

ZIRAAT NEWSLETTER

North America & Oceania

Dec 2023 / Jan 2024

ANNOUNCEMENTS - 2024

Ziraat Online Series

Nature Spirits and Communicating
Intuitively with Nature
2nd Friday of month (Feb – May)

Emerald Earth Retreats

Kainat Norton & Muinuddin Smith
23-24 March – Rising Tide, Florida
12-14 April – The Abode, New York

Earth Day -Gaia Sings– Sat 20 April

Earth Responders

Apr 3 - May 15 - Kinship Activity

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Photo: Pexels -photo-302743

*There is no greater scripture than nature,
for nature is life itself.*

~ Hazrat Inayat Khan (Bowl of Saki, October 5)

Hazrat Inayat Khan - Cupid and Psyche May 5th 1921 -

*There is so much to observe, so much to assimilate, and so much
to give if one can only understand the language of nature.
There is a verse by the great Seer of Persia, who says,*

*'Every leaf of a tree becomes a page of the Holy Book
before the soul that can read.'*

*In the path of wisdom, it is a constant reading, a constant
learning, and every experience whether happy or unhappy, and
in every impression, whether it brings comfort or discomfort, if
we will only observe what each one teaches, then the whole of
life becomes a vision that is man's constant guide.*

[Nekbakht Foundation](#) Archives Unpublished Papers

Ibn al-Farid - Water, Air, Fire, Earth

صفاً ولا ماء ولصب ولا هوى
ونور ولا نار وروح ولا جسم

Purity but not water, Subtlety but not air
Light but not fire, Spirit but not body.

Source:

<https://archive.blogs.harvard.edu/sulaymanibnqiddees/2015/07/15/water-air-fire-earth/>

HOMAGE TO FIRE

O, All-Consuming Fire, We whole-heartedly offer our homage to thee.

Ziraat Additional Optional Vows – (Fire) [Reception of Workers \(Initiation\)](#)

Will you honor and protect the Fire with gratitude,
allowing Fire to burn away that which you no longer need,
and allowing Fire to fill you with light and warmth,
and motivate your endeavors in the world?

From Zoroastrian Scriptures

On the nature of fire: it says that fire is produced of five kinds, namely:

the fire which shoots up before the lord;
the fire which is in the bodies of men and animals;
the fire which is in plants;
the fire which is in a cloud,
the fire which they keep in use in the world.



Of those five fires, one consumes both water and food, as that which is in the bodies of men; one consumes water and consumes no food, as that which is in plants, which live and grow through water; one consumes food and consumes no water, as that which they keep in use in the world; one consumes no water and no food, as the fire *Vazisht*.

Flames - Sri Chinmoy (Source: <https://www.poetseers.org/sri-chinmoy/library/flames/>)

What is important --- In Infinity?	Smiling flames
What is important --- In Eternity?	Climbing flames
What is important --- In Immortality?	Glowing flames

Burning, Burning - Pir Zia Inayat Khan (Source: Dynamics of Healing –Vol 3 Heart of the Healer, p 46)

Rumi said, "I want burning, burning! Reconcile yourself to burning!" All that is incongruous to your ideal, all that is superfluous, let it burn. Love is a fire that burns away the lover, leaving only the beloved. Love is the longing that burns the substance of life and radiates the light of the soul. Let your ego be the fuel. As Pir-o-Murshid said, "When anyone throws down my heart, it does not break, but it bursts and the flame that rises up from it becomes the torch on my life's path."

Hazrat Inayat Khan

Bowl of Saki, June 29 - Commentary:

The worlds are held together by the heat of the sun; each of us are atoms held in position by that eternal Sun we call God. Within us is the same central power we call the light, or the love of God; by it we hold together the human beings within our sphere, or, lacking it, we let them fall.

Vol VIIIa: Sufi Teachings– Section II: Chapter 13 Manifestation and Perfection

A close study of the formation of the sun and of its influence on everything in life will help us to understand the divine Spirit. Heat, gas-light, electric light, the coal fire, the wood fire, the candle, the flame of the oil-lamp, all these different manifestations of light have their source in the sun; it is the sun which is showing itself in all these different forms, although we generally consider the sun to be separate from all other aspects of light. In the same way the supreme Spirit is manifested in all forms, in all things and beings, in the seen and unseen worlds; and yet it stands remote, as the sun stands remote from all other forms of light. The Qur'an says, 'God is the light of heaven and of earth'; and in reality, all forms, however dense they may be, are to some degree the radiance of that spirit which is all light. All the different colors are different degrees of that same light.

