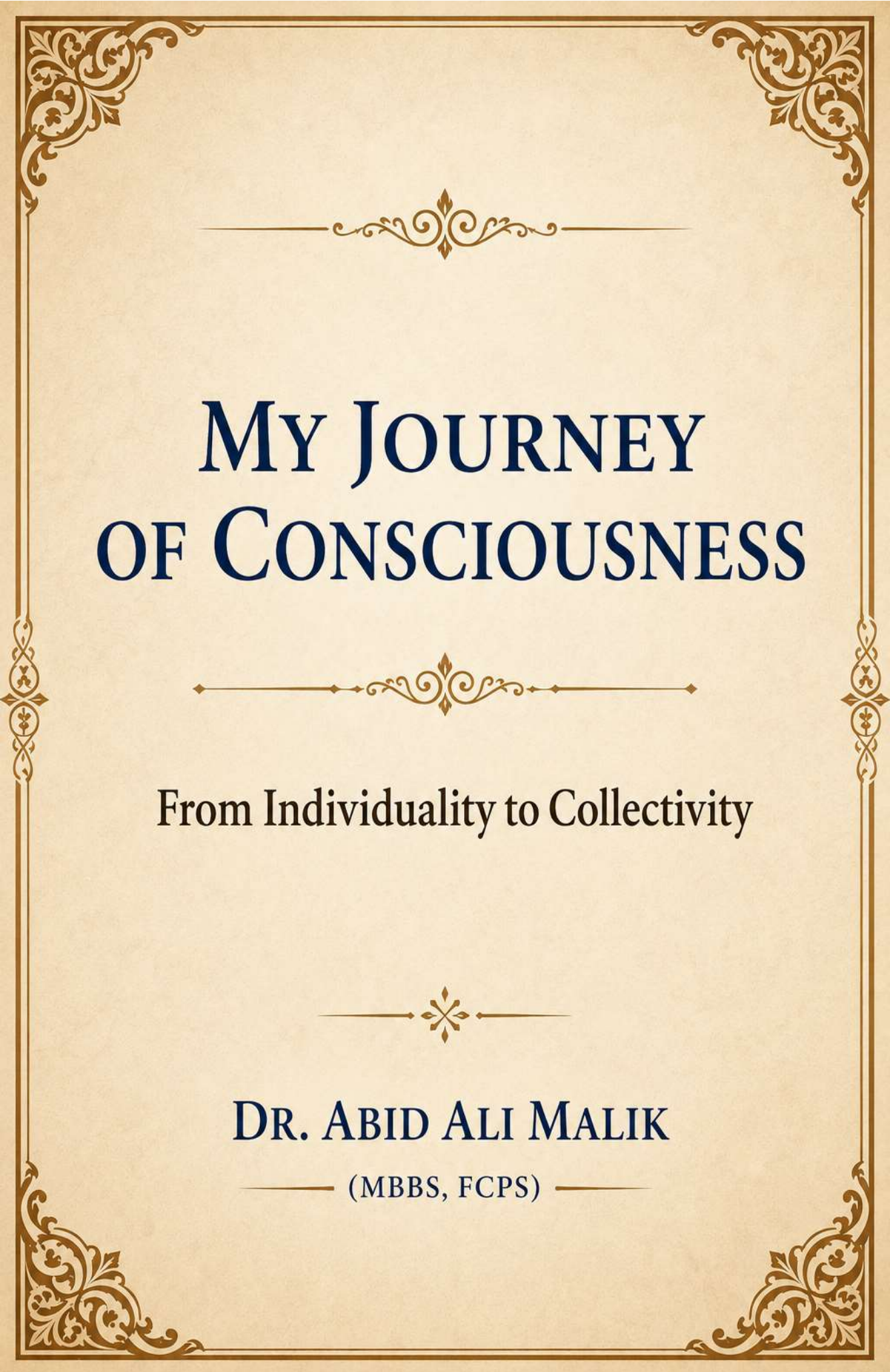




# MY JOURNEY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

From Individuality to Collectivity

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**MY JOURNEY OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

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*From Individuality to Collectivity*

Companionship, Training, Organization, and Collective Consciousness

**Dr. Abid Ali Malik**

English Edition

## MY JOURNEY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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## PREFACE

### **A Journey from “I” to “We”**

This part of my journey tells of a phase in which personal questions gradually became collective and social questions. Medical education, friendships, the guidance of teachers, study, the intellectual and training environment of Idara Rahimia, and organizational experience all contributed to this change.

I began to understand that individual goodness, knowledge, and ability gain a deeper meaning when they are connected with society. This realization did not arrive in a single day. It emerged gradually through questions, study, dialogue, disagreement, training, companionship, and practical experience.

I have tried to preserve these events in the sequence and meaning in which they remain in my notes and memory. This is not merely a record of activities. It is the story of how my questions changed, how my understanding widened, and how the idea of responsibility moved from the individual toward the collective.

My journey was essentially a journey from “I” to “We.”

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE FRIENDS WHO SHOWED THE WAY

Some friends are more than friends. Their real importance becomes clear only years later, when we look back and recognize that a conversation, a question, or a disagreement quietly changed the direction of our lives.

