

# The Awakening

## Communicating with our hearts

Practicing the External Process - Individual to Individual  
Toolbox Series

# Prayer

**O Thou compassionate Lord, Thou Who art generous and able! We are servants of Thine sheltered beneath Thy providence. Cast Thy glance of favor upon us. Give light to our eyes, hearing to our ears, and understanding and love to our hearts. Render our souls joyous and happy through Thy glad tidings. O Lord! Point out to us the pathway of Thy kingdom and resuscitate all of us through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Bestow upon us life everlasting and confer upon us never-ending honor. Unify mankind and illumine the world of humanity. May we all follow Thy pathway, long for Thy good pleasure and seek the mysteries of Thy kingdom. O God! Unite us and connect our hearts with Thy indissoluble bond. Verily, Thou art the Giver, Thou art the Kind One and Thou art the Almighty.**

## Abdu'l-Bahá

# Honouring God's Creation

**Blessed is the spot, and the house,  
and the place, and the city,  
and the heart, and the mountain,  
and the refuge, and the cave,  
and the valley, and the land,  
and the sea, and the island,  
and the meadow where mention  
of God hath been made,  
and His praise glorified.**

**Bahá'u'lláh**

[Bahá'í Prayers | Bahá'í Reference Library \(bahai.org\)](https://bahai.org)

# Guidelines for a focused Practice

- We want to acknowledge the sacrifice that all of us are making to spend our precious time in learning how to practice the ADJ Process.
- Please stay on topic. We will gently remind you of this.
- During the presentation, everybody should be on mute. We will go through the entire presentation first. Write down any thoughts or questions that come to you. Once the presentation is finished, unmute. We will then start the discussion based on each specific slide.
- We are aware that in learning and practicing this process, emotions will be stirred up and awakened that will surprise and confuse us.
- How do we move forward with this double-edged sword where our personal lived experience and tests and difficulties can obscure our path forward in our quest for freedom from racial prejudice?
- If an emotion becomes overwhelming in this process and in the meeting, write it down for yourself. Do not ignore, avoid or deny it. This is a gift.
- If you have any questions about the ADJ process, please reach out to Milagros and Mary Rose.

# What we're working on today

1. Sharing Feedback from Self Assessment and Reflection Practice.
2. Communication - Awakening our hearts

# Reflecting on the Most Vital and Challenging Issue

- We were given this process in 1938 by Shoghi Effendi. Here we are, in 2023 still struggling to understand this. As a result, our communities are suffering.
- What are we being asked to do by Shoghi Effendi?
- How do I see this moving forward?
- How do we make our communities reflect the oneness of humanity?

# Why are we still struggling with the Most Vital and Challenging Issue

- How do I develop my interaction and communication with the Creator?
- Only if I do the inner work, will I be able to develop my capacity and understanding to transform myself and to bring forward the oneness of humanity and Divine Justice.
- I will become increasingly aware that this work provides lessons, rather than punishment. Each fallout points out to me those areas where I need additional spiritual guidance. We have an ocean of spiritual guidance at our fingertips.
- If interaction and communication do not result in a connection, is this a fallout?
- A fallout is characterized by an emotional reaction.
- What do I do with this emotional reaction? If I ignore it, then I start a cycle of emotional spin and rumination. My denial and avoidance behaviours will close the path to spiritual growth within myself and my interactions with others.

# Materialism stifles our spiritual growth

- The gross materialism that engulfs the entire nation at the present hour; the attachment to worldly things that enshrouds the souls of men; the fears and anxieties that distract their minds; the pleasure and dissipations that fill their time, the prejudices and animosities that darken their outlook, the apathy and lethargy that paralyze their spiritual faculties--these are among the formidable obstacles that stand in the path of every would-be warrior in the service of Bahá'u'lláh, obstacles which he must battle against and surmount in his crusade for the redemption of his own countrymen.
- Shoghi Effendi, Citadel of Faith, p. 148

[Materialism | Bahá'í Quotes \(bahaiquotes.com\)](http://bahaiquotes.com)



# To be a Bahai is to be different

- If we allow prejudice of any kind to manifest itself in us, we shall be guilty before God of causing a setback to the progress and real growth of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. It is incumbent upon every believer to endeavour with a fierce determination to eliminate this defect from his thoughts and acts.
- Shoghi Effendi, Lights of Guidance, p. 529
- It is indeed strange that the cultured class, the people of thought and experience, are often more filled with prejudice than just plain ordinary souls who have not enjoyed such advantages. They are so afraid of seeming in any way 'different' from their fellows, and of course to be a Bahá'í is to be different!
- Shoghi Effendi, Lights of Guidance, p. 529

[Prejudice | Bahá'í Quotes \(bahaiquotes.com\)](http://bahaiquotes.com)

# Deepening in the Sacred Writings brings forth the Oneness of Humanity and Divine Justice

- What is the inner work?
- Are we contemplating and absorbing the Sacred Writings, the lifeline to the Oneness of Humanity and Divine Justice?

