

THE FIFTH FORCE OF PSYCHOLOGY: NAFS PSYCHOLOGY¹

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ABSTRACT

Modern psychology approaches have considered human beings to be composed of the nafs al-ammaraah which is characterized as basement floor within the levels of nafs, and they have developed a hedonist understanding, thinking that human happiness can be achieved by doing things that satisfy the nafs al-ammaraah and give pleasure. The goals of self-actualization and self-transcendence have been shaped within the framework of this hedonist understanding, so psychological approaches that cannot connect with the immanence have narrowed one's horizons by remaining in the level of the nafs al-ammaraah. In the psychology of the nafs, it is stated that the freedom and happiness of human begins with getting free from shackles of the nafs al-ammaraah and going beyond material pleasures. A person, who gets rid of the negative effects of material structure and rational mind with the continued rise in the levels of the nafs, will reach the state of psychological well-being with the rituals such as dhikr, contemplation (tafakkur), prayer, voluntary worship and altruistic existence which is expressed as helping or doing good for expecting nothing in return.

Keywords: Nafs, Nafs Al-Ammaraah, Self-Actualization, Self-Transcendence

PSİKOLOJİNİN BEŞİNCİ GÜCÜ: NEFS PSİKOLOJİSİ

ÖZET

Modern psikoloji yaklaşımları, insanı nefs mertebeleri içinde bodrum kat olarak karakterize edilen nefs-i emmâreden ibaret olarak kabul etmiş, insan mutluluğunun nefsi emmâreyi tatmin edecek şeyler yaparak elde edilebileceğini düşünerek hedonist bir anlayış geliştirmiştir. Kendini gerçekleştirme ve kendini aşma hedefleri bu hedonist anlayış çerçevesinde şekillenmiş, dolayısıyla içkinliğe ulaşamayan psikolojik yaklaşımlar nefsi emmâre seviyesinde kalarak kişinin ufkunu daraltmıştır. Nefs psikolojisinde insanın hürriyet ve mutluluğunun nefsi emmârenin prangalarından kurtulup maddi zevklerin ötesine geçmekle başladığı belirtilmektedir. Nefs mertebelerinde yükselişin devam etmesi ile maddi yapının ve rasyonel aklın olumsuz etkilerinden kurtulan birey, zikir, tefekkür, dua, karşılık beklemeden iyilik ve yardım gibi ritüellerle psikolojik iyi oluş durumuna ulaşacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Nefs, Nefsi Emmâre, Kendini Gerçekleştirme, Kendini Aşma

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INTRODUCTION

Psychology as a discipline emerged in the West with the "Enlightenment Movement" and was accepted as a modern science when Wilhelm Wundt founded the first psychology laboratory in 1879. Due to positivism, which was the dominant paradigm of the period, psychology was perceived as a field of science in which only experimental research was conducted (Munn, 1951/1961). Darwin's Theory of Evolution, which was influential in science in that period, also influenced psychologists who adopted the behavioral and psychoanalytic approaches, and as a result, humans were evaluated from an evolutionary perspective (Muckenhoupt, 1997). While Freud view the behaviorist approach as surface psychology, he described psychoanalysis as depth psychology. Evaluating humans in a pessimistic perspective and as a creature dominated mostly by sexual impulses (Freud, 1917/2000), Freud stated that all physical activity of humans is aimed at getting pleasure and avoiding pain, and all the process is completely governed by the pleasure principle.

The science of psychology, which has a pessimistic approach to human beings by the influence of the behaviorist school and psychoanalysis, has created differences in its perspective of human beings with the humanistic approach, and a new school of psychology based on the idea that human is good in nature, has begun to emerge.

The transpersonal psychology approach, which emerged after the psychoanalytic, cognitive behavioral and humanistic approaches, tried to solve the human enigma by applying to religions such as Taoism and Buddhism, but these efforts were not enough and the searches on this subject continued. At the end of all these studies, the efforts to turn towards the transcendent and to reach the inner self which expresses the truth beyond the outer self of the individual and which is described by Yunus Emre's words "There is an I in me, deeper than I" and by Rumi's expression of soul (*can*) laid the groundwork for the emergence of the nafs psychology approach.

In recent years, a significant increase in psychology studies based on Islam and Sufism in the world has received attention (Pryor, 2002). As a result of the work of Indian Sufi Inayat Khan, many Western scientists met with Islamic mysticism in the early 1900s and came into contact with transcendence (Spiegelman, 1991). The enneagram, which is used for describing personal characteristics and expresses the basic weaknesses of the nafs al-ammara, was inspired by Islamic mystical sources (Daniels & Price, 2009).

Fragar, who founded the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in the USA in 1975, later became acquainted with Islamic mysticism and focused his studies on Sufi therapy (2012/2016). Various institutes and research centers were established in Europe and America under the names of Rumi and Muhiddin Ibn Arabi. Studies on the place and importance of Islamic concepts in psychology and psychiatry are carried out under the umbrella of the "Islamic Psychology Association" founded by Malik Badri in the United States.

