

# DEEP DIVE

Using the Inner processes to understand  
Freedom from Racial Prejudice  
Bringing ourselves to Account

# Prayer

O Thou Whose tests are a healing medicine to such as are nigh unto Thee, Whose sword is the ardent desire of all them that love Thee, Whose dart is the dearest wish of those hearts that yearn after Thee, Whose decree is the sole hope of them that have recognized Thy truth! I implore Thee, by Thy divine sweetness and by the splendors of the glory of Thy face, to send down upon us from Thy retreats on high that which will enable us to draw nigh unto Thee. Set, then, our feet firm, O my God, in Thy Cause, and enlighten our hearts with the effulgence of Thy knowledge, and illumine our breasts with the brightness of Thy names.

***Bahá'u'lláh***

# Land Acknowledgement

Halton as we know it today, is rich in history and modern traditions of many First Nations and the Métis. From the Anishinabe to the Attawandaron, the Haudenosaunee, and the Métis - these lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in Indigenous history.

As we gather today on these treaty lands we have the responsibility to honour and respect the four directions, land, waters, plants, animals, ancestors that walked before us, and all the wonderful elements of creation that exist.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation for sharing their traditional territory with us.

# Guidelines for a focused Practice

- We want to acknowledge the sacrifice that all of us are making to spend 2 hours on Saturday in learning how to practice the ADJ Process.
- It is critical that during these 2 hours, we focus solely on the Practice of the ADJ Process, freedom from racial prejudice. **Please stay on topic.** We will gently remind you of this.
- During the presentation, everybody should be on mute.
- 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 your self. Do not ignore, avoid or deny it. This is a gift.
- If you wish to explore this with the facilitators reach out to them by email so that we can honour the allotted 2 hours that we have for the ADJ Process.

# What is hindering us from our purpose? Questions and reflections

- We read our Sacred Writings and look around us, waiting for the oneness of humanity to manifest itself.
- Why do we WAIT, when Abdul Baha's life was not really His life alone, it was the life of every one of us.
- He was the Exemplar, the Centre of the Covenant and he asked us to pursue His path with zest and confidence.
- Why do we look outwardly, when we should be looking inwardly to our own hearts?
- Abdul Baha has told us that each one of us has the capacity to become brothers and sisters.
- We have never been left alone. Baha'u'llah gave us the gift of his precious son, Abdul Baha, the Exemplar, the Centre of the Covenant. Abdul Baha has shown us how to walk on this spiritual path. And Shoghi Effendi has given us detailed directions of how we can navigate this spiritual path. And through all this guidance, we have the instructions of how to create the oneness of humanity.

# Building a community of practice

Dear friends, when we gather here each week to share our learnings from our daily practice of the ADJ process, what we are doing is “ walking that long and thorny road, facing & working through the pitfalls together. Through this work, we are increasing our individual capacity and building a community of souls committed to the teachings of our faith and manifesting them in the reality of our lives, thereby “contributing our decisive share to the eradication of racial prejudice (in ourselves ) from the fabric of our nation.”

"The deeds and accomplishments of the Bahai community of the United States, demonstrating the power of "unity in diversity" will provide a luminous example to all humanity of the might of the faith of Baha'u'llah. Observers will be sure to realize that if His teachings are capable of quelling the contention and reconciling the divisiveness and fragmentation of the American people, they must surely have the power to unite the entire world. (NSA of Bahais of US June 3, 2021)

# Let us walk with our true brother Shoghi Effendi

Close your eyes, relax, imagine that you were summoned into a room where there are two comfortable chairs. You take a seat and wait patiently.

2. The door opens and Abdu'l-Baha walks in. He sits down next to you, greets you and says,

**O SON OF BEING!**

**Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant. Bahá'u'lláh**

3. Abdu'l-Baha asks about your day and you decide what standard you wish to work on.

4. Beloved Abdul Baha, in this year, the Centenary of your passing, guide us, keep us steadfast and ask our true brother Shoghi Effendi for his help on this road.

# Lesson for today

1. Summary from last week
2. New lesson – Deep Dive - Using the Inner Processes to understand Freedom from Racial Prejudice – Bringing ourselves to Account

# Summary

We started the Deep Dive Series to deepen our understanding of the zenith of the 3 spiritual prerequisites, freedom from racial prejudice. Aziz Yazdi wrote, “The Faith is not something extraneous; it is not merely something beautiful, logical, just and fair – it is the very blood and fibre of our being, our very life.”

