



Dervishhood and Adab

Threshold Society Bridge Call, November 16, 2008
Graciously transcribed by Abadi, and Mary Platt

Another in the dervishhood series of bridge calls is planned for January when Sipko den Boer will be opening the conversation. If you would like to join in, please send an e-mail to mevlana@cruzio.com

Kabir: Hello everybody!

Let's begin with a moment of dedication in silence.

Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim, that One who brings our hearts together and purifies them and guides them. Let us bring our finest attention to our breath through which we know we are supported, enlivened by Spirit, breathing out all negativity, all tension, all distraction, breathing in the pure spirit and guidance and love of this moment.

And we acknowledge that we are united in a community beyond space, stretching around this planet. We are a community beyond time; stretching through generations of seekers and guides of our beautiful Mevlevi tradition and our beautiful Sufi *tariqahs* and of all the lovers of God through all time.

And we welcome each other to this beautiful and deep space in which we meet. We begin with Khadim, who is going to open our gathering today with some words on *adab*.

Khadim: *Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*. We begin with the name of our Sustainer who is Infinitely Compassionate and Infinitely Merciful.

I would like to begin with the acknowledgement of our beloved Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, our beloved Pir Mevlana and also our beloved friend and teacher Shams of Tabriz and all of our teachers known and unknown to us. *Salaam* to our beloved shaikh and shaikha Kabir and Camille, and to all of my brothers and sisters on this call. May our hearts be open to the Divine Presence and to each other.

The theme that I chose for "What is dervishhood?" is *adab*. I understand and live *adab* as though I am being held by *ihsan*. *Ihsan* is doing what is beautiful. There is a *hadith* of Gabriel that involves Muhammad and a group of his followers. A man comes to join them who is a stranger to everyone. He begins to ask the Prophet a whole series of questions. His followers are stunned by the assertiveness of this person and by his questioning the Prophet. Finally he asks the Prophet "Now tell me about doing what is beautiful" and the Prophet replies "Doing what is beautiful means you should worship God as if you see Him/Her, for even if you do not see Him/Her, She/He sees you."

This *hadith* describes what *ihsan* is. *Ihsan* is a sign pointing to the deeper meaning of *adab*. *Adab* is understood as courtesy of the path. However this courtesy is not the same as "Miss Manners", the manners that many of us were taught when we were growing up. It is living in service to Love, in relationship to all that is seen and unseen.

Every level of being has its *adab*. It can be seen as courtesy, respect and appropriate behavior.

Our behavior is grounded in love, generosity, kindness, gratitude, humility and sincerity. My unfolding in this path has been guided by the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings upon him), by Mevlana and Shams, and all the other great teachers in my heart. To me Sufism IS *adab*. It is a way of living in relationship to the seen and the unseen.

There is a wonderful poem called “The Porter” by Rumi:

“The porter runs to the heavy load and takes it from others
knowing burdens are the foundation of ease
and bitter things the forerunners of pleasure.
See the porter struggle over the load.
It’s the way of those who see the Truth of things.
Paradise is surrounded by things we dislike,
the fires of Hell are surrounded by what we desire.”¹

For me, this poem, talks about not only our effort but also the way in which we are grounded in that effort. It speaks to how we are grounded in the service we give to the world, to each other and to every part of creation. It speaks to our relationship to our teacher, to one another and to the *tekke*. Greater still is our relationship to all things we come in contact with—to other human beings, and, for me, it is about our relationship to inanimate objects. The chair I sit in serves me, and so how is it that I am in relationship to that chair?

There is another saying by the Prophet:

“None of you will have authentic faith until your hearts are made right,
nor will your hearts be made right until your tongues be made right,
nor will your tongues be made right until your actions be made right.”

The “right” for me is the beautiful behavior, opening my being to seeing the Divine Presence in all of creation.

In dervishhood we are concerned with the human character. Our work is to become fully human through the unfolding of our true nature; the nature that is inside of us already. We do not need to find it outside of ourselves.

This nature is at One with the Divine, it is in harmony and balance with our Beloved. Ibn Arabi tells us that we are to assume God’s character traits as our own. That can be awesome because God is so transcendent but also very eminent.

For me the way that I can get my arms around this guidance is in seeing that beautiful behavior, those traits of God, reflected in others. They are an example for how I may live my life. Certainly the Prophet Muhammad is a perfect example. I see this beautiful behavior in my living teachers, in my brothers and sisters who provide a model for my own behavior.