In 2008, after completing my medical education, I was working at Services Hospital Lahore. The visible life was familiar: wards, patients, duties, examinations, and the struggle to move forward professionally. But another life was developing within me—a life of questions.

If Islam is a complete way of life, I wondered, can it be limited to individual piety and worship? Human beings live inside families, economies, educational systems, social relationships, and political structures. Could religion have no relationship with these realities?

Friends helped give direction to these questions. Among them, Dr. Ramzan Faisal became part of conversations that moved beyond medical work. We discussed the meaning of religion, Dawat, and the point at which individual Muslim responsibility meets collective responsibility.

Through these discussions I was introduced more deeply to the thought of Imam Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (الله رحمه). He no longer appeared to me merely as a historical personality. His thought offered a framework through which the individual, society, and collective order could be considered together.

A new question emerged: if the collective system is unjust, is individual goodness alone enough? The question “How can I become a better person?” gradually expanded

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into “How is a better society built, and what role does a righteous individual play in that process?”

This journey had not begun suddenly in 2008. Earlier teachers and experiences from student life had laid foundations. But during the hospital years, my professional journey and intellectual journey began moving together. The Qur’an, society, religion, economy, and collective order increasingly appeared as connected realities.

I began to see individual reform and social reform not as opposing paths but as interconnected responsibilities. Two questions remained before me: “Who am I?” and “Who are we?” The Rahimia journey gradually became my journey from “I” to “We.”

## CHAPTER TWO

### COMPANIONSHIP

#### **The Friends Who Continued to Show the Way**

At different stages of life, Allah brings certain people before us before He brings certain books. A conversation, a question, a disagreement, or a new subject of study remains in the mind and slowly changes the direction of thought. Friendship then becomes something deeper: *Rafaqat*—companionship in a shared journey.

My understanding of *Dawat* also began to change. It moved from inviting people toward goodness and basic religious learning toward a larger question: must reform also address the social environment in which people live? Human beings do not live alone. They live within family, education, economy, social relationships, and collective systems.

Companionship taught me that disagreement can be a means of learning. It need not destroy relationships. Life continued to change—cities, jobs, professional responsibilities, marriage, children, and my medical specialization toward pediatric cardiac disease—but some relationships continued to provide intellectual continuity.

Books also became silent companions. The thought of Imam Shah Waliullah deepened my understanding of society. My medical training offered an analogy: a physician should understand the disease, not merely suppress the symptom. In the same way, social symptoms can point toward deeper structural causes.

This did not remove individual responsibility. It broadened it. The individual matters, but so does the environment in which the individual acts. *Rafaqat* taught me

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to preserve relationships through disagreement and to continue asking questions without turning every difference into a rupture.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HAZRAT SHAH SAEED AHMAD RAIPURI

#### **From Personal Reform to Collective Consciousness**

My association with Hazrat Shah Saeed Ahmad Raipuri (الله رحمه) became an important stage of intellectual and educational development. Through his guidance, the Qur'an, moral and spiritual development, the training of young people, intellectual direction, and the collective dimensions of religion began to appear within one connected framework.

The social and political questions that had shaped the subcontinent after Partition also entered this understanding. Religion could not be reduced to personal worship and formal religious activity. It addressed both the reform of the individual and the reform of social life.

The environment of Idara Rahimia Ilm-ul-Quran connected Qur'anic understanding with character and collective responsibility. Qur'an and Shariah, Tariqat and Sulook, Ihsan, and social consciousness were not presented to me as isolated subjects.

A sequence gradually became visible: Education → Thought and Consciousness → Character and Purification → Tarbiyah → Action → Dawat → Collective Organization → Review and Accountability → Social Understanding.

Poverty, social injustice, class divisions, and ignorance could not always be understood only as the failures of isolated individuals. They also had structural dimensions. This realization strengthened the conviction that collective problems require collective effort.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ORGANIZATION

#### **From Thought to Social Change**

Thought alone is not enough. Lasting social change requires people who are trained, organized, connected by a shared purpose, and willing to carry responsibility over time.

I began to understand Tanzeem not simply as an organization in the administrative sense, but as organized collective strength united by common understanding and purpose. The sequence became clearer: Consciousness → Thought → Tarbiyah → Organization → Collective Struggle → Social Change.

The local Halqa became an important practical space where education, discussion, Tarbiyah, Dawat, responsibility, and local circumstances could meet. Three pillars repeatedly appeared: Education and Tarbiyah, Dawat, and Organization.

Another sequence emerged: Companionship → Building Thought → Building the Individual → Building Organization → Building Institutions → Building Society.

Tarbiyah is never a one-time event. It requires review and accountability. Social change also occurs at more than one level: thought, character and conduct, and collective institutions.

Thought without organization may remain an intellectual exercise. Organization without Tarbiyah can become an emotional group. And organization without good character can lose its direction. The task is to bring thought, character, and organized action together.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **MY FELLOW-TRAVELLER FRIENDS**

Every long journey contains people whose contribution cannot be measured only by formal roles. They sit with us, question us, disagree with us, explain things, encourage us, and stand beside us when the journey becomes difficult.