Factors such as a negative and pessimistic approach of modern psychology to human beings (Fromm, 1950/2006), inability to produce a solution to existential depression (Kierkegaard, 2013) and inability to approach human beings holistically have caused people to stay away from the spiritual field. However, the traditions of spirituality avoided by modern psychology were among the important facts that people showed great interest and studies on (Oliver, 2009). This process paved the way for the birth of transpersonal psychology which sees spirituality as an element of the holistic structure of human beings (Ruzek, 2004).

Developments such as Assagioli, Tart and Wilber's theories that are similar to the states in Sufism, as important names of the transpersonal psychology approach (Merter, 2007); the evaluation of Sufis as doctors of the cosmic field (Ornstein, 1975); considering Sufism as a psychotherapy method (Anissian, 2005); as the important name of transpersonal psychology, Frager's suggestion of *sayr-i suluk* as a therapy method especially in mood disorders by working on the axis of Islamic Sufism (1999/2018), laid the groundwork for the emergence of an understanding of nafs psychology based on Islamic mysticism. Sufism which expresses the ancient spiritual life and wisdom, which forms the basis of the psychology of the nafs, is seen to be related to psychology.

At this point, the concepts of spiritual psychology, Sufi psychology and nafs psychology are sometimes confused with each other because they show some similarities. Brief explanations of these concepts are as follows:

Spiritual Psychology: It is explained by comparison with the psychology of religion. Although there is no complete consensus on this issue, two views predominate: According to the view claims that religion is broader than spirituality, spirituality is the non-institutional and experiential aspect of religion. According to the view claims that spirituality is broader than religion, spirituality is completely independent of religious traditions and institutions. There is no need for religion to explain concepts such as compassion, love, tolerance and forgiveness. These are not related to the religious aspect of the human being but related to the spiritual aspect. Spirituality should not be seen as an acquired phenomenon. There is a spiritual potential in every individual. Spirituality is about finding inner peace and meaning in life. Those who place religion and spirituality in opposite positions stated that religion is institutional and spirituality is personal (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005).

Sufi Psychology: It is the human psychology revealed by experiential method of the perfect human (*al-insan al-kamil*) who is equipped with the qualities of the God by transcending the physiological, cognitive and social self (Peker, 2003). In Sufi psychology, the inner journey takes one from one's self to one's own depths and from separation to unity of existence. When a person turns his back on the self and turns his face to God, this brings the individual to his inner self (Vaughan-Lee, 1995/2014). There are valleys that every individual encounters on this journey. People in the position of guides present a road map to the person by explaining the possible dangers and difficulties to be encountered in this journey.

Nafs Psychology: It claims to present the methods of understanding human by considering him in the context of nafs, heart and spirit. In fact, the training of *sayr-i suluk*, which was carried out through dervish lodges and *zawiyas* in the past, and the experience of the sufis' secluded life (*khalvat*) are methods of reaching the truth by spiritual education and individual spiritual growth through training of the nafs. These are the efforts of a person to change the situation he is in by experiencing different states of higher spiritual consciousness, to get rid of the anxiety and unhappiness and to take refuge in the God completely. It is the effort of a person to reach unity of existence (*wahdat al wujud*) and love of God (*Muhabbatullah*) by training of the nafs in the company of a guide.

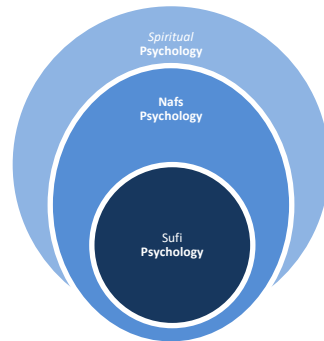


Figure 1: Spirituality, Nafs and Sufi Psychology

As seen in Figure 1, although the concepts of spirituality psychology, Sufi psychology and nafs psychology are intertwined; psychology of spirituality does not only express the religious concept, but also includes many concepts and phenomena that express inner peace and meaning.

Sufi psychology deals with the growth of the Islamic mysticism tradition. The psychology of the nafs, on the other hand, differs from the psychology of spirituality because it takes into account the Islamic spiritual traditions and is similar to the Sufi psychology.

However, nafs psychology, unlike Sufi psychology, performs a complementary function in the aspects that modern psychology and psychotherapy lack by explaining the structure and dynamics of the nafs, and deals with some methods of modern psychology by filtering the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Sufism, which is one of the main pillars of the psychology of the nafs, is a method of turning people into their true self and making them find the truth again with seclusion through removing them from the material world (Ulken, 1946). Therefore, Sufism is a movement based on inner self and meaning rather than material aspects of existence.

Sufism is the science of the heart. This ancient wisdom, which resurfaces when it dives deep like a stream, has always existed in the world (Vaughan-Lee, 1995/2017). Sufism has a suitable background to be studied within the framework of modern psychology approaches. Therefore, studies conducted within the scope of Sufi psychology will directly contribute to the field of psychology.

METHOD

1. Problem: The problem statement of the research is as follows: “What kind of a function can nafs psychology have in reaching the transcendence which transpersonal psychology approach aimed at?”