I also know that *adab* is not highly valued in our culture. One of the deepest ways in which we can learn *adab* is modeled in our Sufi communities, our *tekke* or our circle. The *tekke* is a container; it is a school of Love. But I’m aware that many of us do not have

¹ *Mathnawi* II:1834-1837 of Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi excerpted in *Jewels of Remembrance* translated by Camille and Kabir Helminski, Threshold Books, 1993.

regular contact with circles. So our gatherings, like this one on the phone, or when two of us meet, or two of us talk on the phone we have an opportunity to mirror for each other the beautiful behavior, the love and generosity that we feel. Then we are able to take that out into the world and live in relationship out of that place of love and gratitude and kindness.

There's a practice that Kabir and Camille have talked about—the practice of “seeing with”. If I pick up a glass I can see WITH the glass. I see the glass and the glass sees me. I could just think, “It's nothing, it's a glass, it's just there,” but there's something of beauty in that glass. If I see its beauty then it polishes my own heart and puts me in a different kind of state in relationship with everything.

One of the things I've thought a lot about in the last three or four years is all the ways in which I have accumulated physical things in my life. I have said “yes” to them. In doing so there's a way in which I have this responsibility, not a weighty responsibility, but a responsibility. I have considered how I am holding these things. If I'm not using them or I'm not serving them, then I want to let them go. *Adab* has completely changed the way I interact with my environment and my relationships.

I'm noticing that it is twenty minutes after the hour and I want to make sure everyone has an opportunity to share. I want to pose a few questions to everyone: “What is *adab* in your own life, how are you living that out? What kinds of support might you need to more fully awaken this beautiful behavior and right relationship as we unfold together?”

Blessings and thank you.

Elizabeth: I think the place I have the greatest difficulty with *adab* is at work. I get all tangled up with different pressures and demands and my reactions to those pressures and demands. I often feel my *adab* is “off” in the way that I react. Since I am working with people who are not in the tradition it's very hard to find a common way of having conversation about the problem or issue so that we can work it through.

Kabir: Thank you Elizabeth. I'd like to respond to that and to look at it positively. We live in a world that lacks *adab*, so even our minimal awareness, even our minimal attempts to live with *adab* ought to shine even more brightly in that environment. In a way the bar is so low that any human being that just stays free of gossip, backbiting and expressing the negative is going to be a shining example of something. I imagine people in your environment will notice that and cannot but be helped by it.

Elizabeth: OK.

Kabir: That's at least the minimal practice. The next stage would be to actually try to work out some of the issues that arise. I know that you have the psychological and communication tools to at least attempt that. I would think that the overall principles of *adab* would give you the context to work these things out. You describe something that we all, in one way or another, face the more that we are involved with everyday life and with society.

Do Fred or Mary Ann have anything to say about this? You were the ones who proposed a national program to introduce *adab* into America and particularly the Christian community.

Mary Ann: Kabir, Camille, and I were all at a conference in Aspen this last week with a lot of spiritual elders from many different traditions. As we were leaving some of the staff of the institute actually spoke to my friend Diane Burke and told her that they experienced that group very differently than other groups that had come to that think tank. The group had been so much kinder to the staff; they were gracious and said “thank you.” My reaction was “Oh, so we had our *adab* in place as a group.” I think it is the little things like saying “thank you” and saying “excuse me” and stepping aside for an elder to pass. Those things really do connect with people. People really do notice it.

Camille: Yes, recognizing a moment of connection with another human being. We received a similar reflection from the staff who said “Your group can come back ANY time!”

Fred: I agree. As Kabir mentioned, I have been very interested in *adab* for many years. I think one of the character disorders of our time is lack of courtesy. It manifests in so many ways in this culture of ours. We get a lot of it with “flaming” on the computer, computer viruses, people with road rage and fathers slugging other people at their sons’ soccer games. Venting is another one; people seem to take great pleasure in being angry. It struck me recently that there ought to be a concerted effort by all the worlds’ religions to cooperatively teach and model *adab* in their communities. They all share this value, although the Sufis have the most refined practice of *adab*. I’m wondering what you think of that idea? Is there anything being done right now along that line?

Kabir: Well you guys are in a unique position to promote this with your website, spiritualityandpractice.com. Your website has such a reach that maybe the idea could be introduced as a kind of banner program, to initiate something, to create a “viral *adab*” movement. It would be beautiful.