How do we achieve this? We will examine freedom from racial prejudice at each step of the ADJ Process. We start by looking at freedom from racial prejudice when we do our self examination in the Reflection Process .

Freedom from racial prejudice represents the creation of a new paradigm, whereby we learn a new language, the language of the heart.

- The actualization of the principle of the oneness of humankind, “**the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh revolve**” requires freedom from racial prejudice, from fault-finding, in our thoughts, our communication, our conduct and deeds.
- The journey requires sacrifice, suffering and discernment if we are going to build our capacity to persevere towards the goal, the oneness of humankind.

# Bringing ourselves to Account – Acknowledging what is latent within us

- Now we move forward through the 3 spiritual prerequisites by focusing on freedom from racial prejudice with humility and honesty.
- In this process we start to become aware of the land mines of racial prejudice, hidden within ourselves. They will manifest themselves. The challenge is to learn how to deactivate them before they bring harm to ourselves and others.
- We were given the capacity to connect with God to open our hearts with prayers. Through prayer, we acknowledge that we are spiritual beings. Through this process we realize that there isn't a bad me and a good me. This is the healing and integration of our reality. We accept our failings as lessons that we need to work on. Developing an awareness of our failings is our achievement. Working on these lessons brings us closer to spiritual growth.

# What is my wall? What do I need to sacrifice?

- I survived by believing that my survival depends on not trusting the other. This belief was conditioned by generations of lived experiences.
- The lack of trust stops me from healing.
- And yet, not trusting is the foundation of my protection which keeps me safe from them.
- I have created a wall that keeps me separated.
- Becoming a Baha'i and reading the Writings, shows me who I really am, a child of God.
- Why do I feel uncomfortable around the other when I know I am a child of God? I need to understand this?
- What I believed would protect me, my wall, is hindering me from reaching my goal, the oneness of humanity.
- How can I free myself, bring down this wall?

# Transition to Bringing ourselves to Account

- We transition from reflection and self examination (identifying the tools) at the human level to Bringing ourselves to Account (implementing the tools) on a spiritual level. At the spiritual level, we will test the tools we selected.
- We start the test by reciting the prayers we selected to work on Sacrifice
  - The immediate impact of the prayers are healing and opening up to communion with God. Mind, body and spirit will be communing with God. As we start to relax through the healing, we start to meditate and reflect on the selected standard. Can I commit to what I have selected? Each step is a decision to explore and understand our willingness to commit to sacrifice.
- The 5 Steps of prayer is our spiritual filter. By the 5<sup>th</sup> step, we arrive at the purest state, Action.

# Step 1: Pray and meditate

**Pray and meditate about it. Use the prayers of the Manifestations as they have the greatest power. Then remain in the silence of contemplation for a few minutes.**

Based on the prayers we selected for Sacrifice, can we move to the next step? Asking with humility and honesty, can we sacrifice what we were taught about people of a different colour and have a difficult conversation with ourselves? As we intone the verses of God, we move towards the source. Hearts hardened by fear start to soften with warmth and love. We start to detach from turmoil and fault finding.

In the silence of contemplation we move towards the Creator and away from the emotional turmoil. In the silence of contemplation we observe and reflect, doing the work required to communicate with God and heal. This is where the answer comes and we become aware.

No answer?, Lost in rumination and fault finding? We go back and reassess the spiritual standard and the prayers and start Reflection Process.

## Step 2: Arrive at a decision and hold this

**Arrive at a decision and hold this. This decision is usually born during the contemplation step. It may seem almost impossible of accomplishment but if it seems to be an answer to a prayer or a way of solving the problem, then immediately take the next step.**

As we search our hearts for God's guidance and see the answer, can we hold on to this answer? Asking with humility and honesty, can we sacrifice what we were taught about people of a different colour and have a difficult conversation with ourselves? We listen and hear that voice that says O Son of Being! Love Me that I may love thee. Can we move forward? If we say yes, we will move to the next step.

But at times all we can hear is the burdensome noise of that insistent self. It speaks the language of attachment. It is that perfectionist and judgemental measure that does not see how "Noble have I created thee". Becoming aware of this state of attachment is the first step of detachment from the ego, we start to learn the language of detachment from the ego, "I am here to learn the lessons."