Vol I: The Way of Illumination – Section IV: The Purpose of Life – Chapter 12

The Sufis say, 'God is Love'. That is true, but the Love was not sufficient. The Love had to make an object to love in order to see its own nature, to experience its own character, to fathom its own mystery, to find its own joy. For instance, the seed has in it the leaf and the flower and the fruit; but the fulfillment of the purpose of that seed is that it is put in the ground, that it is watered, that a seedling springs up and is reared by the sun; it brings forth its flowers and fruits.

This is the fulfillment of that seed which already contained in itself, the fruit and flower. A person who does not see the reason of all this, is in the seed state; his mind is in the state of a seed which has not yet germinated, which has not yet produced its seedling, which has not yet experienced the springing of the plant.

No sooner does the soul begin to unfold and experience in life the purpose which is hidden within itself, than it begins to feel the joy of it; it begins to value the privilege of living; it begins to appreciate everything; it begins to marvel at everything. For in every experience, good or bad, it finds a certain joy, and that joy is in the fulfillment of life's purpose.

That joy is not only experienced in pleasure but even in pain, not only in success but also in failures; not only in the cheerfulness of the heart but even in the breaking of the heart there is a certain joy hidden. For there is no experience which is worthless; and specially for that soul who is beginning to realize this purpose, there is no moment wasted in life. For under all circumstances and in all experiences that soul is experiencing the purpose of life.

Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan

If one only knew what intelligence, what emotion, what beauty lies beneath the spectacular display of life on the planet, one would realize what one misses by reducing nature, considering it just matter.

So much is gained by discovering and contacting this world of the soul, which has its correspondence in us, and comes through the forms and behavior of nature as the unwritten law of life.

PRACTICES

Summer / Winter Contemplation (Questions from June Newsletter 2023 - reversed)

If you live in the Northern Hemisphere, here is my winter solstice question for you.

What ideals do you carry deep within you, as seeds that you hold dear, to plant come spring?

If you live in the Southern Hemisphere, here is my summer solstice question for you.

What is ripening in your life at this time and do you have the patience to allow it to develop qualitatively?

Nature Meditation - FIKR

Memorize each phrase by saying it aloud (5 times), then repeat each phrase silently as you exhale and inhale (11 times). Continue breathing in a natural rhythm, without the words and notice what arises.

Exhale: **Fire, in thee I see**

Inhale: **The maker, purifier and healer: God**

Fikr is the practice of reciting a word or phrase silently on the breath as one inhales and exhales. Its purpose is the use of breath as a form of spiritual practice, enabling the words or phrases to penetrate into one's very being. [Preface to 2005 Edition]

Emerald Contemplation (#9)

My conscientious self: Strive to protect and restore the natural world.

You could consider your relationship with fire in this context.

Divine Name related to the Fire Element ([The Holy Mysteries of the Five Elements](#) p69)

Pir Zia's booklet is available for purchase again through Suluk Press \$15 USD

Al Qābid -- the seizer, the withholder, the constrictor

Divine Qualities (opposite wazaif): **Ya Qābid** (contraction) / **Ya Bāsīt** (expansion)

"The underlying roots of *Qābid* give a sense of give and take, a movement back and forth, an underlying rhythm of ebb and flow, like the rhythmical folding and unfolding of a bird's wings in flight, or the rising and setting of the sun, or the endless cycles of life and death."

Source: https://wahiduddin.net/words/99_pages/qabid_20.htm



Photo: pexels -1126384

REVIEW OF ZIRAAT PRESENTATIONS - FALL 2023

The Ziraat Papers - Insights and Reflections: If you missed the live Zoom sessions during Fall (USA), here are links to the recordings and a summary of the presentations.