Elizabeth: I did some work for the Obama campaign and I was always very struck by the *adab* of their website and their gratitude for anything that one did. It was very striking to me.

Kabir: Yes. Well, that is certainly good to hear.

Another friend: I would add to that. I noticed that it was catching. I worked on a phone bank for the Obama campaign right before the elections. They said, “Remember, you are just calling to find out if they know where their polling place is and if they have already voted, it doesn’t matter who they voted for, just thank them for voting.” I listened to people having conversations like that and I thought, “Well that’s really great, it’s not about winning or putting someone down it’s about the process and gratitude.” To me it was an acknowledgement that no matter what some person’s political position was they were someone whose actions you could honor. To me that is a piece of *adab*.

Elizabeth: People responded very well to that didn't they.

Khadim: Kabir, when I went to Turkey with you, Camille, and friends I was struck by the *adab* that I recognized in that culture. I think that *adab* should not be reduced to just manners for the sake of manners, although that is good. I'm sure that if we did have better manners it would really be helpful in this culture. *Adab* is linked to something very deep within our practice and with the spiritual elders. In Turkey I could feel it so strongly. There was something about the *adab* there. I knew about the practice, it had been in my life for a long time. However there was something about being in Turkey where it was rooted in something so very deep that I came away with having "gotten" what *adab* is at a cellular level.

Zakiuddin: I think that's the inner state, that *adab* is directly linked to someone's *iman* (faith), their essential core trust in God, their relationship with God.

Kabir/Khadim: Yes.

Camille: That deepening awareness of the love in which we are swimming.

Khadim: Yes! Yes!

Elizabeth: And the inner connectedness, the depth of the inner connectedness.

Camille: Someone who was on our most recent Turkey trip was here last night for *zhikr*. She explained that while she was wearing her prayer scarf some local women thought she was Turkish and spoke to her. She tried to explain to them that she could not speak Turkish, but they kept trying to speak to her. They were so welcoming, and she felt such a beautiful heart connection with them. She could only respond by saying she was sorry she could not understand, that she was an American. When they heard that they kissed her and hugged her . . . she just melted.

Fusun: It is funny—I did not realize how *adab* had played such an important role in my life until I joined you, Kabir and Camille. *Adab*, putting a name to it, in my education was just something that you grew up with. We were trained not to show our feet toward someone, to stand up in front of our father (we were not allowed to sit). We definitely were not allowed to smoke and definitely not allowed to drink. To kiss hands and to sit at someone's feet . . . it was just a normal thing to do. It was only much later, when I joined you, that I knew that this was *adab* and that this pertained to the Mevlevi Way. I had thought of it as just a general Turkish education.

Kabir: Recently while we were in Holland, a Turkish woman in the group there, who was experiencing her first time in a Sufi group, said, "I finally understand the Turkish saying, *meydani görmedi*, meaning, "He must not have seen the *meydan*." . . . as a description of someone who doesn't have manners. Then she said, "I have seen the *meydan* now and I understand now what that means." We are responsible for creating that *meydan* which is the court of lovers and from that court of lovers *adab* can spread. Hopefully we can establish it to some degree and then it can spread into our lives and then into culture.

Ibn 'Arabi has some interesting things to say about *adab* and he quotes what I believe is a *hadith* (saying of the Prophet Muhammad) that I had never heard before. The *hadith* is, "Whoever lives with *adab* arrives and whoever arrives will not leave, even if he is not courteous." So it goes again, "Whoever lives with *adab* arrives; whoever arrives will not leave, even if he is without *adab*." The way Ibn 'Arabi interprets this is that first of all there is being, and being, "wujud" is everything that is good, and what is not good is relatively without being, so that everything that exists has some element of good in it. What *adab* does—*adab* gathers together everything that is good. The word in Arabic is *m'adaba* and it means a banquet at which all sorts of good things are gathered. So, the human being, who gathers all of the good in their environment and manifests it, manifests being, manifests good, and such a person will arrive, and what that arrival means is that the true meaning of things will be unveiled, and once the true meaning of things is unveiled, there is no going back, there is no forgetting. So *adab* actually leads to *kashf*, to "unveiling," to seeing things more truly as they are, and as we know, there is *adab* on all sorts of levels; there is the formal *adab* of respecting our elders; there is the gentle *adab* of brotherhood and sisterhood; there is the *adab* of friendship, which is a form of informality and spontaneity; there is the *adab* of being with Allah, which is to be in awe and humility.