In this context, the sub-problems of the research are listed as follows:

- 1) What is the position of transpersonal psychology in the transition from surface to depth, from depth to transcendence?
- 2) What is the role of transpersonal psychology in the formation of nafs psychology?
- 3) What is nafs psychology’s perspective on human being?
- 4) How can nafs psychology be used in psychotherapy?

2. Aim and Importance: Modern psychology approaches which think that the evolutionary potential of the individual is limited to one-way growth and have not yet reached a consensus in defining the concept of psyche, treat the human being as a mechanical entity. In contrast, transpersonal psychology attempts to emphasize the transcendent aspect of the person. The psychology of the nafs, which claims that people can get rid of the influence of the material structure and become free by connect with God through purification of the nafs, aims to help the individual to find his inner enlightenment and contribute to a life free of anxiety, thus ensuring that the person experiences a rebirth in the existential context.

3. Limitations: There are various studies on transpersonal psychology in the West. However, there are not many studies in the field regarding the psychology of the nafs. At this point, the studies of mystics such as Arabî, Mevlânâ and Ghazâlî, which are related to psychology and are important in terms of nafs psychology, which were made centuries before the emergence of psychology, were taken into account. While evaluating the subject of nafs, an extensive literature was reviewed, but the subject was limited to the psychology-related parts of the literature. Particularly, the fact that practice-oriented studies are not frequently encountered in the literature constitutes the limitations of the research.

4. Method: In this study, which has a qualitative design, the data were basically collected through literature review. In this context, within the framework of transpersonal psychology, the works of James, Jung, Assogioli, Maslow, Tart, Grof and Wilber; in the context of mystical thought and nafs theories the works of Frager, Lee, Merter, Rumi, Ibn Arabi and Ghazali were examined as primary sources. As secondary sources, studies of psychology and religious mystical works were examined. In the nafs and psychotherapy part of the study, some interviews that were conducted at Erciyes University Psychological Counseling and Guidance Application and Research Center (ERREM), were included within the framework of ethical rules. Thus, the psychology of the nafs has been evaluated within the context of psychotherapy examples. In the analysis of the collected data, descriptive analysis and content analysis techniques were used together with document analysis.

NAFS PSYCHOLOGY

1. Nafs Psychology Approach

Failure of transpersonal psychology in reaching the transpersonal, positive psychology's emphasis on religious virtues (Bulut & Subasi, 2020), some newly emerging approaches which use stories within Masnavi and concepts of Sufism in psychotherapy (Vatan, 2016), the great inclination towards Sufism and nafs psychology in the West, Malik Badri's Islamic psychology approach (Badri, 1979/2018), Frager and Merter's emphasis on the nafs psychology and psychotherapy and, psychology of the spirituality studies initiated at Erciyes University, paved the way for the birth of the nafs psychology approach, which can be described as the fifth force in the field of psychology.

In all of the psychological approaches, the effort to understand the human being draws attention. In this context, it is seen that the view on human nature in the major approaches discussed is one-sided and cannot go beyond the physical structure and emotions. The way of understanding human in nafs psychology approach is holistic. According to this approach, the nature of human will be able to harmonize within the unity of nafs, heart and spirit. It is important to explain the structure of the nafs in order to understand the human being.

According to the psychology of the nafs, human was created in the finest form (*ahsan al-taqwim*) (Holy Qur'an, 95:4) and then he was brought down to Earth which means the lower realm. This descend continues until the level of the *nafs al-ammara*, which is the entrance to the structure of nafs. If the divine signs and warnings are not obeyed there, there is a fall into the lower floors of the *nafs al-ammara*, into the area of shadows. But human nature tends to ascend (Merter, 2020).

When human fails to achieve this spiritual ascension; he will experience existential depression which is defined as the feeling of meaninglessness in a person's life and the lack of hope for survival (Gectan, 2020). Individuals in this situation have lost their self-confidence and have no faith in life (Yalom, 1980/2014).

The process of ascension in the levels of nafs structure is described by the word *aqaba* (Holy Qur'an, 90:11) which means a steep ascent where it is not easy to climb. In order to ascend *aqaba*, it is necessary to gain the morality of *esaa*r (altruism) and *infaq* (aid) together with worship and *tafakkur* (contemplation). With these gains, depression and anxiety levels of the person decrease and level of happiness increases (Merter, 2020).

The psychology of the nafs, which is briefly expressed here, is not actually a new approach, but has an older and more profound experience than the science of psychology. By considering the Islamic civilization which is the source of many psychological techniques and approaches, and many methods of modern psychology, nafs psychology can be suggested to open new horizons in the field.

1.1. A History of the Nafs Psychology:

Knowing the contributions of Muslim scholars who form the historical basis of nafs psychology, is important for a better understanding of nafs psychology. It is seen that Seljuk and Ottoman physicians, who tried to heal mental patients in hospitals and bimarhanes with techniques such as the sound of water therapy, music therapy, and occupational therapy in the past (Altinolcek, 2017), had an interest in psychology. Sufis; in dervish lodges and zaviyahs, which can also be called spiritual growth institutes, they personally applied the techniques called suggestion, treatment or psychotherapy today (Ocak, 2014).