Dr. Farasat became a companion in thought and organizational Tarbiyah. His seriousness, discipline, and attention to practical systems left an impression on me.

Dr. Asif Naveed was a companion in difficult times. Support, sincerity, and encouragement often become more important than advice.

Dr. Mahmood represented another dimension of companionship: cooperation and continuity. Large goals are ultimately carried through small human relationships built upon trust, sacrifice, and cooperation.

I remain grateful for all those who walked with me during these stages. May Allah accept what was sincere, forgive our shortcomings, and preserve the good that emerged from our companionship.

Some journeys are remembered because of their destinations. Others are remembered because of the people who walked with us.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE FORMAL BEGINNING OF ORGANIZATIONAL TRAINING

Around 2009, my organizational training and responsibilities began to take a more formal shape. I was learning that criticism alone was not enough. If something needed to improve, then study, Tarbiyah, relationships, Dawat, and practical responsibility were all required.

Hafiz Imran Sahib helped create an opportunity to move from informal conversation toward regular training and practical association. A central lesson emerged: before inviting others, the Da'i himself requires Tarbiyah.

Dr. Farasat also became part of this organized training. I began to see a difference between information and consciousness. Information can be accumulated, but consciousness changes how a person understands responsibility and acts within reality.

Medical education and Dawati struggle continued side by side. Companions including Dr. Haris, Dr. Ahsan, Dr. Asif Naveed, and others became part of this environment. Small corner meetings gradually developed into more formal training.

Looking back, I learned that a small gathering can become the foundation of significant change when the questions are serious, the purpose is sincere, and the work is sustained.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **FROM FORUM CLASS TO CIRCLE CLASS**

The Forum Class and later the Circle Class gave regular form to study and intellectual Tarbiyah. Subjects included Aqaa'id, worship, history, Seerah, the Companions, the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and different periods of religious history.

The Seerah increasingly appeared to me from a collective perspective: Dawat, Tarbiyah, human development, organization, patience, wisdom, and social formation. The Qur'an was also approached as a source of collective consciousness rather than only individual instruction.

In the Circle Class, the guidance of Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Madani Sahib opened further questions about Qur'anic collective consciousness, social transformation, the freedom struggle in India, theory, and history.

During illness and treatment in 2009, companions stood with me. This gave another meaning to collectivity. It was not only shared thought and activity; it was sympathy and service. Recovery brought reflection.

Three means of Tarbiyah became especially important to me: the teacher, the book, and the companion.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **THE TRANSFORMATION THAT ENTERED MY CONSCIOUSNESS**

Transformation did not come through one lecture or one dramatic moment. It emerged gradually through questions, study, teachers, dialogue, and experience.

Around 2009, the question “What is the purpose of my life?” began to expand into another question: “What role can my ability, knowledge, and life play in building a better collective life?”

Looking back across nearly two decades, I can see that the young doctor at Services Hospital could not have known where ordinary conversations would lead. Teachers taught me how to stand. Friends taught me how to question. Mentors gave those questions direction. Study widened their scope. Tarbiyah gave responsibility. Companionship taught collective life.

Knowledge that changes only the self is valuable. But when knowledge begins to serve the collective good, another journey begins.

This transformation became a foundation for later stages of my life: medicine, teaching, family, experiences abroad, institution-building, Tarbiyah, Dawat, and the observation of society.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE AWARENESS OF CARING FOR THE HOME

#### Tadbeer-e-Manzil

Under the guidance of Hazrat Maulana Mufti Abdul Khaliq Azad Raipuri (دامت برکاتہم), another dimension of my journey became clearer: the true test of reform is not only in classrooms, groups, or social missions. One of its nearest and most difficult fields is the home.

Tadbeer-e-Manzil means more than managing household expenses or daily routines. It is the thoughtful management of family and collective life within the home. Can a home be run with love, justice, responsibility, Mashawarat, and respect?

A family contains different temperaments, habits, needs, emotions, and backgrounds. Children also differ. The first lesson was that managing a home does not mean making everyone the same. It means creating balance and love among different temperaments—more understanding than command, more patience than reaction.

Marriage changed the meaning of responsibility. Decisions were no longer purely individual. Time, finances, future plans, and family relationships now belonged to a shared life. This was a practical movement from “I” to “We.”

Disagreement does not necessarily mean failure. The real questions are: Do we want to defeat the other person or solve the problem? Are we deciding in anger or speaking at the right time? Are we repeating our own position or trying to understand the other?

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Sometimes preserving the relationship is more important than winning the argument. Mashawarat therefore became a foundation of household life—especially in decisions about children, finances, and family relationships. When necessary, sincere and experienced guidance can expand our understanding.

Tadbeer-e-Manzil also requires management of the inner self. Without regulating anger, ego, desire, and speech, it is difficult to build a peaceful household. Not every issue should be shared with every person; counsel should be sought from someone trustworthy, balanced, discreet, and genuinely concerned with solutions.