You know, I love this beautiful story, that once the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing upon him, was sitting in some sort of very casual way and he heard a voice saying, "Is this the way the servant sits before his Lord?" and from that day on the Prophet always sat in a very composed way wherever he was. So, you know, part of our theme now is, the theme of this year has been, a theme of dervishhood and I underline this theme because it's something very practical, very real, very relational and very much down to earth. It's so much the beauty of our way, that we experience the Divine through relationships, through community and through being embodied. And *adab* is the totality of that, it is how we conduct ourselves at all times and it's an idea, it's an ideal, and we know how far we fall from this ideal, and yet it keeps reminding us and inspiring us and making subtle differences in our relationships in our communities. So, how will we apply it? Where will we find its expression?

As Khadim was talking about her "things" I was thinking, too, that the last couple of days I've been noticing that I need to go into the closet and just rearrange, rearrange some things there, rearrange clothing and shoes and just realize that everything, everything we own, has been a choice and that these inanimate things deserve our respect. In other words, there's an *adab* towards my shoes . . . there's an *adab* towards my sweaters, there's an *adab* towards family. . . towards everything.

Khadim: You once told the story about the grandfather and the little boy walking on the floor.

Kabir: Hum...yes.

Khadim: Can you tell that again? Because I think that is so . . . it really sort of captures this preciousness and the love and the service that we have, and I don't remember enough of the details to tell it well.

Kabir: Well, you're putting me to the test.

Khadim: (laughter)

Kabir: It was in an article that was published in Parabola a few years ago and it comes from a story of Abdalbaki Golpinarli who is one of the great Mevlevi scholars of the last century and he describes, as best as I can remember and I think it's the *adab* article . . . I hope it's on our website, on our welcome page or somewhere, I will have to check. But it's in the paper on *adab* that's not published. It's not the chapter from *The Knowing Heart*. It's one I wrote especially for Parabola.² I keep realizing that the subject of *adab* keeps growing.

Khadim: Yes.

Kabir: In this story, Abdalbaki as a young boy was walking with his grandfather and they went somewhere where they were expecting to see a Mevlevi family that was caretaking an old Mevlevi site. And they go to the address where they expect to find it and they knock on the door and they are greeted rather rudely by an older woman, who says, "No, no, no. This is not the right place. This is not the door; go around the other side of the building, and you will find what you are looking for." So Abdalbaki and his grandfather walk around the other side of the building and they knock on the door and a woman comes to the door and as I recall, she greets them with such, such gentleness and respect and graciousness and invites them to sit in the garden and comes and serves them tea. The upshot of it is that, as Abdalbaki and his grandfather are leaving, the little boy asks a question about these two women and his grandfather says, "The first door we came to was only *shari'ah*; the second door we came to was the door of *tariqah*." It was a lesson that the child carried for the rest of his life, and as I said, he went on to become the great author and contributor to gathering the knowledge of the Mevlevi tradition.

Last night, a woman who had come to Turkey with us, who had very little exposure to Sufism she said; Of course one of the things that touched her was just the affection and the open heartedness that she experienced all over Turkey and especially in the places that we went like Mevlana's tomb. She had a little magnifying glass that was perfect for viewing these miniature manuscripts that were on display there and practically everyone in the museum was coming up and wanting to use her little magnifying glass. So she got to meet countless people, she stayed there for hours just letting people look through her magnifying glass, but she said what most touched her of all the people on the whole journey was one of our friends, Mustafa Merter, some of you know him, who received us at the hotel that he had built in Bodrum. And Mustafa who was meeting this group of 15 people or so for the first time, as she put it, "I've never seen a human being who so openheartedly welcomed people that he didn't know and was willing to express love to them without any expectation of how they would return it." I thought that was a beautiful observation and a beautiful example that this went beyond *adab*. This was an *adab* of friendship. He treated us very generously; we stayed at a wonderful hotel that he and his wife had created. He himself is a psychiatrist and the founder of the Turkish Transpersonal Society. He went beyond the call of duty and arranged some wonderful meals and a boat trip for us. When it came time to go and we wanted to pay for these

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things which rightfully should have been on the bill, he said, “Oh, no, no, no. I can’t charge you for any of these things. You are the guests of Mevlana and we are just so honoured to have you here, you don’t know what an honour it is to have the guests of Mevlana here.” And so that is another expression of *adab* with so much more than formality and apart from paying or not paying, I think what most touched people’s hearts, was just the way he welcomed everyone with love and deep friendship.