# Creating a doorway for a spiritual connection

- Turn to your Bahá'í brothers and sisters, who are living with you in the kingdom. Indeed, the believers have not yet fully learned to draw on each other's love for strength and consolation in time of need. The Cause of God is endowed with tremendous powers, and the reason the believers do not gain more from it is because they have not learned to duly draw these mighty forces of love and strength and harmony generated by the Faith. Shoghi Effendi (Note 1)
- I desire distinction for you. The Bahá'ís must be distinguished from others of humanity. But this distinction must not depend upon wealth—that they should become more affluent than other people. I do not desire for you financial distinction. It is not an ordinary distinction I desire; not scientific, commercial, industrial distinction. For you I desire spiritual distinction—that is, you must become eminent and distinguished in morals. In the love of God you must become distinguished from all else. You must become distinguished for loving humanity, for unity and accord, for love and justice. In brief, you must become distinguished in all the virtues of the human world—for faithfulness and sincerity, for justice and fidelity, for firmness and steadfastness, for philanthropic deeds and service to the human world, for love toward every human being, for unity and accord with all people, for removing prejudices and promoting international peace. Finally, you must become distinguished for heavenly illumination and for acquiring the bestowals of God. I desire this distinction for you. This must be the point of distinction among you. Abdul Baha The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 190. (Note 2)

**Note 1:** [Bahá'í Reference Library - Directives from the Guardian, Page 41 \(bahai.org\)](https://www.bahai.org/library/Reference-Library/Directives-from-the-Guardian/41)

# The path to the oneness of humanity

Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation. To establish these great fundamental principles a propelling power is needed.

It is self-evident that the unity of the human world and the Most Great Peace cannot be accomplished through material means. They cannot be established through political power, for the political interests of nations are various and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. They cannot be founded through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and weak. The very nature of racial differences and patriotic prejudices prevents the realization of this unity and agreement.

Therefore, it is evidenced that the promotion of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity, which is the essence of the teachings of all the Manifestations of God, is impossible except through the divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit. Other powers are too weak and are incapable of accomplishing this.

**Abdul Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace**

Reflection: The oneness of humanity can only be accomplished through divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit.