The home became the first practical school of collective life. Justice is first tested with those closest to us. Mashawarat first becomes real in the family. The upbringing of children becomes the nearest field of Tarbiyah. A dream of social reform cannot be separated from responsibility toward one's own home.

## CHAPTER TEN

### TADBEER-E-MANZIL

#### **From Disagreement to Understanding**

Married life became a school of patience, tolerance, sacrifice, reform, communication, and self-control. My notes from 2013 reflect a young person trying to understand how two people with different temperaments, habits, expectations, and family backgrounds build one home.

Marriage taught me that the goal is not the complete elimination of disagreement. The goal is to live with differences while preserving love and respect.

My medical and scientific training naturally valued logic, evidence, and solutions. But relationships do not run on logic alone. Sometimes a person needs to be heard before a solution is offered. A correct point expressed at the wrong time may worsen a problem. At times, silence can be wiser.

Home is not a battlefield. Every disagreement does not require a winner. Compromise is not necessarily defeat or self-erasure. Shared life means that my preference cannot always be final. Sometimes one person steps back, sometimes the other, and sometimes both modify their positions to find a third path.

This was another practical movement from “I” to “We.” The deeper question became not “How should the other person change?” but “What must I change within myself?” Am I a good listener? Can I control anger? Can I control my words when angry? Can I admit a mistake? After disagreement, can I take the first step toward restoring the relationship?

These were not easy questions, but they became essential questions.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### TADBEER-E-MANZIL

#### **Sacrifice, Love, and Self-Reform**

The most practical starting point for reforming a home is not changing the other person but reforming oneself.

Family life contains many unseen sacrifices: time, personal preferences, financial choices, and sometimes changing one's own plans so that another person's plan can succeed. When both sides carry a spirit of mutual sacrifice, the home becomes more than a shared residence; it becomes a relationship of sincere goodwill.

Sacrifice, however, should not become a one-sided demand. Tadbeer-e-Manzil requires rights and responsibilities, justice, and the fulfillment of another person's rights with dignity.

Consultation is necessary, but not every person is an appropriate adviser. Repeatedly sharing every small disagreement with friends and relatives may solve an immediate emotional need while leaving a lasting negative impression. If guidance is required, it should come from someone trustworthy, discreet, understanding, impartial, and genuinely interested in preserving the relationship.

Youth may understand love mainly as emotion. Marriage taught me that love is also responsibility. It means protecting another person's dignity after learning their weaknesses. It means avoiding angry words that can wound for years. It means standing together against the problem rather than standing against each other.

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Before managing the home, one must learn to manage the self: speech, anger, time, desires, finances, and ego. The lesson of Mashawarat that I had learned in collective training now entered family life.

A successful family is not one in which disagreement never occurs. It is one in which dialogue survives disagreement, love remains protected, and both people continue to grow.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### TADBEER-E-MANZIL

#### **Love, Freedom, and Trust**

Many household problems are not merely administrative. Their roots lie in emotions, expectations, fears, and our concepts of relationships.

My old notes reveal a tension between the desire for love and closeness and another question: where do freedom, trust, and individuality fit within marriage?

Love and possession are not the same. Closeness is natural, but when closeness becomes continuous control, the beauty of love can be damaged. I once framed the question as, “How much freedom should be given to the other person?” Experience later taught me that the question itself needed to change. Freedom is not a favor granted by one spouse to the other. Both are human beings with personality, dignity, opinion, and legitimate boundaries.

Marriage does not eliminate freedom. It brings freedom into relationship with shared responsibility, harmony, and trust. Love should not limit a person; it should create a relationship in which both can grow while remaining connected.

Not every difference is opposition to the relationship. One person may be more social, another quieter. One may respond emotionally at once, another may need time. Healthy marriage can include both shared activities and personal space, consultation without surveillance, time together and time for reflection.

My notes also used the word “emotional.” Looking back, I understand this as a growing awareness of emotional intelligence: not only recognizing my own feelings,

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but asking what the other person feels, what fear or need may lie behind a reaction, and what effect my own words may have.

One principle became especially important: do not make a permanent decision under intense temporary emotion. When anger is high, pause. This pause is not punishment. It is an attempt to regulate emotion before returning to the conversation.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### TADBEER-E-MANZIL

#### **Expectations, Children, and the School of Family Life**

Many disappointments arise from expectations that are never spoken. We may assume that a spouse should understand our needs without being told. When reality differs from that mental picture, we conclude that the other person does not understand us.

A better path is direct communication: express needs, listen carefully, and search for a mutually acceptable way forward.

The peace of a home depends greatly on communication. Sometimes the real issue is not the subject being discussed but the desire of both people to have their own position accepted. Helpful sentences can change the direction of a conversation: “Perhaps I misunderstood.” “I did not understand your perspective.” “I realize this affected you.” “Let us solve this together.” Such words do not make a person smaller; they strengthen the relationship.

The arrival of children creates another level of responsibility. Family management is no longer only about husband and wife. Communication, disagreement, anger, love, and respect now affect the next generation. Children learn from the relationship they observe: how adults disagree, how they show respect, and whether they can admit mistakes.