Considering the theory of conditioned reflex which Ghazali put forth centuries before Skinner (Ghazali, 2016, as cited in Badri, 2018); Arabi's demonstration of concepts such as the collective unconscious and archetype eight hundred years before Jung; (İzutsu, 2020); Rumi's interpretations in his own work Masnavi, particular concepts that psychology science had just realized (Mevlânâ, 2004 as cited in Merter, 2007; İbrahim Hakkı's inclusion of physiological and psychological determinations in Marifetname, (Erzurumi, 2011, as cited in Atak, 2021) and descriptions of human beings in Abdürrezzak Kashani's interpretation of Qur'an, (Kâşânî, 1998, as cited in Atak, 2021) which is beyond the human being description of modern psychology; It can be suggested that psychology actually played an active role in the Islamic world in the past and also have a rich accumulation of knowledge.

2. Key Concepts of Nafs Psychology

2.1. The Nafs:

Nafs, one of the most common terms in Sufi psychology, is sometimes translated as ego and sometimes as soul. The word nafs, which is widely used as self in Arabic, is used by Sufis to indicate bad personality traits and tendencies. The lowest level in the nafs is seen as the power that leads people to disaster (Frager, 1999/2018) The concept of nafs which based on the statement "One who knows himself knows his Lord" (Acluni, 1399/2009) expresses a structure similar to the concept of self in psychology.

Inside human, there is a core ego/self, and around it, sub-personalities (selves) representing the identities identified throughout life, and there are the complex and shadows of the subconscious realm in which those selves are in contact. Modern psychology has explored this structure in depth (Ellenberger, 1970). However, the existence of another self (*nafs al-lawwamah*) that is watching this play on the stage of life from the outside and on a higher screen, has been ignored.

Training the Nafs: Training the nafs is considered the most important stage in reaching the idealized human level in Sufism. Training the nafs, which prepares the ground for the person to get rid of the unnecessary desires and directions of the body and to connect with his spirit, also helps people to reach their own truth through inner journey. Some terms such as *sayr suluk*, *mujahada* and *khalvat* come to the fore in the training of the nafs. Since training of nafs will be clarified by understanding these concepts, it is important to know them:

- A. *Sayr Suluk*: It is the way Sufism follows to train the nafs. Sayr expresses a process of change from ignorance to knowing, from bad morals to good morals. Suluk, on the other hand, is the name of the spiritual education of the devotee who entered the path of Sufism (Arpagus, 2009). Setting out on a journey, in its most basic sense, is to become aware of one's own self (May, 1953/2018). The journey of Sayr suluk is actually a journey to reach the true self in one's own deeps with the company of a guide. It is the process of knowing one's self, observing his role on earth and his situation in the sight of God.
- B. *Mujahada*: It means that to put effort into and to suffer a lot in order to reach a certain goal by risking all kinds of troubles. In Sufism, *mujahada* (strive) means to break the resistance of the nafs by striving against to it, to do the opposite of its desire, taking it under control by weakening it through eating, sleeping and talking at a minimum level.
- C. *Khalvet*: The most important goal in the *khalvet* (seclusion) is to discipline the sense organs and thus to reduce the effects of the outside world that attacks the nafs. The nafs is busy with earthly things by constantly receiving information from the environment through sense organs and directing its attention to the outside world. Thus, the nafs becomes unable to hear the voices that warn him to direct towards good. However, for spiritual development, the nafs must be turned away from the negative suggestions of the environment and turned into itself.

States/Levels of the Nafs: Since the science of psychology is based on observable human behaviors and is not interested in how the ideal human should be in terms of spiritual growth, it has not been able to reveal a point of view at this context (Walters, 1987/1995). Psychology has not gone beyond diagnosis and prediction and has superficially evaluated the qualities of self-actualizing human beings. Recently, the science of psychology has begun to partially confirm the existence of the human condition known as the spiritual state (*hâl*). The explanation of the spiritual stages or levels of the nafs which was inspired by various Qur'an verses and which a person must transcend in order to complete his spiritual growth is as follows:

A. *Nafs Al-Ammarah*: In the Qur'an, this nafs, which is at the lowest level, is called the nafs that commands evil. "And I do not seek to free myself from blame, for indeed the soul (*nafs*) is ever inclined to evil, except those shown mercy by my Lord. Surely my Lord is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Holy Qur'an, 2015, 12:53). The verse expresses the nafs al-ammarah.

B. *Nafs Al-Lawwamah*: Lawwamah is to resist to do sin and do repent to God when person realizes that he has committed a sin. At this level, bad behaviors and actions begin to seem disgusting to the person and people understand the negative effects of their self-centered attitudes towards the world, even though they do not have the ability to change themselves. The people in the level of lawwamah are seen as addicts who can recognize the level of their addiction and the damage it has done to them (Frager, 1999/2018).

C. Nafs Al-Mulhimah: The individual who reaches this level enjoys worship, contemplation (*tafakkur*) and other religious practices. He is now personally experiencing the spiritual truths that he had only heard or read about before. Previously, while all information came from the outside world, information in the level of Nafs Al-Mulhimah now comes to the heart through inspiration. It is considered important for a person to act in accordance with Islamic wisdom so that these inspirations, which connect with the heart, are not interrupted (Frager, 1999/2018).

