

## The Power of Suggestion in Self-improvement and Self-Growth

### What Is the Power of Suggestion and How Can It Help Us Grow?

The power of suggestion refers to the intentional and conscious influence over our own thoughts and those of others. However, how much can we trust the power of suggestion, can it truly impact people's lives and enhance their abilities?

You may have heard about suggestion and its positive and negative effects; but can it really change a person's personality and lead them toward success? The truth is that suggestion is indeed beneficial and possesses incredible power. Many great scientists, such as Einstein and Newton, have referred to the power of suggestion and its effects in their writings.

The power of suggestion is so strong that it can either make a person ill or help him recover from severe illnesses. Nowadays, suggestion is used as a tool for overcoming mood disorders like depression, negative thinking, hopelessness, and obsessive behaviors (e.g., OCD). Additionally, one of the most effective ways to instill truths and knowledge into our hearts is through suggestion and repetition, striving to embed them within ourselves. Perhaps this is the secret behind the repetition of many *Dhikrs* (remembering God). Suggestion can also be used to control the soul. Sometimes, illnesses, temptations of Satan, environmental conditions, and our relationships with people around us, can lead to laziness and apathy; in such cases, we must use the power of suggestion to create conditions for the growth and nourishment of our human spirit.

In previous articles, we discussed the concept of suggestion and its importance. In this article, we aim to explore the effects and power of suggestion on the path of self-improvement and self-growth.

### **The Power of Suggestion in Awakening the Heart**

As previously mentioned, we all need a sound heart to move toward eternity and fulfill the purpose of our creation. To achieve this, we must impel our hearts to long for the unseen; in other words, we should instill a sense of longing in our hearts. We can think of the heart as a toddler that does not know how to talk, and we want to encourage them to talk. It is important to note that due to the dominance of our lower beloveds over our us, suggestion may initially seem untrue; however, since the truth of our hearts aligns with the concept of "There Is No Deity but Allah," it ultimately leads to the growth and strengthening of the precious Soul Child or Divine Spirit that has been breathed into us.

Sometimes, it is necessary to feign love and act as if we are devoted, even if it feels insincere; this untrue affection can become genuine over time and awaken the heart. For example, we can imitate the Infallibles (Peace be upon them) and recite their Duas; by doing so, we gradually indoctrinate ourselves to love God until one day we speak the truth like the Infallibles. Many individuals may initially develop a tendency toward exaggeration in their relationship with God, only to find that over time, their words gradually take on a more genuine tone. Some people are even unwilling to invest time in expressing insincere affection, which reflects the deeply troubled state of their being.

### **The Mechanism of Suggestion to the Heart**

Essentially, the heart's mechanism for guiding the body is similar to a car engine, which sometimes requires an external force to start. This external force, in the case of the heart, is suggestion. At times, in our daily routines, the heart can become sluggish or unmotivated, and in such moments, suggestion can help us overcome obstacles. For instance, although we may want to wake up for the night prayer, our existential acquisitions and assets often make it difficult to rise at dawn. The remedy in such cases lies in self-suggestion. We must gently persuade the soul and impose the desired action on it until it gradually becomes accustomed to it. If left unchecked, however, the soul will be overtaken by thoughts, imagination, and illusions, leading us to the depths of Hell.

Human existence is fundamentally connected to the things it becomes attached to and the habits it forms. Unfortunately, this is often neglected. We must plan for our hearts and be mindful of what they become accustomed to, as we should avoid becoming attached to things that cause our spirits to become depressed. It is of little benefit to occasionally perform good deeds or visit religious sites. Instead, we need a structured plan, perhaps on a weekly or daily basis. For instance, dedicating one month each year to the memory of Imam Hussain (Peace be upon him), but then forgetting him the remaining eleven months, will not significantly affect the health of our hearts. It is far more effective to greet him daily at a specific time, fostering a continuous connection with him.

### **Types of Suggestion for Awakening the Heart**

Just as when we raise a child, we need to repeatedly instill a lesson in them through various methods, we must also prepare our hearts by repeatedly suggesting different forms of verbal *dhikr*, such as prayers or righteous deeds. Here are a few methods of suggestion:

a) One effective method for awakening and strengthening the heart is through physical movements, like chest-beating or participation in processions. These actions are like pushing a car that will not start due to the cold; once we push, the engine comes to life. For example, when we begin chest-beating during mourning ceremonies, tears often flow, and we establish a deep emotional connection with the Infallible we mourn for.

b) Sermon listening is another method of suggestion; in order to "become" we constantly need reminders. The Infallibles (Peace be upon them) also encouraged their companions to preach to them, stating that the impact of listening is greater than that of merely having knowledge. As a famous saying suggests, "The human being is nourished through listening; the animal is nourished through food."

c) Various forms of verbal *dhikr*, such as reciting Salawat loudly, are also considered verbal suggestion .

d) Visiting the shrines of the Infallibles (Peace be upon them) and their descendants is another form of suggestion. Sometimes, when we visit the shrine of Imam Reza (Peace be upon him), our hearts may feel cold and numb. In such cases, standing beside others who are crying or mourning and allowing their emotional state to influence us can serve as a form of suggestion, helping to awaken our own hearts.

In this lesson, we discussed the power of suggestion on the path of self-improvement. We mentioned that suggestion and repetition are among the methods for controlling the soul and awakening the heart. We also provided examples of different types of suggestion.

What other types of suggestive methods have you experienced for awakening the heart? If you have previously overlooked the effects of suggestion, it is time to start now and benefit from its positive impacts!