Tadbeer-e-Manzil therefore becomes Tarbiyah of the next generation. Under the guidance of Hazrat Mufti Abdul Khaliq Azad Raipuri, I increasingly understood that collective thinking begins with responsibility in one’s own sphere. A person who

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wants justice in society must practice fairness at home. A person who values Mashawarat must listen within the family. A person who values dignity must respect legitimate boundaries.

Looking back at my 2013 notes, I see a young person trying to understand relationships through logic, emotion, mistakes, and guidance. Tadbeer-e-Manzil was not a final lesson but an ongoing stage. Marriage taught love; disagreement taught tolerance; consultation taught collectivity; responsibility, sacrifice, and children taught me to look beyond myself.

Managing a home is not the art of controlling others. It is the continuing work of becoming a better human being.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE FOUR PILLARS OF MY LIFE

#### **Family, Profession, Social Responsibility, and Personal Needs**

Family life cannot be reduced to husband-wife disagreements or daily household matters. The peace of a home is connected with the balance of the whole life. If professional work consumes all time, if social and organizational responsibilities dominate everything, or if personal needs are completely ignored, the effects eventually reach the family.

In my diary I drew a simple framework: “Four Pillars of My Life.” They were Family, Profession or Career, Organizational and Social Responsibilities, and Self or Personal Needs.

Family is not what remains after every other commitment is completed. A spouse, children, and close relationships have a legitimate right to time and attention. A doctor’s life includes duties, emergencies, patients, training, and examinations. Social and organizational work can also expand indefinitely. If we say, “I will sit with my family when I have time,” that time may never come. Family time must be deliberately allocated.

Physical presence is not enough when the mind remains elsewhere. Quality of presence matters.

Profession is also part of identity and purpose. Medicine, knowledge, expertise, and service to patients are not merely sources of livelihood. Balance therefore does not mean neglecting professional development. The question is how to progress without making the family pay the hidden cost of that progress.

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Social and organizational responsibility is also important. But if a person works to reform society while neglecting the rights of his own family, his priorities require review. Collective responsibility begins close to home.

The fourth pillar is the self. Physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual needs matter. Giving time to health, study, worship, reflection, rest, and friendship is not selfish when it helps a person become healthier and more balanced.

My diary also contains attempts to divide time between hospital, study, family, organizational work, and personal needs. This was a movement from time management toward life management. Everyone has twenty-four hours; the problem is often not time alone but priorities.

Quality matters as much as quantity. One attentive hour with family may be more meaningful than two distracted hours. Focused study may be more valuable than longer distracted study.

At first, the four pillars seemed to compete with one another. Later I understood that they can support one another. A healthy self can become a better doctor. A peaceful family can give mental strength. Profession can provide service and purpose. Social responsibility can develop concern for others.

Tadbeer-e-Manzil was therefore expanding into Tadbeer-e-Zindagi—the thoughtful management of life. Success is not conquering one field. It is the continuing effort to create balance among relationship with Allah, care of the self, family rights, professional development, service to society, and wider human responsibility.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### FROM MISUNDERSTANDING TO CONSCIOUS CONDUCT

Tadbeer-e-Manzil gradually became broader in my consciousness. I had once thought mainly in terms of responsibilities, routines, and discipline. Experience taught me that true Tadbeer is deeply concerned with human beings and emotions.

A good home is not created by resources alone. It needs patience, consultation, appropriate silence, and the ability to speak with love at the appropriate time. The question became: do I want to change the other person, or do I want to improve my own conduct and the relationship?

Success in married life is not the absence of disagreement. It is the preservation of respect within disagreement; the ability to experience misunderstanding without breaking communication; the ability to feel anger without surrendering the tongue to anger; and the habit of standing together against a problem rather than against each other.

Many domestic disagreements are not fundamental conflicts. They arise from misunderstanding, emotional state, incomplete listening, or poor expression. We interpret words through our current mood. Under pressure, an ordinary sentence can feel enormous.

Another problem is listening only to reply rather than listening to understand. Old incidents are then brought into a current disagreement until a small issue carries the weight of years of complaints.

Before entering such a conversation, I learned to ask: is my goal to solve the problem, or to prove the other person wrong? When anger is high, do not try to solve

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the problem. Give the mind and emotions time to settle. Silence can be self-control rather than punishment.

Three principles became useful: keep the discussion limited to the present issue; focus less on blame and more on how to do better next time; and understand the other person's viewpoint before defending your own.

Listening is often half the solution. Not every disagreement requires one person to be completely right and the other completely wrong. Sometimes a third solution exists—changing timing, dividing responsibility, clarifying expectations, or simply giving full attention.

Marital disagreements should not casually become public discussion. Personality attacks and humiliation damage the possibility of repair. “This hurt me” is very different from “You are always like this.” Not every argument deserves an answer, and not every misunderstanding must be resolved in the same moment.

## Nathia Gali — Travel, Resources, and Conscious Living

A journey to Nathia Gali gave another practical dimension to this way of thinking. Travel is a beautiful part of life. It can bring nature, family time, mental rest, learning, and shared memories. Yet every journey also uses resources.