D. Nafs Al-Muthmainnah: Nafs Al-Mutmainnah is the nafs that firmly believes that God is its Lord, adheres to what God has promised, fully affirms the word of God, and is patient with what comes from it (Sulemi, 2014). At this stage, the negative attributes of the Nafs Al-Ammarah seem very ugly and disgusting to the individual. There is no longer any desire for these qualities in the heart (Frager, 1999/2018).

E. Nafs Al-Radhiah: At this stage, a person is not only satisfied with what is given, but also with the difficulties and tests that come from God. He realizes that he is always surrounded by God's mercy and grace (Frager, 1999/2018). When the spirit of human begins to act in harmony with the divine order, peace fills him and he is pleased with his Lord. The purified heart of the individual, who is now protected from making mistakes, is full of love and peace (Bayraktaroglu, 2017).

F. Nafs Al-Mardhiah: In the stage of Nafs Al-Mardhiah, the individual completely transcends the struggle between positive and negative tendencies within him. With the integration of the personality, more intense contact is made with the infinite light and wisdom of the innermost heart. There is only one veil that blocks the innermost heart. It is the sense of self, of being something separate (Frager, 1999/2018). At this stage, the state of gratitude is evident.

G. Nafs Al-Kamilah: Since the nafs that has reached this level, has been purified and attained perfection, it is now called the perfect human being (*al-insan al-kamil*) (Sayar, 2015). According to Sufism, which can also be defined as a love story, true love which is beyond all loves is a genuine and pure love everlasting between human and God who created him.

As it can be understood from the levels of the nafs, human can experience two opposite state of existence. He was created in the most perfect form (*ahsan al-taqwim*), and then he was reduced to the level of the lowest of the low (*asfal al-safilin*). The "most perfect form" here refers to the "spirit" side of human. From the moment this spirit enters the body house or the structure of the nafs, as it descends, it begins to materialize and lose its original purity. As you go down to the lower floors of the nafs structure, it gets darker. The floor where this descent temporarily ends is the nafs al-ammarah, which is the ground floor of the nafs structure. In this narrow, boring and dangerous place, one stands next to the abyss of hell which is called *hawiya*. Frightening sounds are coming from the bottom of the abyss, and there are beings whose shadows can only be noticed (Merter, 2020).

Human, due to his original nature, cannot live here, this place is too narrow for human, and after a while, a spiritual crack called the state of *kabad*, as expressed in the Qur'an (90:4), occurs.

Right next to the ground floor, a steep ascent called *aqaba* (Holy Qur'an, 90:11) starts. In order to ascend to the upper floors, it is necessary to restrain the body from desires of the nafs, to take it under control, and to move to the altruistic existence. Some efforts are expected from people at every level of this steep ascent. If these are fulfilled, it will be possible to reach floors with more spacious, bright and beautiful views such as *lawwamah*, *mulhimah*, *muthmainnah*. As the individual ascends spiritually, the states of sadness, grief, mourning, depression and anxiety in the lower floors begin to decrease. A person finds peace by getting rid of spiritual contractions and depressions (Merter, 2019).

2.2. Heart (Qalb)

According to Sufi psychology; the heart, which is the place of deep intelligence and wisdom, is also the place of ingenuity. The divine spark or spirit that exists in the innermost of every human being resides in the heart. The heart is seen as a sacred temple. That's why all people are treated with great courtesy and respect (Frager, 1999/2018). The hadith "My heaven and my earth embrace me not, but the heart of my faithful servant does embrace me" expresses this truth (Frager, 2012/2016).

Purification of the Heart: Purification of the heart is to free it from restlessness, excessiveness, haram and sins; It is to purify it by means of peace, order, modesty, morality and doing good works (Bayraktaroglu, 2019). To polish the heart is to completely erase the image of the individual self that covers the eye of the heart like a veil (Baldock, 2005). A polished heart does not mirror anything but God. Practices such as dhikr, ecstasy (*wajd*) and contemplation of death (*tafakkur-i mawt*), which enable the heart to be polished, have a supportive function in reaching the innermost heart of the individual and experiencing inner peace.

1. *Dhikr:* Continually directing the attention to God enables attributes of the nafs to be transformed into divine attributes over time. An individual can light the lamps waiting to be illuminated in his life with dhikr, consciousness and attention (Frager, 1999/2018). Emphasizing that dhikr is an element that activates people intellectually, Rumi said, "If your mind is frozen, if you cannot think, walk, do dhikr! Dhikr shakes the mind and activates it. Make the Dhikr sun on this frozen idea!" (2007, Volume 6, Line 1475-1476). He emphasizes the importance of dhikr with his expressions.

2. *Wajd:* It is a state of ecstasy, which affects the emotions and excitements of the normal consciousness (Ozkose, 2007). According to May, the whole self is affected by the unity of the subconscious and unconscious during *wajd*. This is not an irrational situation, but a suprarational one (May, 1975/2016). Grof (2019) claims that the boundaries of time and space are transcended during this state of *wajd*.

