

ALLAME TABATABA'I UNIVERSITY
ADVANCED TRANSLATIONS (1) COURSE
INSTRUCTOR: DR. SEDIGHI

[Persian Life Therapy]

[An English Translation to the Film Script]

Translated by Bamshad Lotfabadi
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This is the text of a movie script used for production of an educational film by Dr. Hossein Lotfabadi in Winter 2009. The main work is available online by going to the author's website at www.lotfabadi.net. It focuses on an approach that can play an important role in the Iranians' life improvement and enhancement. This work also includes translations of a poem by Hafez and a sonnet by Khayyam. These two translations are included with their relative translation copyright information.

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Tape 1

Preface:

This program, named, “Persian Life Therapy” is based on the “Philosophy of Scientific and Eternal Wisdom” with the help of Persian Poetry and Literature. It is presented in four sections and in seven films each with a duration of ten minutes. It has some footage of Ferdowsi's Tomb, Khayyam's Garden, and Shiraz Hafezieh¹ accompanied with traditional Iranian music and poetry-reading. The therapy consists of a new approach and method toward providing a healing experience and therapy in the Iranians' psychological life.

The “Philosophy of Scientific and Eternal Wisdom” and the theory on the “Persian Life Therapy” is an approach to helping Iranians in their thoughts, feelings, and behavior which puts humanistic, wisdom-based, and reality-directed attitude at the guiding center of dynamic knowledge on psychology which is accompanied by Persian history, culture, music, poetry, literature, and beautiful natural scenery.

Apart from persons' natural and biological differences, which include humanistic similarities and individual differences, it is mainly the psychological specifications and impacts by the family environment, schools, media, social environment and the structure and content of the education system in general and the persons' behavioristic models which establish the final word on the shaping of the persons' identity and personality, mental plans, and cognitive maps and models for personal behaviors. All these elements should be considered for success in the person's psychotherapy and their healing experiences.

Thus, the “Persian Life Therapy” approach is based on the various natural, historical, social, cultural, anthropological, and aesthetic aspects of betterment of the development process. Since the time of this program is limited, we refer only to one item which is part of the aesthetic and artistic and cultural dimension of the therapy, meaning Persian poetry and literature. We shall also consider its stance in the psychological healing experience of the Iranians.

We can say, regarding the artistic and aesthetic aspects of life and the stance of poetry and literature, that from the beginning of human civilization, these arts have mostly been at the service of healing the wounds of groups and nations.

Iranians have also used arts, songs, poetry, and literature to heal their wounds. This is a thousands-of-years-long antidote for their thoughts and emotions.

It is a great mystery to know why there is so much insufficiency and lack of development and use of arts and literature for the healing, and therapy of life in a systematic and research-theory based

1 Hafez's resting place in Shiraz, also called “Hafezieh” or Tomb of Hafez

structure.

[Continuation of the preface through help of picture of “The Art-Therapy Congress”];

My short speech is provided in four sections, within this audio/video music/poetry format:

Lecture 1:

The essential need for a new approach to psychology and psycho-therapy of the Iranians

Lecture 2:

The meaning of “The Philosophy of Scientific and Eternal Wisdom” and the approach to the “Persian Life Therapy”.

Lecture 3:

The conceptual meaning, solutions, and operational techniques of the approach to the “Persian Life Therapy”

Lecture 4:

Flourishing of the human existence qualities by support of the objective science, and correct thinking and turning to nature, culture, art, and literature.

Poetry and Music:

Film 2:

Speech One: The essential need for a new approach to psychology and psycho-therapy of the Iranians:

1. The first item I'd like to point at is that, the cultural & social & psychological status of the past several decades in our country has been such that a huge and unexpected amount of anxiety, depression, aggressiveness, wrongdoing, incorrect thinking, paranoia, and **fatigue**, psychopath, untruth, moral and social corruption have spread in the nation.

For example, we can refer to the Judiciary System, where there is over ten million current files open, in each of which, there are several people involved. But really, how many adults live in our country anyway? Isn't this self-explanatory?

2. Secondly, the national researches done about people's mental health level show that: about 25 percent of people experience serious psycho-cognitive disorders and the rest of people also, have degrees of minor or medium psychological difficulties.
3. The third issue, is that the normal expectation would be for the formal and informal education systems and cultural and scientific organizations to do something systematic to work with this essential matter; but there is no serious effort done in these fields and it seems that the problems in psycho-cognitive & social & cultural disorders fields are somehow pre-arranged and are being seriously developed.
4. Fourth, is that as far as it concerns the psychiatric and psychological treatments, there is no

quantity and quality observed in the Iranian counseling.