The real cost of travel is not only money, fuel, food, or accommodation. Time is an investment. Long journeys, mountain driving, fatigue, accident risk, sleep, cleanliness, food, and the ability to maintain Salah all matter.

This does not mean that travel should be abandoned. Home offers routine and comfort, but continuous routine can also create stagnation. Travel can refresh the mind, expose children to new experiences, and strengthen family relationships.

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The important distinction is between purposeful and purposeless travel. Before travelling, I began to ask: What is the purpose? Is the expected benefit proportionate to the time, money, and energy? Will the family benefit? Can basic needs—safe travel, suitable food, cleanliness, rest, and Salah—be protected? What is the opportunity cost?

An old note of mine said: “Cannot afford wastage of resources—Be productive.” Later I felt that “intentional” was a better word than “productive.” Not every moment must produce measurable output. Sitting quietly with children, drinking tea with one’s spouse, looking at mountains, and resting the body and mind can all be valuable. The problem is not rest; it is purposelessness.

The principle became: less travel, but better travel—purposeful, safe, comfortable, and memorable. Time, health, wealth, and family are trusts from Allah Almighty. A good journey is one after which we return more refreshed, grateful, purposeful, and appreciative of home and family.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### SIYASAT AL-MANZIL

#### **Working with Wisdom within the National System**

As my journey progressed, another recurring question emerged: if a person becomes part of a flawed system, what should he do? Practical life is rarely as simple as either leaving the system completely or confronting it at every point.

Family, institutions, professional life, and society are systems we did not create. Some practices are wrong; some weaknesses are inherited; sometimes the environment itself makes right action difficult. Can a person remain within such a system while keeping intention, character, and action right?

I gradually moved toward an answer: yes—but good intention alone is not enough. It must be accompanied by wisdom, patience, Tadbeer, and responsibility.

Two extremes should be avoided. One is to carry the burden of every failure of the system as if it were personally ours. The other is to blame the system for everything and free ourselves of responsibility. Conscious action lies between the two. What is within my control, I must take responsibility for. What is outside my control, I must understand honestly.

Correct intention also requires a correct method. Truth spoken without regard to time, context, or consequence can sometimes make reform more difficult. Reform is an art.

The idea of Minimum Harm became important: when the ideal solution is unavailable, choose the path that does not increase harm. This does not mean calling wrong right. It means acting responsibly within imperfect choices.

## MY JOURNEY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Another principle was the Creative Solution—the third path between complete surrender and complete confrontation. A person may build a better model within his own department, begin with a few people, create trust, demonstrate results, and gradually open space for wider change.

Not every disagreement should become a battle of arguments. Respect may reform where humiliation creates resistance. Silence, good work, and visible results can sometimes persuade more effectively than debate.

There is also a danger in remaining within a flawed system: its faults can become normal to us. “This is how the system works” can become permanent justification. Therefore, remain within the system if responsibility requires it, but do not allow the corruption of the system to enter within you.

Four practical principles emerged: choose the best possible path in present circumstances; minimize harm; search for a creative solution; and avoid unnecessary argument and confrontation. The purpose is not to win the argument. The purpose is to create a path toward what is good.

Siyasat al-Manzil therefore came to mean neither surrendering to the system nor fighting blindly against everything within it, but learning to work consciously, ethically, patiently, and wisely for improvement from within.

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**CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**

**PRINCIPLES OF DAWAT**

**From Understanding the Individual to Collective Change**

Dawat became another important stage in my journey. I gradually understood that it is fundamentally connected with understanding human beings, psychology, gradual development, trust, dialogue, and collective consciousness.

Every human being is different in temperament, intellectual level, background, experience, ability, questions, and circumstances. Therefore, one method cannot simply be applied to everyone.

Nine principles became increasingly clear. First, change comes gradually; thought formed over years cannot be transformed through a few conversations. Second, create questions rather than merely supplying ready-made answers. Third, connect Dawat with the real problems of contemporary life—family, livelihood, education, morality, and social questions. Fourth, find common ground before disagreement: human welfare, justice, education, good character, opposition to oppression, and the desire for a better society.

Fifth, understand the human being before the label. A sect, profession, group, or social identity does not reveal the whole person. Sixth, begin from the person's present intellectual position. Knowing the destination is important, but understanding the starting point is equally necessary. Seventh, when there is immediate disagreement, ask a question rather than closing the door with "You are wrong." Eighth, build trust before deep intellectual conversation. Ninth, move from individual thinking toward collective thinking.

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Not everyone contributes in the same way. One may teach, another organize, another write, research, build relationships with young people, or serve quietly through practical work. Unity does not mean uniformity. It means organizing different abilities around a shared purpose.

With time, Dawat ceased to mean defeating someone in an argument or immediately bringing him to my own position. It became a longer process: understanding the person, building trust, finding common ground, creating questions, introducing ideas gradually, recognizing abilities, and awakening collective responsibility.