[Unearthing the Hidden](#) (September) - Nehmat Kyan & Ziraat Australia

- Welcome and Acknowledgement of our Australian Indigenous Heritage – Nirtana (5:42 – 11:00)
- Hidden Treasure Meditation – Karima and Haqqiqa Noor singing (11:00 – 27:35)
- Q&A tour of the Ziraat website – Abdul Hakim & Nehmat (27:35 – 51:40)
- Reflections on Ploughing and Harrowing – Nehmat (52:00 – 1:36:20)

[Our Attitude Toward the Work](#) (October) - with Mumtaz Kammerer

- [Paper](#)

[Ziraat and Ecology](#) (November) - with Tasnim Stupac (Ziraat Co Vice President Europe)

- Talk (11:55 – 20:50)-
- **7th Generation Practice** – Joanna Macey and Molly Brown (21:50 – 36:45)
Source: <https://workthatreconnects.org/resources/seventh-generation/>
- Group feedback (36:45 – 1:01:05)

7th Generation is a practice of imagination and deep listening and was conducted in breakout rooms with 4 people. The instructions and questions are included on the recording along with feedback from participants at the end of the session.

You may like to try this on your own as a writing exercise – or a small group (2 – 4) people.

You are invited to imagine having a conversation with future humans from seven generations ahead, about 200 years from now, so it would be in the year 2223/2224. If you are in a group, assign one person as the future being and the others speak for approx. 3 mins each for each of the three questions. If you are doing this on our own – you could take a short break after the third question, then review what you have written and respond as the descendent from the future. The questions are written here in the Newsletter and there is also a link to an audio recording of the question, if you prefer to listen.

A couple of assumptions are needed before you begin:

- that there are people living on Earth in 200 years from now, living in some sort of life sustaining communities.
- that the future ones have a cultural memory of what is happening today, carried by universities or by books or by storytellers or by songs.

As we all know, our society, as we are living today is unlikely to last another 200 years – so we need to accept that there has been some significant “change event” or series of events. We do not need to know what that was.

In order to meet across the two centuries, we must go to a point outside of time, so we will travel there by the power of our intention and imagination - with a long "ah" sound.

Your descendent (approx. 200 years) in the future speaks:

Question 1: [Audio Link](#)

Ancestor, I greet you. It's so amazing to see your face, because all my life I have heard stories from teachers and grandparents about the time you are living. Some of the things I've heard I find hard to believe, so I'd like to check them out with you.

They say that in your time there are a few people richer than the richest ancient kings, while billions of people are without enough food or shelter or clean water. They tell us that in your time bombs are being made that can blow up whole cities. We know about that, but they say you know about it too, right when the bombs are being made. They tell us that whole species of animals and plants are going extinct. We know about that, too, because gone is gone.

*But they tell us you know about that while it's happening. Is that true?
And if it is true, what's that like for you?*

Question 2: [Audio Link](#)

Ancestor, I greet you. When we in our generation find water, we can drink and soil that's safe to grow food, it is thanks to the work you and your friends are doing on our behalf. It must be hard for you, especially at the beginning, standing up for beings you haven't met and will never meet. So, I want to ask you this question: What inspired you to start on this path? And what were the first steps you took?

Question 3: [Audio Link](#)

Ancestor, I greet you. We know you did not stop with those first steps. There are stories and songs about what you and your friends are doing to leave us a livable world. What they don't tell us, and what I would really like to know, is where you find the strength to do this. Where do you find the power to keep on going for the sake of life, despite all the obstacles and discouragements? Can you tell me?

Now, you of the seventh generation, it is your turn to talk. [Audio Link](#)

*You have been listening to your ancestors speak of their experience. As you listened, thoughts and feelings arose in you. Now is your chance to express them. What is in your heart to say to the one before you?
Very soon this person will be returning right into the midst of that darkness and travail. What words do you have for him or her?*

[Doing Our Own Work](#) (December) - with Wali Via

- Sowing Seeds (9:40 – 13:52)
- Ziraat Teachings Booklet & Lesson 5 (13:52 – 20:05)
- Divine Names & Zikr and Ziraat Stages (20:05 – 42:12)
- Doing Our Work – continued (42:12 – 47:00)
- Ceremony – naming seeds to plant (47:00 - 1:26:20)



Photo: istockphoto-1185019438

EARTH RESPONDERS PILOT 2023

This last year, between June and December, several Ziraat Council members took part in a special pilot program coordinated by Rabia Povich, Inayatiyya Kinship leader. It was a trial of a new course for Murids and Ashiqs wishing to connect and serve Earth during our time of climate change and social upheaval. The trial involved a group of 10 people who received guidance and practices for each stage of the Kinship Activity: Respect, Sympathy, Understanding, Forgiveness (of self and other), and Unity.

