

The Sufi Experience with Adnan Sarhan

by *Marianne Damhuis*

On the 26th of this month Sufi master and drummer Adnan Sarhan will be including Bolinas as part of his itinerary. This is a great opportunity to experience his work which is truly transformational.

I first met Adnan in New York 11 years ago and his work totally changed all aspects of my life. I remember the day I met him. I woke up at dawn (very unusual for me) — with this strong feeling that something very profound was about to happen.

I got up and went to the living room and noticed a cassette that someone had given to me a while ago and that I had not yet listened to. It was Middle Eastern music — something that I was quite unfamiliar with. I will never forget it. It was exquisitely beautiful and haunting. It touched me in a very far away place deep inside my soul. The person who had given it to me was a professor of music and totally unconnected to Adnan.

That night I went to the workshop. I had no idea what to expect — someone that I had met casually invited me and I was curious — I knew absolutely nothing about spiritual work and had never heard of Sufism.

I walked into this Manhattan

loft and . . . the exact same music that I had played that morning was playing!!! The energy was soft and warm and strong yet exotic and exciting at the same time — it was like nothing I had ever experienced before and I had this powerful feeling that I had come home. It is hard to describe except to say that I felt this huge YES.

I had some amazing experiences during the workshop . . . I learned a totally new language and am still in the process of learning and discovering it . . . it is endless and very exciting.

Adnan has a huge list of credentials which I don't have the space to go into here, but he regularly drums at St James' Church in London, has drummed at the Alhambra Palace in Spain and was invited by the United Nations to open the Earth Summit in Brazil with a drum presentation.

He was born in Baghdad, Iraq; is a member of five Sufi Orders and is the Founder and Director of the Sufi Foundation of America in New Mexico where he holds an intensive retreat every summer. The rest of the year he travels the world giving drum concerts and workshops.

This is what Adnan has to say about his work:

“My work is pure play. It is the play of the spirit using the

body in action and motion: engaging the movement of the body, and being sensitive to the space; blending with the vibration of the space and gathering hidden cosmic intelligence.

“When the body is activated in a certain way, it is possible through pure play to acquire spirit that is connected to the inner body. Through the activation of the strength and the power of that inner body, which is closer to the soul, it is possible to receive spirit through the connection of the breath to the reservoir of intelligence and spirit that exists abundantly in the expanse of the universe.

“When a person becomes ready for that connection, that intelligence and spirit comes to them in abundance and enriches them. This leads to great change.”

I feel really fortunate that he is going to be in Bolinas and can't wait to tune into the energy, to feel the exquisite sensation of my body moving in space, to have my heart opened to the sound of the drum, to experience each delicious moment expanding and unfolding into the next, and to continue on this exciting and beautiful journey wherever it takes me.

Marianne Damhuis

STUDENTS TELL OF THEIR EVOLUTION IN ADNAN'S WORKSHOPS

The work is the essential fountain of youth experience that ever existed. Adnan, you humbly offer us the privilege and the very rare opportunity to witness, experience and learn about the Glorious Truth. A miracle performing miracles.

Your gift, Adnan is in bringing what is an essentially impersonal universe, to a more personal place of possibility. You make the sweet eminence of reality tangible.

You have been wonderfully consistent. I draw strength from you continuous commitment to the truth. It is admirable.

The workshop today was a microcosm of universal perfection. Not a hitch, a glitch nor a second out of time. We soaked up the nourishing waters of Allah, the rejuvenating spirit of all life, the ultimate essence of goodness. With increasing thankfulness and gratitude, we can just be, with you, in the shared space under one sky.

Such an inspiring session of Koranic chanting. None of us will ever be the same again. The entire atmosphere is swimming in divine love.

I desire more work, more workshops, more deep connections to what is real, majestic and loving. You are our guide to heavenly bliss on earth. Your teachings are of the highest value and I enjoy your sense of humor just as much.

So this Sufi path is open and right for change, for a total rebirth. To develop and obtain more subtle states of divine union with Allah. This can be done progressively, with style, vivid color, adventure, harmony, healthy risks. lots and lots of humor, a lightness of being, with serenity and bliss, glory and absolute, absolute love. This is the way, yes? To union, surrender with you always, always. I want this.

There exists so many deeper, richer ways for us to experience oneness with Allah. I know this for sure because you have been the one to show us many, many times. Am I grateful? You will never believe how much.

Whoever knew these kinds of states, so exalted and sublime, were ever possible??? Nowhere else in the entire universe does this happen without you and it is always happening. There is the connection of the sweetest union in the workshops and then there are those extremely precious moments, rare and priceless, the highest, highest treasures when you take us with you soaring into the sky like a bird with the birds and the kaleidoscope of rainbow colors across the white clouds, the expansion, the firmament, the sun and the moon all moving together, all one until I am saturated, oblivious to anything except the drowning in pure love, drowning in pure love.

I want to thank you for helping me so much with the chanting. While it still is a great challenge to keep the focus, I am much more confident. I had given it up entirely as impossible. Because of you I know all things are possible and the magic of the universe is tangible whenever you are around.

— Stephanie Forest, Great Barrington, Massachusetts

Awareness coming and going in waves. Waves of bliss, harmony, joy... getting closer to the divine infinite Presence.

Sharing, dancing my way to my own true self.

Challenging moments melting into the clarity of Spirit.

This was summer 2000 at Sufi Camp.

— Nuria Vidal, Barcelona, Spain

I attended your brief workshop at Safety Harbor, Florida. By imitating your erect posture, hands on my knees, eyes closed (and perhaps too by just being there with you) I found that I could empty my mind of thought and feel a calmness with which I was hitherto unfamiliar. Although I have previously attempted meditation by ceaselessly repeating a mantra, such meditation has never before been of such depth and tranquility as I achieved at your workshop. I cannot say that I have the slightest idea quite how this came about, and, in fact I do not care. But I should like to do it again.

— Alvin S. Hyde, M.D., Ph.D., Psychologist, Hyde Associates, Inc., Key Biscayne, Florida