



# Pointers to Presence

*A collection of aphorisms for the  
wayfarer*

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri



Publisher: Zahra Publications

ISBN (Printed Version): 978-1-919826-70-7

ISBN (E-Book Version): 978-1-919826-71-4

<http://www.zahrapublications.com>

First Published in March of 2013

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## **Book Description**

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri emphasizes inner transformation and the refinement of conduct, as preludes to the realization of the prevalence of Divine Grace. He considers that the purpose of life is to know and resonate with the eternal essence of the one and only Life giver – Allah.

*Pointers to Presence* are for the heart. This collection of aphorisms provides insights into consciousness and is pointers to spiritual awakening.

## **About Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri**

Acknowledged as a master of self-knowledge and a spiritual philosopher, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri's role as a teacher grew naturally out of his own quest for self-fulfillment.

He travelled extensively on a spiritual quest which led to his eventual rediscovery of the pure and original Islamic heritage of his birth, and the discovery of the truth that reconciles the past with the present, the East with the West, the worldly with the spiritual – a link between the ancient wisdom teachings and our present time.

A descendant of five generations of well-known and revered spiritual leaders, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri has taught students throughout the world for over 30 years.

He is a gifted exponent of how the self relates to the soul, humankind's link with the Divine, and how consciousness can be groomed to reflect our higher nature.

The unifying scope of his perspective emphasizes practical, actionable knowledge that leads to self-transformation, and provides a natural bridge between seemingly different Eastern and Western approaches to spirituality, as well as offering a common ground of higher knowledge for various religions, sects and secular outlooks.

He is a prolific author of more than thirty books relating to the universal principles of Islam, the Qur'an, and its core purpose of enlightenment.

## **Introduction**

*Pointers to Presence* is an elixir for hearts seeking truth. This collection of aphorisms by Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri provides insights and openings into higher consciousness and spirituality.

This collection attempts to answer the questions posed by a curious person or serious seeker regarding the meaning of life. It addresses a wide range of issues including self-conduct, governance, leadership, religion and spirituality, i.e. a condensed ‘map’ for living lucidly in the present.

The author takes the liberty in the text to coin some terms that may help to convey subtle issues in life.

## SECTION 1: SELF-EVOLVEMENT & CONDUCT

What is good for you? Sometimes you think you know but often are uncertain. This is because you don't know who you really are!



Most human struggles are about attaining the state of being in paradise – where no needs exist and where states are ever content and happy.



What does it mean to be you? The ego-self is so elusive and tricky that it can only be known by the light of your perfect soul.



When a traveler is lost, he is presented with an opportunity to discover where, why and who it is that is lost.



The illusion of the 'self' or the 'ego' is a necessary start to realizing its 'phantom' reality – a shadow, which hides the inner light.



The self is a reflection of the soul upon the developing person and contains aspects of the past and present, illumined by the soul.



The self always creates its own illusions of a separate existence, beyond which lies perfect transcendence.



The true self is the eternal soul, and not what we are deluded by.



When self-concern becomes extreme, it brings about its own self-destruction.



A crisis of identity could be the unlocking of destiny's door to Reality. Welcome the crisis as a new dawn, be patient, and witness all.





The self is a companion shadow of the soul but desires independence.



The soul is never in doubt: it knows its own perfect nature.



Real self-growth means soul-connection and liberation from the animal self.



The desire to appear 'good' is a subconscious attempt not to disgrace the soul's perfection.



Spiritual awakening and clear vision of Reality happens when the fog of the lower self is lifted.



The hidden soul shines when the self is groomed and disciplined.



Rebellion relates to the self, expressing its illusion of individuality and special independent identity.



Guilt is the discrepancy between what had been done and what could have been done better.



The self always tries to assert its own authority in whatever way is possible, and that includes acting irrationally and confusedly.



The desire to be different and special is an expression of dissatisfaction with one's inner present state.



Desires and attachments increase limited, basic conditioned awareness and reduce higher consciousness.



Blame and denial are natural defenses of the ego in perpetuating its shadowy reality.



Desires are expressions of what is perceived as agreeable or required for contentment and a good life.



Attachment is a feeling that enhances the perception of well-beingness or happiness.



Personality and character relate to intentions and actions, as well as genetic origin and the environment.



‘Good’ character relates generally to what brings about goodness and harmony. The reverse is what causes disturbance and conflict.



Calling a person ‘good’ or ‘bad’ simply relates to the person’s intentions and actions, which can change.



Aggression, fear and sorrow will continue as long as we remain concerned for survival and fear death.



Hatred, fear and animosity toward a perceived enemy mask any goodness that may emanate indirectly from them.



The soul's light is veiled behind layers of fear, anger, ambition, desires and other shadows of the ego.



Shyness is a result of uncertainty that faces one in a particular situation. Confidence is what removes it.



The self will be depressed when ignored, excluded or reprimanded. The self always fears the loss of its 'deluded' identity.



A sound mind is necessary for discernment, correct judgment and wisdom. It is the pure heart that allows the light of the soul to lead us to the inner gardens of joy.



Mind and intellect are great worldly assets but without the light of the soul they can only lead to misery and disappointment.



The mind's nature is not stillness as it continuously seeks to connect and relate the inner with the outer world.