The purpose of Dawat is not to make people exactly like ourselves. It is to help people think, understand, and use their abilities for goodness within collective action.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### DAWAT AND TARBIYAH

#### **From Imposing Thought to Awakening Consciousness**

After reflecting on Dawat, the next question concerned Tarbiyah. Establishing a relationship, introducing an idea, or involving someone in collective activity is not the end of the journey. It is the beginning of another stage.

A major danger is the unconscious desire to place everyone into the same intellectual mould. Human beings are not machine-made objects. Every person has a different temperament, ability, education, experience, social background, and way of thinking.

The purpose of collective struggle is therefore not to make everyone identical. It is to organize different human abilities around a shared purpose. Tarbiyah should not aim to make a person think exactly like the Murabbi. It should develop the ability to think, understand reality, and consciously distinguish right from wrong.

Ideological Tarbiyah therefore moves beyond emotional attachment. A person should be able to examine an idea, understand its logic, see how it understands society, and apply principles under changing circumstances.

This is the difference between living thought and static thought. Society changes. New technologies, economic circumstances, social complexities, and new generations create new questions. Tarbiyah must preserve fundamental principles while developing the ability to understand changing realities.

A Da'i or Murabbi does not need an immediate answer to every question. More important is understanding the question correctly. Listen first. Clarify. Sometimes the

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words spoken are not the real question; behind them may lie experience, fear, emotion, or a deeper intellectual difficulty. Sometimes the best answer is one that produces a better question.

Not everyone is suited to the same role. One person may build relationships, another communicate, another research, organize, teach, or serve. Understand the individual first, then assign responsibility. A valuable person placed in the wrong role can become a wasted ability.

Attachment is also not the same as transformation. A person may attend meetings and activities without meaningful change in thought, character, or responsibility. The objective is not simply to increase numbers. It is to prepare conscious human beings who can understand reality and become a means of goodness for others.

Dawat reaches the human being. Tarbiyah develops thought and character. Collective action connects ability with the improvement of society. The successful Murabbi does not create replicas of himself; he helps people develop the capacity to question, understand, analyze, recognize their abilities, and accept collective responsibility.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT JAMAAT

#### **From Khilafat-e-Batini to Khilafat-e-Zahiri**

As I continued reflecting on collective life, another concept emerged: the development of a Jamaat takes place in two stages—Khilafat-e-Batini, inner formation, and Khilafat-e-Zahiri, outward collective expression.

A collective organization may develop an impressive external structure, but if this structure has not been preceded by genuine inner Tarbiyah, it may exist without the spirit that should give it life.

Khilafat-e-Batini begins within the human being: clarity of thought, character, discipline, and responsibility. The principles that will later guide collective conduct must first become internal.

When thought becomes clear, character develops, and people organize around a shared purpose, the next stage begins. Khilafat-e-Zahiri is the visible, practical expression of inner consciousness through relationships, decisions, institutions, and collective action.

If justice exists within, it should appear in dealings. If Mashawarat has value within thought, it should appear in organizational decisions. If human dignity is genuinely respected, it should appear in the treatment of the weakest member. If collective interest is understood, authority should not become a means of pursuing personal interest.

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In this sense, Khilafat-e-Zahiri becomes the practical examination of Khilafat-e-Batini. Ideas that remain beautiful only in books, lessons, or conversation have not completed their Tarbiyah.

A Jamaat is therefore not merely a gathering of people. It is organized collective action by people with shared consciousness, shared purpose, meaningful Tarbiyah, and collective responsibility. Collectivity does not erase the individual; it connects individual ability with a larger collective good.

The system must first take shape within us before we can hope to express it meaningfully in the world around us. This was the journey from inner reform to outward construction.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

### LEARNING DAWAT

#### **Ideology, Relationship, and Character**

If Dawat is a responsibility, how should it be learned properly? My notes made me realize that it is not merely enthusiasm, good intention, or skill in conversation. It requires ideological clarity, understanding of human psychology, continuous Tarbiyah, strong relationships, and reform of one's own character.

A Da'i must know his purpose. If I do not know why I am connecting with people, how I understand society, or what transformation I seek, Dawat can become emotional conversation without direction. Yet ideological clarity does not mean turning the person before me into a reflection of myself. Ideology gives direction; understanding the human being determines the path.

Ideological Tarbiyah is more than memorizing terminology. It means understanding an interconnected intellectual framework and learning how principles take practical form in changing circumstances. If an ideology remains only on the tongue and does not enter decisions and behavior, Tarbiyah remains superficial.

Dawat begins with relationship. Without trust, deep intellectual conversation is difficult. But relationship must not become a substitute for principle. Relationship is a bridge through which an idea reaches a person.

The style of Dawat should combine a soft heart with firm principles. Respect, love, and sincere goodwill do not require silence about everything. Likewise, a principled position does not require harshness or humiliation.

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Dawat must also connect ideology with real life: family, employment, education, injustice, morality, and the future. Thought should provide guidance for life, not merely sound beautiful in a lesson.

Another distinction is between a person's relationship with an individual Da'i and his relationship with the Jamaat. The objective is not to bind people personally to ourselves but to connect them with thought, purpose, and collective responsibility.