The inaugural [Earth Responders](#) program is open to the public and will run from April 3 to May 15. (see details on page 10). Saraswati Burke and Zebunissa Overeynder were part of the pilot group and have written about their experiences.

We Are Earth: Empowering ... Blessing ... Connection – Saraswati Burke

This included: support to human or other-than human communities as the multitude of needs is growing; increased awareness of our inter-connection to the whole web of life; deepening our connection; and learning from nature-based wisdom traditions. These were just a few of the threads knotted into the hearts and minds of the participants.

We shared emotional experiences (wonder, shock, grief), music, ritual, art, connections to Indigenous wisdom, and practical actions. Sham's Kairys frequently gave the Earth Responders sage guidance and clarity reminding all to:

See from another's point of view

Deepen our understanding of the natural world

Hold and process grief

Hold grief and hope together

Find forgiveness (deepen tolerance) and

Facilitate heart-centeredness

And, to not overlook certain practical capacities Earth Responders will need to know how to:*make known your availability*

...describe what you have to offer

...identify the/a key contact person

...learn what is wanted/needed in a particular situation

And ...how to enter a complex, likely disordered situation and get your bearings



Earth Responders Pilot 2023: A Wonderful Opportunity - Zebunissa Overeynder

What a wonderful opportunity to commit to serving the unity of life in whatever ways we are inspired to do. Though the Kinship activity leads the effort, it is a collaboration with all of the Inayatiyya activities involved. Kinship became a very alive reality on so many levels—from the kinship of our small group to kinship with the Earth and all beings, human and more than human. I came away with such a deep attunement and respect for all life. We were a small and very dedicated group and we bonded deeply.

I can say that this experience was affirming and even life-changing for me. The material presented was inspiring, sometimes challenging, and always led to a life-affirming perspective. I had been longing for a small group of friends who shared my concern for the earth crisis to commune with and our small group met that need. In this safe and loving container, I was able to begin to befriend the well of grief I had been carefully controlling so as not to be completely overwhelmed. I found new reservoirs of hope and, despite the desperate situation, I could feel my capacity for resilience grow stronger.

2024 Events

Ziraat Spring 2024 Series – (2nd Friday of month)

[Nature Spirits and Communicating Intuitively with Nature](#)

Sessions are 3-4:30 pm New York Time, 9-10:30 pm Central Europe Time
(Saturday in Oceania: 9am NZ, 7am NSW, 6:30 SA, 6am QLD)

February 9th – Jewels of the Heart; an Introduction to Gemstones
with Mahbano Genevieve Scase



March 8th – The Mysticism of Sound and Nature
with Maryam Hasnaa At-Tauhidi

April 12th – The Tender Fabric of the Spirit of Nature
with Devi Tide and Jamia Haqq

May 10th – Learning to Breathe with the Earth
with Robert Karbelinkoff

SPRING RETREATS 2024

March 23-24

Nature, Mysticism and Ziraat

2-Day Emerald Earth Ziraat Retreat

with Kainat Felicia Norton and Muinuddin Charles Smith

Rising Tide International, 5102 Swift Road, Sarasota, Florida 34231

All are welcome! Come and renew in this retreat in sunny Florida, near the Siesta Keys, 10 minutes from the Ocean.

For more details and to register: <https://risingtideinternational.org/event/emerald-earth-retreat/>

April 12-14

**Emerald Earth Ziraat Retreat – with Kainat Felicia Norton
and Muinuddin Charles Smith**

Abode of the Message, New Lebanon, NY 12125

Come to this retreat in Nature in the beautiful Berkshire mountains.

All are welcome! Registration: <https://www.theabode.org/offerings-events>

Contact: Wahaba@theabode.org



EARTH RESPONDERS 2024

A Kinship Program Designed in Collaboration with Several Inayatiyya Activities

By a deep insight into nature, we discover that the creation is the same as the Creator. ~ Hazrat Inayat Khan

Save the date: Wednesdays, April 3-May 15, 2024, from 6:00-7:15 pm ET (USA) / Online Course
[Program Information and Registration](#)

If you are interested in expanding your capacity to serve your community at this time of ecological crisis, join us for a six-week Earth Responder intensive training this spring. Earth Responders is designed to enhance the qualities we need to provide comfort, support, understanding, and renewal to humans and other-than-human communities impacted by the ecological-crisis.