I was also reflecting, after being with these wonderful people in Aspen, there were truly a lot of wonderful people, it was very uplifting and deeply touching to be with them, I also had reflected back to me some of the qualities of our own tradition which we love so much and what I realized there, is that the Sufi way, the Mevlevi way especially, our experience of the Divine happens so much in community and in relationship that while it’s a solitary and lonely journey, in certain respects, it’s also a beautiful journey that we, a true spiritual “we,” we take together. Mevlana said, “If you want to know love, become we.”

I realized that as I looked back on these years that I have been on this journey, how many of the experiences that really remain and give me strength and make me feel a deep gratitude are the experiences of love and friendship, both given and received, that remain with us and how those are at least as important as anything that I have experienced alone on my own through any of my own efforts and somehow the spiritual journey on our way is much, much bigger than any of our individual efforts and *adab* has really been the context, the framework in which much of what has happened, has happened.

Khadim: Our last conversation that we shared, when we all met [on the phone bridge], we were speaking of altered states or experiences of the unseen and I believe, I think that it was Patzia who was saying that she didn’t have those, a lot of those experiences, but what she did name was the experiences that she has had with other people, relational experiences. I think that that reinforces that the beauty of this tradition is that it doesn’t encourage us to spend all that much time in isolation, it can be good, but it is a living relational practice that brings us into contact with all of creation, all of its beauty, the human being and nature and animals and the elements, and so that it calls us out to live embodied, live embodied in the soul and in the spirit.

Kabir: Yes. And yet we never get lost . . . just in the outer,

Khadim: No.

Kabir: I mean sometimes we do get lost, but our hope is, and our practice is, that as much as we return to community and relationship there is always this movement between finding the still point and then venturing back out into relationship and community. So it’s a continual referring between one and the other, between the deep solitude and stillness, inner peace and then the beauty of *adab* in relationships that we experience with each other.

Elizabeth: I wrote a poem a few days after the election that sort of relates to this *adab*, may I share that?

Kabir: Yes.

Elizabeth:

Three days gone
Barack Obama won the race
now President-elect
first black man to win that post
coming out of the house this evening
two black men walking by
one maybe thirty
the other grey haired
face filled with signs of years lived
he said to me
we have been talking about how things have changed
I responded feeling chills in my body
yes and a good thing too
baraka blessing from the unseen world
coming into the seen
faces filled with joy in Grant Park
Jesse Jackson weeps
many are weeping
joy overwhelming
perhaps the time for healing
has come

Kabir: Thank you.

Elizabeth: I've just seen so much dissolving of some of the barriers between people, which seems to me to be an expression of this deeper level of *adab*.

Kabir: Yes.

Elizabeth: That has been coming out of things that have been happening in our society recently, which to me is a very major sign of hope that there may be change happening at a really deeper level.

Kabir: When we were in Aspen, I experienced something very similar to this and the way I noticed it was, I noticed day after day my increasing openness to everybody who was there with all of their differences, all of their particularities and the feeling of a kind of subtle love and acceptance spreading through the whole group where we were just accepting each other as we are, with all of our differences and that the oneness, the unity, the *tawhid* was—the *tawhid* of difference and multiplicity and love and acceptance of that diversity and differences; differences of traditions, of approaches, of personality and form, of race, etc. We long to experience that on as wide a scale as possible.

Elizabeth: Yes.

Kabir: Well, how about somebody we haven't heard from yet? I long to know who you all are out there, I think I know but. . . . One day we will have a form skype where we can see twenty or thirty faces in front of us . . . but then we have the inner skype . . . inner-net.

Connie: I live in a pretty gentle place where it seems that in my interactions with people, there is an underlying respect and I don't experience a cultural disconnect with that, but where I do run into a problem with *adab* is in my own feelings with inanimate objects, the tools like rakes and lawnmowers and things, that I tend to get really impatient with in an effort to get a job done, and it seems like the *adab* of relating to things is related to being present.

Camille: Yes.

Connie: And so that's where I have a challenge and an exercise in my life.

Kabir: Well, what a beautiful and objective observation. It's all useful, for all of us to hear.