3. *To Die Before Death:* To die before death means the emergence of various perceptions as a result of moving away from human attributes by controlling forces of nafs arising from the body with the abstinence and striving and the removal of the *hijabs* (divine veils that covers the heart) and the manifestation of secrets (Ibn Khaldun, 1374/1984).

In the Masnavi, the salvation of the human being from the bondage of the flesh is told through the story of the parrot and its owner. The answer sent by another parrot in the Indian country, by falling from a tree and pretending to be dead, to the question of how the parrot would get rid of the captivity of the cage (Rumi, 2007, Volume 1, Line 1547-1648) symbolizes the advice that a person can get rid of the bondage of the flesh before he dies (Kucuk, 2009).

2.3. Spirit (*Ruh*)

The concept of spirit, which has been removed from the agenda of the science of psychology and which is defined as the study of *psyche*, with the influence of positivism over time, have started to re-enter the field of interest of psychology with the emergence of transpersonal psychology. It is not possible to explain the concept of spirit satisfactorily since the spirit, which is intangible and invisible, cannot be proved scientifically. For this reason, the science of psychology refers to the traditions of spirituality. Among the spiritual traditions, the discipline that has the richest literature on the spirit is Islamic mysticism. When the views of Islamic scholars and mystics, who focused on the qualities of the spirit rather than what it is, are examined, enlightening information is encountered about the nature of the spirit, which is one of the issues that makes humanity think over the most.

According to Ghazali who describes the spirit as perceiving aspect of human, the verse "Say: Its nature is known only to my Lord." expresses this divine aspect of the spirit (Holy Qur'an, 2015, 17:85). The spirit is not a form that enters in body. According to him, disappearance or destruction of spirit is not a matter of discussion. The spirit does not die; it waits to leave the body at the day of judgement and return to it again. Therefore, when God calls His servants, He says "Return to your Lord!" (Holy Qur'an, 2015, 89:28). The spirit is permanent aspect of human.

The spirit is considered as a seven-layered structure in Sufism:

1. *Mineral Spirit*: The mineral spirit is located within the skeletal system. The mining world is close to God; never rebel against the divine will. It is an indication of this that a stone stays in the place that it is put permanently unless it is moved by an outside force (Frager, 1999/2018).

2. *Vegetable Spirit*: This spirit, which is similar to the spirit that God gives to plants, is located in the liver and is connected with the digestive system. It regulates growth and assimilation of nutrients (Frager, 1999/2018). There is no life in the world without the vegetative spirit, which is seen as a sign of vitality. Growth, reproduction and physiological changes in the bodies of all living things take place thanks to the vegetable spirit (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E. /2001).

3. *Animal Spirit*: The center of the animal spirit is the heart, and its fruit is life and comfort. What is meant by heart here is the heart like a pinecone placed on the chest. It is given this name because it governs the whole body (Abdulkerim El-Cili, 1365-1417/2015). It is a subtle body and is like a luminous lamp. The light of this lamp is life and its oil is blood. This spirit is present in all humans and animals (Ghazali, ca. 1095-1105/2016).

4. *Personal Spirit*: The personal spirit is also the place of the ego. Humans have both positive and negative egos. The positive ego organizes the mind, gives a sense of self and is a compelling force for self-respect, responsibility and honesty. Negative ego is a force that makes people arrogant and selfish. While the positive ego is a great power on the spiritual path and provides the necessary sense of stability in the ups and downs that occur on this path. The negative ego becomes the enemy and changes the way of relations with the world by deflecting the perception of the world (Frager, 1999/2018).

5. *Human Spirit*: It is located in spiritual the heart and is more refined than the personal spirit. It is the place of compassion, faith, and creativity; embodies spiritual values and practices. Judging by the love and care that animals show for their offspring, there is love in the animal spirit, albeit in a very basic form. Love and compassion have evolved much more holistically in the human spirit of the mature person (Frager, 2012/2016). The necessary infrastructure to reach the self-actualization step targeted by the humanistic approach, which uses concepts such as human love, unconditional acceptance and respect, empathy and sincerity, is located in the human spirit layer.

6. *Secret Spirit*: This spirit, which is located in the depths of the heart of each individual, one level above the human spirit, is also called the angelic spirit. Angels are always in a state of worship and dhikr of God. Everyone has the potential to live with constant consciousness. The secret spirit is the degree of prophets and great saints (Frager, 2012/2016). It can be thought that the concept of spiritual intelligence, which is seen to be related to the temporal lobe and expressed as taking its source from God (Zohar & Marshall, 2000/2004) refers to the secret spirit that covers the depths of the heart and emphasizes the spiritual aspect of man, similar to angels.

7. *Secret of secret spirit (Sirr'ul-Esrâr)*: The human spirit, the secret spirit, and the secret of secret spirit reside in the spiritual heart. It is a space for the human spirit, compassion and creativity. While the secret spirit is the place of dhikrullah, the secret of secret spirit is the eternal divine spark in the inner world of the individual (Frager, 2012/2016).