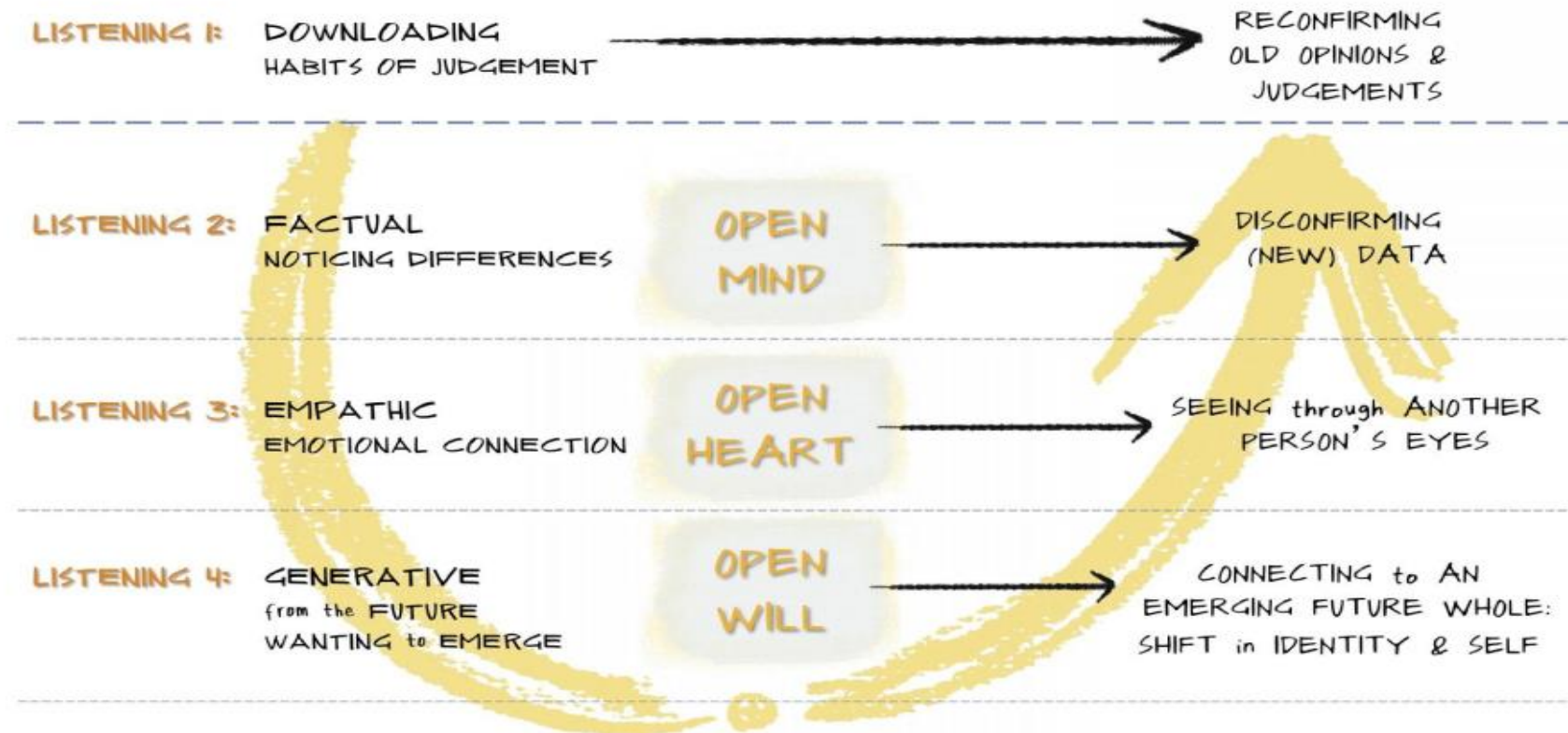
# Communicate - Bridging the painful division

- “Communication (from Latin *communicare*, meaning "to share" or "to be in relation with") "an apparent answer to the painful divisions between self and other, private and public, and inner thought and outer word.”
- Human communication is grounded in cooperative and shared intentions. Our ability to communicate with one another cannot be possible without an understanding of what we are referencing or thinking about. Because we are unable to fully understand another's perspective, there needs to be a creation of commonality through a shared mindset and/or viewpoint.” (NOTE 1)
- When we truly communicate
  - We embrace each other in all our differences.
  - The thoughts of our heart are focused on love and unity. What would this do to the totality of our communication?
- If we are to speak and listen from our heart ...we need to know our heart ...what happens when we speak with our hearts as opposed to speaking and listening with our brain.
- When we speak with our heart, the words are ‘**clothed with meaning.**’
- When we listen with our heart,
  - we listen as spiritual beings – hearing the meaning of the message
- When we listen with our brain,
  - we listen as computers – calculating, measuring, owning our opinion like our life depends on it, grabbing what will support our personal views.