For example the total number of psychiatry and psychology and counseling therapists in Iran currently stands at about 4000 persons. If each of these therapists work 40 hours a week for 40 weeks annually and spend 20 one-hour sessions with their clients, each therapist can visit only 80. Hence, the therapists can cover a 2-percent total of the clients that need help. The problems remain still with the remaining twenty-three percent of patients. On top of this, the individuals who have light mental matters will be completely deprived of organized cognitive & social & cultural therapy. These issues are on the rise during the recent years.

5. The fifth matter and the most important of all, is that the mental attitude and method of approach in our country do not help to resolve the issues most people have. Patients have difficulty in their identity and character, mental patterns and organization of thoughts, and behavior models. Also most of the psychologists and counselors, focus on either one or a few approaches in therapy and show no commitment to re-invention and innovation in their practice. In other words we are in serious need of a suitable approach for the “Persian life therapy”.

Poetry & Music:

Considering what went on in the first section of this program,

We are in need of more practical therapy approaches. This need is more essential for the majority of Iranian people who have light or medium-level psycho-cognitive, social, and cultural needs. We are in serious need of a suitable approach for the “Persian life therapy”.

Considering this situation, we confront two major questions.

The first is to know how the Iranians can heal their psycho-cognitive & social & mental & cultural wounds? And the second is to see how the insufficiencies in treatment approaches can be fixed and to find out which innovative approach can be applied.

I should say that my over-forty years of assessment and interactions in the field of psychology and treatment of the Iranians suggests that we need new approaches in at least three areas to answer the above questions:

1. Discovery of correct theoretical foundations for psychological treatments;
2. Re-identification of Iranians disorders & mental difficulties and their categorization;
3. Invention of suitable therapeutic methods and approaches to match the disorders and mental difficulties.

The “Persian Life Therapy – PLT” is based on the “Philosophy of Scientific and Eternal Wisdom” and seeks assistance from Iran's nature, history, civilization, mentalities, culture, art, poetry, and literature to answer these very three questions.

Allow us to listen to a bit of festive music and poetry and then focus more on the explanation of the “Persian Life Therapy” approach:

Part Two

Film Three

I pointed at the necessity of a new approach in psychology and treatment of the Iranians. I should point out here that there has been over 250 psycho-therapy approaches since the first half of the previous century up till now, especially from the time of shaping of psychology and development of personality theories..

From among these, there is more emphasis on psycho-analysis approaches, Cognitive approaches, Behavioristic approaches, and Systemic Family approaches, and on the other hand, the therapeutic approaches by Adler and Gestalt are in least attention.

All of these approaches are creations of the West. Not only has there been no therapeutic approach created in Iran, but also no approach has been adjusted for the treatment of the Iranians.

The other important matter is that even the existing treatment theories by the Iranian and Non-Iranian psychologists for the categorization of mental illnesses are different from each other. Specifically, it is not easy to include the patients belonging to Eastern cultures in psychiatric diagnoses of DSM-IV categorizations.

The other fact is that when it comes to considering therapeutic theories, especially for patients who do not belong to Western or American cultures, there is a great deal of bias and deficiency and there is no unique theory to cover all psycho-cognitive and social and cultural existences of a person.

It is with this understanding that the “Philosophy of Scientific and Eternal Wisdom” and the theory of “Persian Life Therapy” is based on three main concepts:

1. Objective science in the fields of psychology and sociology and culture,
2. Wisdom and correct method of thinking by the support of logical, critical, and creative thinking, and
3. Taking support from human's eternal existence and truth and righteousness, and freedom, beauty, freedom, and sympathy, which all have roots in the ancient Iranian civilization.

It is important to now that stating the complexities and all aspects of this theory require tens of such programs and there is not enough time here to even summarize all aspects of the “Persian Life Therapy”. However, from among all naturalistic, historical, social, cultural, anthropological and aesthetic aspects, we will only concentrate on this approaches support by Persian poetry and literature.

There is no doubt that all Iranian great wise-men and poets of the like have a role in the treatment and healing of thought and psychological and behavioral character of the Iranians through time. However, of all these, we can refer to several matchless graduates. From among these, Hakim¹ Ferdowsi, Khayyam of Neyshabour, Hafez of Shiraz, and Sa'di are of first rank. We can refer to other great men like Nezaami and Khaaghaani. And if we were to mention other wise men we could talk of Attaar of Neyshabour and Jalaladdin-Balkhi, all of which are among the great healers of the Iranians' thought and feelings and behavior. Here in this program, we will first mention God Almighty through the epic poet, Hakim Ferdowsi, and then will bring fourteen of the quatrains by Khayyam and then two sonnets

1 Hakim in Persian means “Wise Man”.

by Hafez.