Relationships also have two levels: broad relationships across different temperaments, professions, social groups, and intellectual levels; and deeper relationships based on trust, sincerity, consultation, and genuine goodwill. Breadth helps us understand society. Depth develops trust and balance.

The most powerful message of a Da'i is ultimately his character. If I speak of justice but behave unjustly, speak of collectivity but insist constantly on my own opinion, or preach good character while losing control during disagreement, my words lose their effect.

Dawat therefore first changes the Da'i. Another person's objection tests tolerance. Disagreement tests patience. Neglect tests sincerity. Another person's success tests whether jealousy exists within. Conduct toward a weaker companion tests whether collectivity has truly entered character.

I began to see Dawat through three circles: Thought → Relationship → Character. Thought gives direction. Relationship creates the bridge. Character gives testimony.

The success of a Da'i cannot be measured only by how many people he brings with him. The deeper questions are how many people develop the ability to think, consciousness of goodness, stronger character, and collective responsibility—and how

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much the Da'i himself becomes a better human being. Before Dawat becomes a journey of reforming others, it is a continuous journey of reforming oneself.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### THE ROOTS OF MORAL EVILS

#### **From Reforming the Individual to Transforming the System**

There was a time when I viewed moral evils primarily as weaknesses of individuals: lying, dishonesty, selfishness, injustice, exploitation, and violation of the rights of others. The simple conclusion was that if individuals become good, society will become good.

Collective thought placed a deeper question before me: does a morally unhealthy society merely produce bad individuals, or can a flawed system itself continually produce and reinforce harmful behavior?

A human being does not live in a vacuum. He lives within family, economy, institutions, state, and a wider social system. Some behaviors are encouraged, some discouraged, some rewarded, and sometimes principled conduct carries a price. If selfishness brings benefit, law treats the powerful differently, exploitation creates opportunities, and personal interest appears more successful than collective interest, individual weakness alone does not explain the whole picture.

This led to another question: if a system is wrong, but a person remains within it and works honestly, is that enough? He may not personally commit oppression, yet his efficiency may help a harmful structure continue functioning. Individual goodness and collective reform therefore cannot be completely separated.

Moral Tarbiyah is necessary, but sustainable moral reform also requires a collective order that protects what is good and discourages what is harmful. Good

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human beings help change systems, and good systems help good human beings remain good.

In this context, I also tried to understand the Seerah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ from another perspective. His ﷺ work began with belief, thought, and human character, but it did not remain confined to individual morality. In Makkah, alongside Tawhid, harmful social practices connected with oppression, exploitation, class inequality, the rights of the weak, and misuse of power were challenged. In Madinah, belief and morality also became visible within collective relationships and responsibilities.

The lesson I drew was that inner reform and the reform of collective order cannot be completely separated. In my journey, this connected the stages: Dawat → Tarbiyah → Jamaat → Systemic Change.

Three practical principles emerged for working within a flawed system. First, do not personally become part of wrongdoing. The corruption of the system cannot justify dishonesty, oppression, exploitation, or another clearly wrongful act. Second, do not allow wrongdoing to become stronger through you. A person must examine whether silence, cooperation, professional ability, or institutional role is indirectly strengthening a harmful structure. Third, continue trying to improve conditions through wisdom, gradualism, Dawat, Tarbiyah, Mashawarat, and collective effort.

This reflection also moved me beyond intention alone. Earlier I often asked, “What is my intention?” Now another question accompanied it: “What is the collective consequence of my action?” A good intention does not remove the need to examine consequences.

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At the individual level, the question is: What kind of human being am I? At the collective level: What kind of human beings are being shaped by the system of which I am a part? And at the level of conscious struggle: Alongside reforming myself, what role am I playing in improving the collective system around me?

Moral reform and systemic reform are interdependent. Without reforming individuals, where will the people capable of building a better system come from? Without a better system, how will the moral efforts of good individuals find stable collective expression?

Perhaps this was the point at which goodness moved beyond being merely a personal quality and became a collective responsibility: protect myself from wrongdoing, ensure that my actions do not strengthen wrongdoing, and continue—with wisdom—to work toward improving the system itself.

This was another completion of the journey: From Individuality to Collectivity.

## NOTE ON KEY TERMS

**Dawat:** invitation toward understanding, goodness, and responsibility; retained because the manuscript uses it as a broader formative process.

**Tarbiyah:** education, formation, cultivation, and development of thought and character.

**Mashawarat:** consultation undertaken sincerely in search of a wiser collective decision.

**Tadbeer-e-Manzil:** thoughtful management of home and family life.

**Siyasat al-Manzil:** the manuscript's framework for acting wisely and ethically within a wider system.

**Jamaat:** an organized collective united by shared consciousness, purpose, Tarbiyah, and responsibility.

**Khilafat-e-Batini:** inner formation: clarity of thought, character, discipline, and responsibility.

**Khilafat-e-Zahiri:** the outward collective expression of inner principles through conduct, institutions, and social life.

**Da'i:** a person engaged in Dawat.

**Mad'u:** the person being approached or invited through Dawat.

**Murabbi:** a person engaged in Tarbiyah and formative guidance.

**Rafaqat:** companionship in a shared journey.