## Note 1:

# Levels of listening

## 4 LEVELS OF LISTENING



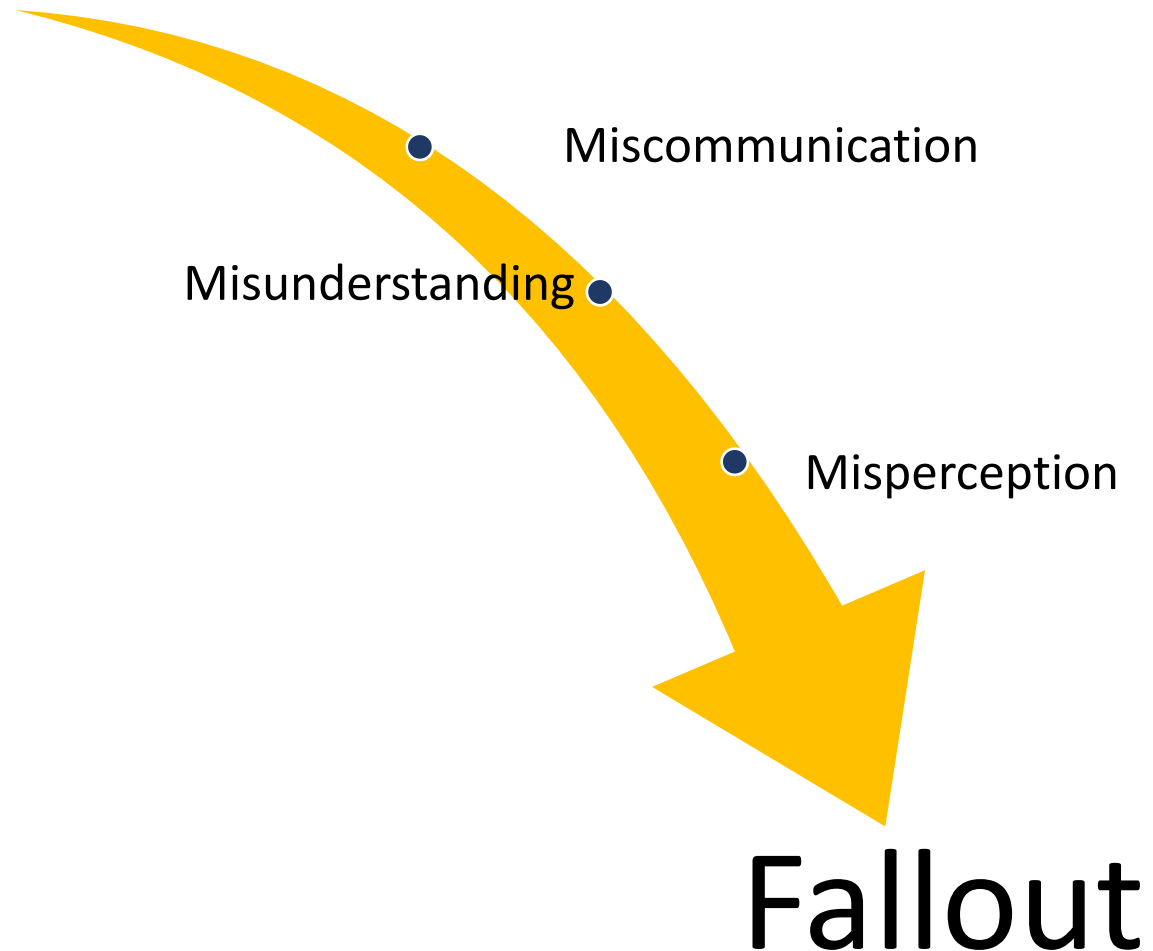
### Note 2:

# When communication breaks down – Fallout and the Ego

- Believing you have communicated. ..
- Talking without listening. ...
- Failing to connect. ...
- Trying to convince. ...
- Second-guessing.....
- Saying too much. ...
- Saying too little. ...
- Talking down.
- Not being meaningful (Changed from Being boring)
- In other words, wanting/needing to win!
- Our very own personal twofold crusade...