# Step 3: Determination to carry the decision through

**Have determination to carry the decision through. Many fail here. The decision, budding into determination, is blighted and instead becomes a wish or a vague longing. When determination is born, immediately take the next step.**

Determination comes with making a commitment to this decision to sacrifice what we were taught and have this difficult conversation with ourselves, and being ready to act on it. No reservations. No backing off. Determination helps us to stick to it even when we doubt our capacity. With determination, we may move to the next step.

Without a commitment, our determination may shrivel to a wish or a vague longing, to rationalization. Now we must start again, but not at the very beginning. For we have learned so much. Our journey is not circular. Our learning path is a spiral. We go back to the beginning of the process but not in the same state.

## Step 4: Have Faith and Confidence

**Have faith and confidence that the power will flow through you, the right way will appear, the door will open, the right thought, the right message, the right principle, or the right book will be given to you. Have confidence and the right thing will come to your need. Then, as you rise from prayer, take at once the 5th step.**

Do we have the perseverance, the spiritual commitment to act as if it was already done? Do we have the love of that sacrifice of what we have decided to do? Using humility and honesty, are we creating roadblocks? If we are not able to sacrifice what we were taught and have this difficult conversation with ourselves, then we will go back to the beginning. This is the spiritual commitment. We believe that we will not fail regardless of our weakness. God gives us the strength. Each step reaffirms that love for God. Listening, encouraging, nurturing.

We say we believe that Baha'ullah will assist us. But we are afraid that we will not recognize His assistance, that we will not see the right way. If at this step we cannot move to action, we must return to the first step and reflect on the spiritual standards and prayers. Knowing that God is listening, encouraging and nurturing as we walk that road, that long and thorny road.

## Step 5: ACT

**Act as though it had all been answered. Then act with tireless, ceaseless energy. And as you act, you, yourself, will become a magnet, which will attract more power to your being, until you become an unobstructed channel for the Divine power to flow through you.**

If we have any inkling, even after all the filters that we cannot act, then we must go back to reflection.

But if there are no reservations and we have confirmed that we are willing to act, then we will do this. We will make the sacrifice. It has all been answered. We see ourselves walking down the sacred path together. As we are energized by the spirit of God, by our loving energy for each other, we become beacons of light attracting our brothers and sisters.

# Be not despondent

Shoghi Effendi tells us that:

**Many pray but do not remain for the last half of the first step. Some who meditate arrive at a decision, but fail to hold it. Few have the determination to carry the decision through, still fewer have the confidence that the right thing will come to their need. But how many remember to act as though it had all been answered? How true are those words- "Greater than the prayer is the spirit in which it is uttered" and greater than the way it is uttered is the spirit in which it is carried out."**

As we use the tools, we learn and fine tune them for our spiritual goals.

# Abdu'l Baha's Vision

**Look ye not upon the present, fix your gaze upon the times to come. In the beginning, how small is the seed, yet in the end it is a mighty tree. Look ye not upon the seed, look ye upon the tree, and its blossoms, and its leaves and its fruits. Consider the days of Christ, when none but a small band followed Him; then observe what a mighty tree that seed became, behold ye its fruitage. And now shall come to pass even greater things than these, for this is the summons of the Lord of Hosts, this is the trumpet-call of the living Lord, this is the anthem of world peace, this is the standard of righteousness and trust and understanding raised up among all the variegated peoples of the globe; this is the splendour of the Sun of Truth, this is the holiness of the spirit of God Himself. This most powerful of dispensations will encompass all the earth, and beneath its banner will all peoples gather and be sheltered together. Know then the vital import of this tiny seed that the true Husbandman hath, with the hands of His mercy, sown in the ploughed fields of the Lord, and watered with the rain of bestowals and bounties and is now nurturing in the heat and light of the Day-Star of Truth.**

**Wherefore, O ye loved ones of God, offer up thanks unto Him, since He hath made you the object of such bounties, and the recipients of such gifts. Blessed are ye, glad tidings to you, for this abounding grace.**

# References

[https://www.gottman.com/blog/6-ways-to-help-children-accept-difficult-emotions/?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=blog&fbclid=IwAR3B0TttIWS54GFSsoB4xiR\\_JBdc59EAnyqlEjePFNpQJUC3YB7JSZxImBA](https://www.gottman.com/blog/6-ways-to-help-children-accept-difficult-emotions/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=blog&fbclid=IwAR3B0TttIWS54GFSsoB4xiR_JBdc59EAnyqlEjePFNpQJUC3YB7JSZxImBA)