Poetry and Music:

Film Four

From amongst the great men of Iranian poetry and literature we know that

The epic of Hakim Ferdowsi is our national identity and our certificate.

The poetical works by Hafiz and Khayyam are also in most Iranian homes and are read. And

Khayyam's songs are translated to many languages and hundreds of its English translation are published. After Bible, it is the only classic book that has been translated so many times to English. Let's ask ourselves what makes the quatrains by Khayyam so popular among the people of the world, and how much do we Iranians really know him? And why are we not aware, and what is it that makes our awareness necessary.

The main characteristic of authentic Iranian thought in these works is their humanistic attitude in all of their songs which seeks to heal people's thought, feeling and behavior.

For example, Let's look at only one of the quatrains by Hakim Khayyam of Neyshabour to see what true and healing attitude he has toward the importance of human & the treatment of the soul and thought:

**Hear from the spirit-world this mystery:
Creation is summed up, O man, in thee;
Angel and demon, man and beast art thou,
Yea, thou art all thou dost appear to be! ¹**

The thoughts given by Khayyam's humanistic quatrains, created in the era of tyranny & lie & darkness & superstitious, are still greatly useful for our similar problems today.

Khayyam created the songs in the era of great ignorance, superstitious, and darkness of the deadly beliefs which were wrapped in the blanket of religion beliefs and showed people the path to joy & happiness & taking true advantage of life.

Considering the understandings at that era and by avoiding the fallacy of history and refraining from the fallacy of "identifying the requirements of past with present" we can still consider his work the essential tool for treating ignorance, superstitious, depression, neurosis, learned helplessness.

Let's hear more of Khayyam's work, the light of the dark era, whose life in the eleventh century in Neyshabour of Khoraasaan province shone like a sun into time:

Film Five Section Three

¹ From: Charles F. Horne, ed., *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East*, (New York: Parke, Austin, & Lipscomb, 1917), Vol. VIII: *Medieval Persia*, pp. 17-100 (Translated by E. H. Whinfield).

Speech Three, conceptual models, solutions, practical techniques for the approach the “Persian Life Therapy”

During the previous speeches we outline the necessity for a new attitude toward Iranians' disorders and psychological problems and we had a quick look at the approach to Persian Life Therapy based on the philosophy of Scientific and Eternal Wisdom.

This section is regarding the conceptual models and solutions and practical techniques of the Persian Life Therapy approach. It is important first to mention that the fundamental problems in the Iranians' psycho-cognitive life is mainly due to how they think, their identity, and the current life style.

Iranians' environmental and psycho-cognitive life from the past up to now is active in their mind, memory, feelings, and emotions as well as their relations with others in a conscious and semi-conscious, and their non-conscious body in addition to the previous social and cultural tyranny and fear and superstitious. These have had a decisive role, not only in the Iranians non-conscious historical and social life but also in their method of thinking and identity and life-style and behavior.

We are confronted with paradoxical problems of content and quality of peoples' super-ego (which basically takes shape in the family, school, media, and general cultural environment within children, adolescents and youth) with their ego, nature, and humanistic needs.

On the other hand, life pressures and difficulties, along with serious friction between id and superego lead people to one or more mental disorders and un-healthy defense mechanisms. The background element for such inferiority and learned helplessness and instability by creating tired and unstable weak ego is the feeling of insecurity, deficiency and disgrace and inferiority and loneliness which occurs in childhood for most people. Passive patient and marginality in grasping the responsibilities of social and cultural demands and surrendering to baseness, which open up the field for tyranny and charlatanism are the consequences of such ill-structured defense mechanisms.

The fact is that the structure of the persons' character and the various layers and parts of cognition, emotional, behavioral, social, and cultural of this building should be based on human's nature, while in contrast, the existing deviations and insufficiencies are too much and make the need for treatment undeniable.

The “Persian Life Therapy” approach focuses on the design, reinvention and renovation of the cognitive and identity and character and layers and sections and levels of this building.

In the order mentioned:

The “Persian Life Therapy” can be understood and used in four layers:

- 1- Layer One, is its Philosophy of Scientific and Eternal Wisdom
- 2- Layer Two, is the conceptual model of this approach
- 3- Layer Three, are the solutions of this conceptual model
- 4- Layer Four, consists of the practical techniques of this model.