Aziza: I have a new job working at an elementary school as the Student Management Specialist, which means I am doling out discipline when there have been fights or kids being insubordinate with teachers and often times I am interacting with children who I don't even know because I am new in the building, so I don't already have a relationship with them, and it's sometimes a struggle just to find a way to be in my heart, to be with the children who are having a difficult time taking any responsibility for their behaviour and having to see them lose a recess and go home, and part of what I realize is that they may not get it. It may be that my own knowing that I am in my heart and coming from my best self has to be enough for me.

Kabir: Yes. In response to both of you, Connie and Aziza, I'm remembering a story that comes from an Asian tradition, about a man who is crossing a river and suddenly in the current this other boat comes and smacks into his boat, and he gets really mad and starts cursing the other boat until he sees that there is nobody in it. I think that probably applies to tools and sometimes to adolescents as well.

I think there is a fundamental law here which is what we put out to the world, to existence, whether animate or inanimate, the way we relate—do we relate with force and violence or abruptness, or do we act consciously, appropriately and sensitively—that it doesn't matter whether, entirely doesn't matter, whether we are relating to animate or inanimate things, as the heart awakens, we realize that it's all animate, finally, there is nothing, no such thing as inanimate existence, everything has being to some extent, including the rake and the hoe and the adolescent, so what we are developing is a way of being. *Adab* is a way of being that applies to all things and Mevlevi tradition where we would kiss the cup and kiss the jacket you would put on with respect. The teaching is that, isn't it?

Camille: And very much that sense of interconnectedness and interwovenness within the One who is holding us all.

Kabir: Well, our hour is drawing to a close . . . any last comments?

Michael: This is Michael. I am just reflecting on the last couple of comments. What happens to me with *adab*, is that it's just like a mirror—that might be traffic. And I feel like a lot of people feel, that our society is so much about hurrying up. I get so wound up in being in a hurry and getting somewhere on time. At some points I can be very courteous in traffic and very forgiving because I do the same thing—I yell at other people at other times, and it just seems like it's such a hurry-up-thing and that, really in a way, gets in the way, and I just lose all my *adab* when I get in a hurry, and then I start yelling at other drivers. The state of my “hurry-up-ed-ness” just really impacts my *adab*, I guess.

Kabir: Yes. Even the Prophet Muhammad commented on that. “Haste is of the devil,” he said.

Camille: Or as Mevlana reflects, “Patience is the key to joy.”

Rahima: One quick comment and it takes me back to the election, we were in a coffee shop and there was a person there who made up this song about Sara Palin and it was very. . . I mean it was really funny, but it was very negative about her, and as I'm sitting here thinking and listening, I'm realizing that even those kinds of things really aren't expressing *adab* when we make fun of, or the negativity that we express towards, people who don't agree with us. Our attitudes towards people and how we talk about them is also an *adab* and affects us.

Camille: Yes.

Kabir: Absolutely.

Zakiuddin: I have a thought about that, too, that it is so easy to have *adab* when among people with whom we are trying to put our best foot forward, but among the people who deal with us every day it can sometimes be another matter, and that's where that idea of *ihsan* (doing the most beautiful) where one is at least aware that God is present can really be helpful.

Kabir: God is seeing us even when we are in traffic.

Michael: I Hope I can remember that.

Zakiuddin: Well, when we are saying something that's essentially beneath our better, beneath our higher self, we can kind of catch ourselves doing it, we'll often say these sorts of things among people that we are most comfortable with.

Kabir: Yes.

Zakiuddin: That's kind of a breach of *adab*, I think.

Kabir: Yes.

Khadim: I know that sometimes when I am in traffic, when I was working as Director of a Non-Profit and I would have to go to meeting after meeting after meeting and I would get sooo . . . just sort of get this irritation and then I would imagine well, what would be happening for me if the Prophet was sitting next to me, and that helped. I mean, imagining, and really in a sense cultivating, that relationship with the Prophet. So if I'm in the car, okay, I consider what if the Prophet is a passenger, how would I be, how am I? And so that's just something that has been helpful for me.

Kabir: That's really beautiful Khadim and I'm getting a picture now that I just want to share, that not only is the Prophet on one side but Imam Ali is on the other side.

Khadim: Ah.

Kabir: So, picture yourself standing between those two beloveds or any others you would want to include, male or female who are representative of that for you. Let's carry that with us, the final thought, it's really beautiful and it's true.

Khadim: Yes. Blessings to you, Kabir and Camille. Thank you so much.

Camille: Thank you. Thank you.

Kabir: Thank you all.

We will be having another phone call in January with Sipko and we'll try and get an email to you even sooner, next time.

Much love and affection.