Here, it is of great importance for a person to understand the human spirit, the secret spirit and the secret of secret spirit, and to get closer to the spirit by ascending in the levels of the nafs, in order to make sense of his existence and to reveal the potential he has inside. Each spirit layer has a different importance for human beings. It is important to develop them in a balanced way without neglecting any of them. For example, if a person neglects his vegetable or animal spirit, he may lose his physical health, or if he neglects his secret of secret spirit, he may put his mental health in danger.

3. Psychotherapy Techniques Supported by Nafs Psychology

3.1. Smile and Gratitude Exercise:

Smiling has become one of the forgotten behaviors in our age, just like giving thanks. Smiling, which is a method also used in therapy, not only relaxes the individual spiritually, but also spreads positive signals around. Being smiling reduces body aches, strengthens the heart, makes the person happy by relaxing, strengthens the immune system, reduces the risk of getting sick and relieves fatigue (Atak, 2016). Examples of therapy using smile and gratitude exercise support this argument.

Application of the exercise: A depressed individual stands in front of the mirror at least once a day, looks at himself with a smile, and thinks about the beauties and possibilities that God has presented to him. After a few minutes of contemplation, "Thank you, God, for presenting all these beauties to me!" and completes the exercises. At the end of a one-month period, it is observed that the understanding of realizing the blessings that were given begins to settle with a marked relief.

3.2. Contemplation (*Tafakkur*) and Walking Exercise:

It is known that walking is good for people with depression and anxiety and has a positive physiological effect on the brain (Ulusoy, 2006). In the early hours of the day when the universe wakes up, focusing on the sounds in nature, watching the natural beauties and walking by contemplating reduces stress (Atak, 2016).

Application of the exercise: Beck depression and Beck anxiety Inventories are applied to individuals with depression and anxiety disorders at the beginning of the therapy process. The client is asked to contemplate with slow steps for at least 25-30 minutes daily. Regardless of the weather conditions and the workload of the individual, it is important to do the walking exercise every day without interrupting, and it is essential that the walk is done in a calm way that will allow contemplation instead of being brisk walking like a weight loss walk. In this way, contemplation and walking exercises are continued for 4-6 weeks. The same tests are applied again at the end of the specified period.

3.3. Act of Kindness:

In recent years, the psychological method applied under the name of act of kindness therapy has become widespread. According to this method, when people who experience problems such as uneasiness, unhappiness, meaninglessness and loneliness, help other people and do good deeds provide psychological relief.

Application of the exercise: People with a weak sense of compassion and prone to violence, especially those who experience anger and depression, are assigned to help others or to do random act of kindness. The application period varies from person to person depending on the problems experienced, and when the person continues helping behaviors for a while until he/she feels better, this action can become an indispensable part of his/her life.

Nur, who receives psychological support due to depression, stays in the student house. Nur, who was assigned to do good deeds in the context of kindness therapy in the later sessions of the therapy process, decided to give the food items left in their homes to the needy with her friends before she went to her hometown in the summer. When they identified a family in need and went to deliver the supplies, Nur enjoyed the happiness that appeared on the face of the old aunt at home and embraced her sincerely. Stating that she normally stays away from contact with the elderly because of her anger at her grandmother and grandfather, Nur also did a moral support by showing the warmth of hugging the old aunt in addition to doing material favors. Nur, who stated that she felt peaceful afterward, expressed with amazement that her coldness towards the elderly was broken in the following times and that her anger towards her grandmother and grandfather decreased after a while.

3.4. Masnavi Sharif Readings, Sufi Stories and Bibliotherapy:

In the therapeutic process, stories can deepen the therapist's perception and make the client aware of new dimensions about his situation (Deikman, 1982).

Application: In individual psychotherapy; a book suitable for the solution of the problem experienced by the client is determined and the client is asked to read the selected chapters until the next meeting. The client presents his/her subjective summary about the chapter he/she has read from the book, and this summary is discussed during the session. Since the individual has the opportunity to look at his own problem from the upper floor through the events or people in the book, he can find his own solution by understanding his problem. In group counseling; a general evaluation is made at the end of the bibliotherapy-based group therapy process, which continues for 8-10 weeks, supported by current experiences. The aim of bibliotherapy, which is done with masnavi reading, is to travel to the inner world of the individual, to know himself, to reach the source of his problems and to take solution-oriented steps under the guidance of the therapist.

3.5. Contemplation of Death Exercise:

Remembrance of death, which is included in the psychology of the nafs, destroys the negative features of the person and opens the heart, enabling him to contact the inner wisdom and get closer to God. By thinking of his own death, the individual realizes the state of existence and knows the value of time (Frager, 1999/2018). In this sense, contemplating death also means starting the process of individual growth.

Application of the Exercise: The technique of confrontation with death is applied to raise awareness of death with individuals who have death anxiety for any reason, go into mourning after losing a loved one, or have panic disorder. In this context, the client is asked to contemplate death, similar to the one in Sufism, to imagine his own death, to fictionalize what might happen after his death, and to write them down. The client, who comes with the text he prepared for the next interview, is discussed about his feelings while doing it.

The client, who is exposed to the death that he is deeply afraid of, by contemplation, realizes that the death that he tries to forget by subconsciously is not so catastrophic when it is revealed by talking. In subsequent sessions of therapy, support is received from bibliotherapy.