In the practical level of the treatment, its place being the therapy room, review & assessment & correct understanding & design of a suitable therapy plan are the most important. This alone is a complex task

based on the research methodology in psychology.

Poet and Music:

Allow us to say that the deficiencies and errors begin from the very first stage in the level of review and analysis and correct understanding. It is in this stage that review of approaches and mental functions should begin. Therefore the practical levels of therapy include the following four stages:

First – Review, assessment, diagnosis, and design of the therapy program

Second – Showing the clients problem to him step by step and establishment of the mental schema and his structures and cognitive maps and behavior models and finally the specifications of his character and identity

Third – Positioning next to the client and supporting him in order for him to renovate emotionally in order to conquer further horizons from what is currently in his identity and character. It is necessary for him to let go of insecurity and feeling of shame and inability to do things.

Fourth – Involvement of the therapist and the client in discovery of the relationship between the client's problems and the incapable and destructive parts of the client's identity and character in order to change the behavioral models and to make access to brighter horizons possible and thus making the client strong and to help him enhance his behavior.

The therapeutic operation should be constant and dynamic and be able to shed light over all matters and cognitive & emotional & behavior layers of the psycho-cognitive system.

Additional to what is mentioned, three therapeutic solutions should be in the background for technical efforts for the betterment and therapy of the client and his guidance:

First, are the ontological solutions and scientific objectivities in various aspects of life

Second, logical & critical & creative & solution-providing strategies in the psycho-cognitive and social and cultural life, and

Third, eternal/transcendental and humanistic strategies in an all-rounded approach toward life.

It is in this operational level of treatment based upon the three-facet approach, specially in the emotional renovation and taking advantage of the third strategy that it becomes possible to heal the psychological wounds by taking support from nature, culture, art, and literature.

Allows us to listen to a short piece of music and to ponder on a few tunes regarding life and happiness and to see how we can take charge of our soul to reach prosperity , also through sonnet 486 by Great Hafiz.

Poetry and Music:

Film Seven

Section 4

The Final Word: Flourishing the qualitative aspects of human existence through objective science and correct thinking, and turning to nature and culture and art and literature.

In this final section of the program, I'd like to mention that it is not possible to flourish our existence potentials and qualities by only depending on objective science and correct thinking; but also it is important to turn to eternal/transcendental and humanistic worlds and to also take support from nature, culture, art, and literature for this purpose as well.

Thus, the Persian Life Therapy approach based on the philosophy of Scientific and Eternal wisdom stresses utilization of poetry and literature.

Let us hear poem 142 by Khajeh-Hafiz of Shiraz who has thoroughly understood the school of thought by Ferdowsi and Khayyam and has expanded it, the works of who have a Khayyam-type essence and an Aryan eternal/transcendental thought.

I provided this poem in the National Art-Therapy Congress on October 10th, 2009, which will be now read:

Hafez Poem 142:¹

**For years my heart was in search of the Grail
What was inside me, it searched for, on the trail
That pearl that transcends time and place
Sought of divers whom oceans sail
My quest to the Magi my path trace
One glance solved the riddles that I Braille
Found him wine in hand and happy face
In the mirror of his cup would watch a hundred detail
I asked, "when did God give you this Holy Grail?"
Said, "on the day He hammered the world's first nail!"
Even the unbeliever had the support of God
Though he could not see, God's name would always hail.
All the tricks of the mind would make God seem like fraud
Yet the Golden Calf beside Moses' rod would just pale.
And the one put on the cross by his race
His crime, secrets of God would unveil
Anyone who is touched by God's grace
Can do what Christ did, without fail.
And what of this curly lock that's my jail**

¹ © Shahriar Shahriari - Los Angeles, Ca - April 1, 1999

Said this is for Hafiz to tell his tale.

In this eternal/transcendental sonnet, several points are of interest:

- 1- The ever-searching nature of human is after realizing eternity and reaching prosperity
- 2- Everything is us, ourselves, the Jaam-e-Jam (Jamshid's cup) and the foundation of life secrets.
- 3- The secrets of life are hidden in us from the beginning of time and it is our searching nature which should be flourished in order to reach prosperity.
- 4- Instead of going to those who claim they are heavenly, we, ourselves should seek for realizing our jewel of existence in ourselves in order to understand the world.
- 5- The Aryan Wisdom and the guidance of the old-wise-man who holds the glass of happiness in his hand invite us to prosperity and ask us to avoid an-ever-deepening feeling of sadness and holding funerals in life in order to answer the complex question.
- 6- It is by drinking the glass of happiness and observing the life-giving wisdom and truth, and beauty that we can understand the secret of life.

Poem and Music