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Diseases of the Power of Anger and Their Treatment

As already said, the Power of Anger has three states: deficiency, moderation, and excess; each of which will now be discussed in detail.

a. The Condition of Excess

Foolhardiness: Foolhardiness, a disease of the Power of Anger, is reckless entrance into dangerous and deadly situations despite the warnings of both reason and religion.

The Holy Qur'an explicitly forbids it when it says:

....and cast not yourselves by your own hands into destruction (2:195)

The way to cure foolhardiness is to think carefully before embarking on any particular course of action to see whether reason and religion approve of it or not. If it meets their approval, one may act upon it, but he must abstain from it if disapproved by any one of them. It may even be necessary for him to abstain from actions in which the amount of danger is not great, so as to curtail his propensity for foolhardiness. He must maintain this course until he is certain that he has been completely cured of the vice, and until the condition of moderation, namely courage, has been reached. Once he has reached this state, he must try to preserve it.

b. The Condition of Deficiency

Cowardice: Cowardice is timidity under circumstances which call for immediate violent action. Cowardice, the opposite of angry and violent temper, results in a feeling of inferiority, irresolution, melancholy, and lack of self-confidence. In a tradition attributed to the Holy Prophet, it is stated:

اللهم إنى اعوذ بك من البخل وأعوذ بك من الجبن.

O God, I seek Thy refuge from miserliness and cowardice.

The way to treat the disease of cowardice is to stimulate anger and violent temper in oneself, and take a violent course of action when it is not too dangerous to do so, until the soul arrives at the state of courage, which is the moderate condition of the Power of Anger. He must then be on his guard not to move out of the state of moderation towards the condition of excess.

c. The Condition of Moderation

Courage: Courage is the manifestation of the Power of Anger in its state of moderation, and is defined as subservience of the Power of Anger to the Power of Intellect. This subservience is a most admirable trait, and is the cause of numerous spiritual virtues. It is attained after successful struggle against foolhardiness and cowardice as the result of constant perseverance and exercise.

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