Having death anxiety and panic disorder, Ayhan applied to ERREM for psychological support. The anxiety level of the client, who has frequent panic attacks, was found to be quite high in the tests given at the beginning of the therapy. It was observed that the client, who lost his father a year ago, tried to take death out of his life, but could not get rid of his subconscious death anxiety. After what his father's death made him felt was talked, the client was asked to imagine and write down his own death and the aftermath in detail. In the ongoing process focusing on the meaning of death and life, the client was asked to read Mustafa Ulusoy's book "Tell Me Something While You Go (Giderken Bana Bir şeyler Söyle)" and write the parts that reflect him. In the following process, the client stated that the current scary image of death in his mind was erased; instead the image of the angel of death smiling at him appeared. He stated that he understood that the death that his father faced and that he would surely face one day was not as painful as he thought. At the end of the therapy, the client, who had a significant decrease in the level of anxiety and the frequency of attacks, now gained the ability to face death and completely got rid of panic attacks.

3.6. Dreams and Their Interpretations in Nafs Psychology

Since the essence of the spirit is given by the Creator, the Creator gives messages to people through dreams in the state of sleep, where the body is pacified and the spirit becomes active. Depending on which layer of spirit a person nurtures and develops, the Creator sometimes warns the person, sometimes appreciates, and sometimes disciplines the person. Construing the dream correctly and interpreting the given symbols correctly gives direction to one's life. In order to understand the dream correctly, it is important to look at the dream phenomenon.

Interpretations of Dreams

1. Objective Interpretations: In the dream, the emotions, relational patterns, similar events, behaviors and problems in the past are evaluated. These are like rehearsal of real relationships in the dream. Dream interpretations in the works known as dream interpretations, can be considered as objective interpretations.

2. Subjective Interpretations: It is the interpretation of the figures in the dream as representations of some aspects of the dreamer's personality. Everything seen in a dream actually represents the person himself. The protagonist of the dream scene takes part in each play subjectively and objectively.

According to nafs psychology, dreaming is an important practice used in therapies as it is seen as a more effective way to reach the subconscious than hypnosis or free association.

Application of the Exercise: In nafs psychology, the dreams of the client at the beginning and later stages of the therapy process determine the course of therapy. At this point, dreams help the person to know himself in all aspects, including complexes and shadows, to face negative personality traits, and give important clues about determining the course of therapy. In dream interpretation based on nafs psychology, the approaches of the Qur'an and Sufism are utilized, as well as Jung's understanding of symbols and archetypes.

CONCLUSION

Although particular modern approaches in psychology (e.g. transpersonal psychology) have considered and studied spiritual aspect of human being majority of modern psychology approaches have considered human beings to be composed of nafs al-ammara which represents a basement, and they have developed a hedonist understanding, thinking that human happiness will be achieved by doing things that satisfy their ego and give pleasure.

In the psychology of the nafs, the point modern psychology has reached has been seen as the lowest level of the nafs. The freedom and happiness of man begins with removing the shackles of the nafs al-ammara and going beyond material pleasures. At this level, a person will evaluate the events from above by surpassing the nafs al-ammara and ascending to the upper levels of the nafs, and will contact the spiritual heart area with the clarity of the gaze. People's view of themselves, the world and events will change, and with this experienced state, they will be effective in coping with common mental disorders of our age such as depression, anxiety and panic disorder.

When we look at the nafs, heart and spirit, which is the triple structure of human personality of nafs psychology; The nafs is considered as a structure that is thought to be the main source of lust and passion and that prevents a person from commune with God, and it is thought that individual growth can be achieved by overcoming this obstacle. The heart is the structure that encompasses deep intelligence and wisdom, is the source of gnosis and is seen as a sacred temple. The spirit, on the other hand, is expressed as a state of consciousness that can affect the material structure, but is non-material and each layer must be fed at a certain rate.

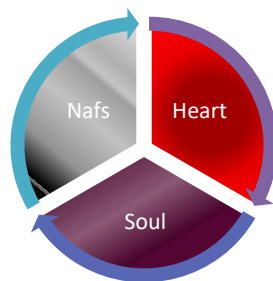


Figure 2 Nafs Psychology Personality Structure Chart

Nafs psychology sees diving into transcendence without having the nafs, heart and spirit fully trained as getting away from the truth, like trying to taste the honey by licking a jar of honey from the outside. The nafs psychology approach, which states that the mind of a person whose nafs, heart and spirit are trained opens to new perceptions, feels different aspects of truth, and that these new dimensions continue to exist in a different reality, suggested that the consciousness of being human can be reached in this way.

In conclusion, nafs psychology will have an effective function in transitioning soul-centered psychology, as Allport has stated, and in reaching the concept of transendence aimed at by transpersonal psychology. This research, which is the first academic study in Turkey on the psychology of the nafs, which can be the fifth force of psychology with its contribution to reaching the transpersonal, is an important beginning for the field of psychology and will open different windows to the scientists in the field. Following this qualitative study, in which the general portrait of the psychology of the nafs is tried to be drawn, empirical studies can be conducted on the effects of the states encountered in the steps of the nafs and the rituals of the heart purification on the psychology of the individual.

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