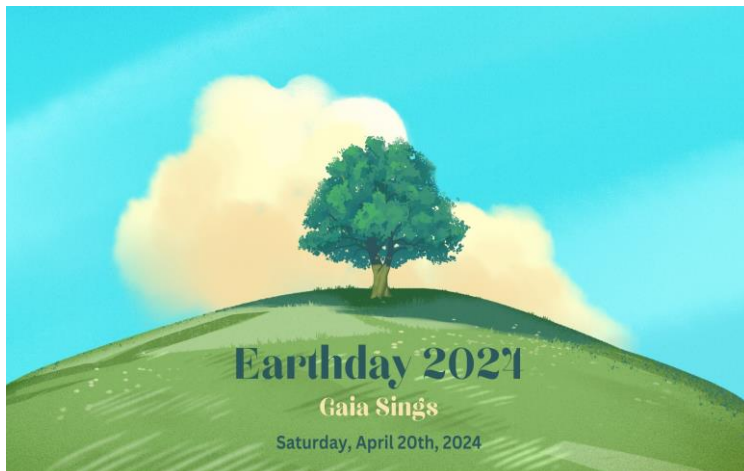
The global ecological crisis deeply impacts us all. The framework of this training is built on the foundation of the five stages Murshid gave for the development of the ideal of Kinship. By enhancing our awareness of our interrelationship with the natural world, reading the sacred manuscript of nature, and immersing ourselves in it, we are inspired and strengthened to help protect and restore the web of life.

This program draws on values and teachings found in several Inayatiyya Activities.

- Awareness of the sacredness of the natural world, as taught in Ziraat, grounds us in the elements and their transformational qualities.
- Devotion and prayer, central in the creation of nature ceremonies, are qualities exemplified in the Universal Worship.
- Sympathetic resonance, a focus of the Inner School, bolsters our ability to support and understand each other.
- Transforming difficult emotions like grief and anger is central to Kinship, which nurtures care and harmonious relationships with all life.
- Building a community of servers supports us as we seek to enact our ideal.

Cost is sliding scale and open to all. Contact Rabia@inayatiyya.org for additional information.

Earth Day 202 – Gaia Sings: A combined Ziraat & Music Offering – Sat 20th April (USA)



The international theme this year is:

PLANET versus PLASTICS

Please visit the official [Earth Day 2024 website](#) to see the many ways you can be involved or things you can do at home to help the planet by reducing waste and avoiding single use plastics.

Have you done a [Bin Audit](#) recently?

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

The secret of Ziraat
Pir Zia Inayat Khan

“What is the seed?”

The seed is the spiritual life itself. The seed is the life of the Messenger.
As a seed, it grows in your heart and, from there, it changes humanity and
society, and makes all things new;
it grows out in a new, a reborn man, who is to live forever.
The whole secret of Ziraat is in this.

From Aziza Baker

Symbolism has not come from the human intellect for it is born of intuition.
~ Hazrat Inayat Khan - Social Gathekas:

From Dan Duggan

“No ray of sunshine is ever lost, but the green that it awakens takes time to
sprout, and it is not always given the Sower to see the harvest.”
— Albert Schweitzer

**Ziraat Website
Updates
thankyou Leon**

[Events](#) – Ziraat programs and retreats for the first half of 2024 are listed.
[Recordings of Past Programs](#) – this page has a complete list of Ziraat offerings
from 2020 - 2023. You can click the graphic to see the original program and
presenter information.
[Newsletters](#) – Anyone not on the discourse list can access them here.

Ziraat Newsletter

Contributions for March and June are most welcome!

We plan to distributed the newsletter on a quarterly basis via the Ziraat
Discourse List – so please sign up (see link below).

Are you part of an active Ziraat group? Could you write and tell us a little
about your group, where you are located and your plans for this year. Perhaps
you could nominate someone to send us interesting items each quarter.

Photos, poems, quotes, links to interesting articles or recordings, online
events -- anything Ziraat related that may be of interest to others.

(For photos of people, please seek approval for inclusion in the newsletter)

March will include an Homage to Air and Community Contributions

June – will include an homage to Ether and Community Contributions

Send to: ziraat.newsletter@gmail.com (the first week of the month).

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