## Note 1:

## Negative interaction

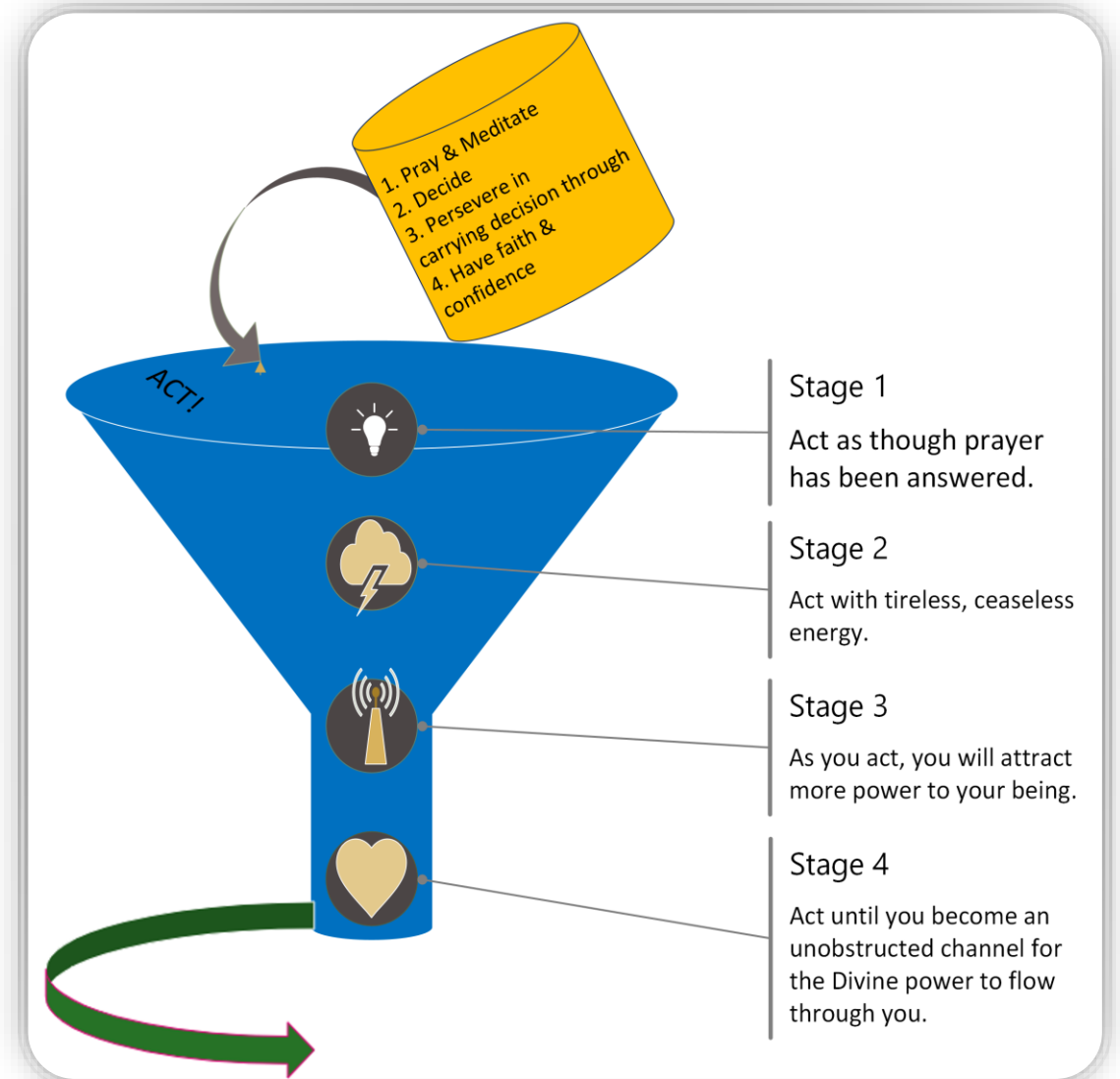


# Becoming the thoughts of our heart

I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love.

## Paris Talks, Abdul Baha

Through our practice of the internal processes, we prepare ourselves for the external interactions. We transition to the **“spiritual communication of the hearts.”** (Abdul Baha)





# The Binding Contract - Bahai Standards

The Binding Contract contains all the characteristics of a Contract

- Contract Date, 2 or more Parties, Acceptance and, Value, duration of the Contract, and penalty for non – adherence.
- The Binding Contract binds the ADJ Cycle's internal processes of Reflection and Bringing Ourselves to Account to the external processes of Communication.
- The Binding Contract also binds us through our commitment to focus on the 3 spiritual prerequisites as our standards and our commitment to God through Baha'u'llah's Message.

**A tremendous effort is required by both races if their outlook, their manners, and conduct are to reflect, in this darkened age, the spirit and teachings of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Casting away once and for all the fallacious doctrine of racial superiority, with all its attendant evils, confusion, and miseries, and welcoming and encouraging the intermixture of races, and tearing down the barriers that now divide them, they should each endeavor, day and night, to fulfill their particular responsibilities in the common task which so urgently faces them.**

**Let them, while each is attempting to contribute its share to the solution of this perplexing problem, call to mind the warnings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and visualize, while there is yet time, the dire consequences that must follow if this challenging and unhappy situation that faces the entire American nation is not definitely remedied.**

## **The Advent of Divine Justice, Shoghi Effendi**

Reflection item: At this time, in this moment how will I bring this forward?