The self fears and resists mindlessness; like every creation, it is programmed to assert its identity.



The lower self is naturally connected to earthly issues or subjects. The story is complete when the self and the soul are in unison.



The human mind needs training, discipline and focus to become an evolved mind. This leads to higher intellect, creativity and inspiration.



Every person has a mind and heart. The mind deals with rationality and reason, the heart with passion and spiritual awakening. One is for differentiation and the other is for unification.



Short term pleasures are enticements for real joy, which relates to higher consciousness.



There is constancy in our care for our personal condition, as well as to the group to which we belong. The outer objective may change in form and appearance but the ultimate destination is ever constant and is towards truth and the Supreme Consciousness or God.



What we understand of consciousness is what is limited or conditioned, such as pain or pleasure. Pure consciousness can only be felt in deep meditation, where no mental activity or self-awareness exists.

## **SECTION 2: CYCLES OF LIFE & DEATH**

The entire universe ebbs and flows according to rhythms and frequencies, which appear as cycles and follow special patterns. As human beings we are always challenged by the meaning of life and nature of death. We always look for new stimulation and get bored with whatever is familiar. In truth we are looking for an ever present mystery, our soul, or spirit or God!

The following section includes aphorisms covering these various states and transitions of life.

Your mood may change any moment! Yet your soul is ever constant and reliable, if only you were to lose yourself in it!



Disappointments and mistakes will teach us to be more focused towards appropriate and feasible appointments.



Earthly life is like a net we weave around ourselves. Whatever more we do entraps us further.



Depression occurs when you are not being joyful or content. It means you need to re-calibrate your attitude, emotions and inner presence.



Nostalgia and melancholy are the mists and smoke that veil us from witnessing a joyful state. This is wrongfully perceived as being lost.





Despair arises when depression is accompanied by loss of hope for a better outcome. The ego fears its death!



The self struggles for recognition, status and honor, all of which it can never fully attain. The ego is in constant turmoil, until it loses its identity completely.



Pride is an expression of the desire to be given special status or position.



It is the ego that is the cause of most suffering, whereas the soul or spirit exudes wondrous spiritual offerings.



To exaggerate is an attempt to highlight the importance of an issue.



No one wants to miss out on goodness and everyone tries to avoid misery.



Whatever is new appears special until familiarity makes it ordinary.



The desire for death indicates the darkness of the self and deprivation of the light of the soul.



The flow of time creates the idea of achievement, attainment, a sense of purpose and direction in life.



The flow of life enables us to understand, change and evolve in consciousness.



Pure Consciousness is utterly free from all limitations, whereas its off spring – limited or conditioned consciousness – is defined by birth and death.



The real nature of the moment is timelessness and pure consciousness.



Life and death represent a temporary connection between what has its origin before time – the soul – and what belongs to time – the self.



A personal life presents us with a sample of eternal and infinite life – the soul within the heart.



The desire to prolong life is due to the need to experience the eternal presence of life itself.



Life is a love affair; and death, therefore, appears as a tragedy, until one realizes how eternal this affair really is!



Death is nature's loyalty to the original Unity. The material body returns to its mother earth and the soul returns to the infinite ocean of spiritual lights.



Whilst alive our behavior evolves from a most basic animal level towards higher consciousness. After death our soul carries traces of the lower self, in its ongoing journey.



Death lifts the veil upon eternity.



When personal life has led to the realization of the eternal and perfect nature of the soul, then no fear or sorrow can tarnish life's joys.



At the beginning and at the end of an event time seems to move faster. At the beginning of creation events moved at great speed. The same is expected at the end.



The hereafter is already here and now, for eternity is not subject to place and time.



The universe and all of creation occurs within the framework of space and time. It is the scales of quantity and quality that change.



The mystery of life is neither solvable nor teachable. It is only livable after giving into it – a move from ‘becoming’ to ‘being’.



Whatever is created is rushing towards its destiny, where it emerged from in the first place.



The idea that life is worth living will help in creating the belief that it is worth living. Life itself does not need any affirmation.



Existence is a spiritual trap. The only way out of it is by progressing in awareness from form to meaning, then to essence and Oneness.



Lasting happiness is a natural outcome of being with the constant bliss of Supreme Consciousness.



Higher consciousness is behind every level of conditioned consciousness; all of which aspire towards higher consciousness.



Once the seeker is established in higher consciousness, there is no going back. He then needs to let go of all personal choices or possibilities.



The sun that appears to set on one horizon is rising upon another. Such is the cycle of birth and death.



When you are consumed by your principle duty in life, your rewards are given to you unconditionally.



Fear of death is due to attachments to earthly desires or ignorance of the immortal soul.



Reason, skepticism and rationality are all myths, when seen through the lens of Reality.



For many people the past is a burden that causes the future to become confused and unwelcome.



Life may be considered short, yet it starts from 'no time' and returns to infinity again.



It is a great fortune to be joyful in the twilight years without fear of death. This happens as a result of living a life of good intentions, actions and being blessed by grace.



Life's journey begins in wonder and surprise. It ends with witnessing realities and Truth. In between, we are relentlessly challenged and oscillate between fear and hope.

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*Translated By: Asadullah ad-Dhaakir Yate*

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*Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri*

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