# The fallacious doctrine of racial superiority - Fallout and our Ego

**"Regarding the questions you asked: Self has really two meanings, or is used in two senses, in the Bahá'í writings: one is self, the identity of the individual created by God. This is the self mentioned in such passages as 'he hath known God who hath known himself etc.'. The other self is the ego, the dark, animalistic heritage each one of us has, the lower nature that can develop into a monster of selfishness, brutality, lust and so on. It is this self we must struggle against, or this side of our natures, in order to strengthen and free the spirit within us and help it to attain perfection.**

**"Self-sacrifice means to subordinate this lower nature and its desires to the more godly and noble side of ourselves. Ultimately, in its highest sense, self-sacrifice means to give our will and our all to God to do with as He pleases. Then He purifies and glorifies our true self until it becomes a shining and wonderful reality."**

**(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, December 10, 1947)**

Reflection item: What does this message mean to me?

# The fallacious doctrine of racial superiority and our Ego contd

**“Just as the earth attracts everything to the centre of gravity, and every object thrown upward into space will come down, so also material ideas and worldly thoughts attract man to the centre of self. Anger, passion, ignorance, prejudice, greed, envy, covetousness, jealousy and suspicion prevent man from ascending to the realms of holiness, imprisoning him in the claws of self and the cage of egotism. The physical man, unassisted by the divine power, trying to escape from one of these invisible enemies, will unconsciously fall into hands of another. No sooner does he attempt to soar upward than the density of the love of self, like the power of gravity, draws him to the centre of the earth.” (‘Abdu’l-Baha, Bahá’í Scriptures, p. 241)**

[Ego — True Self Baha'i \(trueselfbahai.com\)](http://trueselfbahai.com)

Reflection item: What does this mean to me?

# The fallacious doctrine of racial superiority and our Ego contd

**"Today the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abhá are with those who renounce themselves, forget their own opinions, cast aside personalities and are thinking of the welfare of others...**

**Whosoever is occupied with himself is wandering in the desert of heedlessness and regret. The 'Master Key' to self-mastery is self-forgetting. The road to the palace of life is through the path of renunciation."**

**(‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Star of the West, Vol. XVII, p. 348)**

Reflection Item: What does this mean to me?

# Communication and the 3 spiritual prerequisites

Spiritual standards in the 3 spiritual prerequisites define the work we must do and the standards we must follow in our communication. It is important to always consider that our thoughts will always affect how we speak and how we hear. When we communicate, we must also pay attention to our body language and the body language of those around us.

On a daily basis, we must reflect on the state of our heart, our relationship with God. This is the only way that we are able to consistently and continually, reorient our vision to the spiritual standards rather than the materialistic standards that are currently embedded in our lives.

**Baha'u'llah tells us “O SON OF SPIRIT! The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbor. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behooveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes. (NOTE 1)**

Baha'u'llah provides me with the standards of communication and commands me to follow these standards. This is how I develop and learn the language of the heart. This is the Standard!

**NOTE 1: Baha'u'llah, Hidden Words**

# Activating our heart

- In the inner processes we have started the practice to develop and cultivate the attributes given to all of us by the Creator.
- How do we do this? By nurturing the attributes as seeds that the Creator placed in us. They need to have fertile soil, provided by the Sacred Writings of the Manifestation
- What happens when we realize that we are part of God's creation, and that He has placed in us His attributes?
- We realize that we must sacrifice our ego in order to nurture our attributes. In doing this we align ourselves with God's plan for us.
- He has also given us the capacity to recognize that we are all spiritual beings. Therefore we must treat our brothers and sisters as spiritual beings and free ourselves from racial prejudice.

**“Turn to your Bahá'í brothers and sisters, who are living with you in the kingdom. Indeed, the believers have not yet fully learned to draw on each other's love for strength and consolation in time of need. The Cause of God is endowed with tremendous powers, and the reason the believers do not gain more from it is because they have not learned to duly draw these mighty forces of love and strength and harmony generated by the Faith.”(Note 1)**

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# Our Potential

**“O army of God!” writes ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “Through the protection and help vouchsafed by the Blessed Beauty—may my life be a sacrifice to His loved ones—ye must conduct yourselves in such a manner that ye may stand out distinguished and brilliant as the sun among other souls. Should any one of you enter a city, he should become a center of attraction by reason of his sincerity, his faithfulness and love, his honesty and fidelity, his truthfulness and loving-kindness towards all the peoples of the world, so that the people of that city may cry out and say: ‘This man is unquestionably a Bahá’í, for his manners, his behavior, his conduct, his morals, his nature, and disposition reflect the attributes of the Bahá’ís.’ Not until ye attain this station can ye be said to have been faithful to the Covenant and Testament of God.”**

**The Advent of Divine Justice, Shoghi Effendi**

Reflection Item: How do I attain this?