

The Role of *Muḥāsabah al-Nafs* in Conflict Resolution

Senad Mrahorović

Abstract

Muḥāsabat al-naḥs (self-accountability or self-reflection) is a concept referring to the spiritual practice developed by early Muslim scholars in the field of Sufism and Islamic psychology. It is principally founded on the Qur'an and the Sunnah. *Al-muḥāsabah* as a spiritual method signifying cleansing and illuminating a self/soul is widely practiced by followers and adherents of the spiritual path in Islam. It embodies a well-constructed procedure within the spiritual process called *Tazkiyat al-Naḥs* (the Purification of the Soul). Since the notion of *al-naḥs* denotes several connotations mainly related to human being, its nature from the very beginning of Islam occupies not only the central question in Islamic scholarship, but also the essential subject in Islamic spirituality. The *naḥs* is endowed with numerous qualities and powers both, positive and negative. The positive or good qualities of it need to be cherished and cultivated, while the negative or evil ones ought to be cleansed and eradicated. It is believed that all evil qualities of the soul are source/s of sinful thoughts, words and deeds that usually lead to harmful, violent and catastrophic consequences triggered by it. Thus, in order to properly address the issue of a conflict, it is required to start with the very nature of human self or soul as the most feasible cause. In this article we examine the role of *al-muḥāsabah* or self-reflection in conflict resolution.

Keywords: spirituality, self-reflection, purification, conflict, conflict resolution.

Introduction

In this paper, I will analyze the concept of *al-muḥāsabah* and the spiritual role it has in resolving conflicts, be they within oneself, or in relation to others. The practice of *muḥāsabah* is used for self-development on the spiritual path within Islamic tradition. As such, it is an Islamic ritual prescribed by the Qur'an and the Prophet of Islam. In the context of the contemporary psychology, *muḥāsabah* may well correspond to the notions of self-reflection, self-regulation, introspection and other similar variables used in various fields of psychology for the improvement of one's wellbeing. Within the traditional Islamic context however, *muḥāsabah* is not only used in psychological domain of human beings, if by such a domain only mental characteristics coupled with human behavior is understood, but also in relation to the spiritual states and stages as the consequence of one's faith, that is, the intellectual as well as spiritual awareness of Divine Reality. Thus, *muḥāsabah* is a holistic ritual used to perfect oneself and as a consequence, by extension of such a perfection, to bring positive impact on others, including people, nature and all beings situated therein as well.

The term *muḥāsabah* derives from the root *ḥ-s-b*, meaning to count, calculate, reckon, forecast. It is the verbal noun of the verb *ḥā-sa-ba*, that is, to settle account, to pay the bill, to call

to account. In case when the verb is used with preposition ‘*’alā*’ (at/on), followed by the term *nafs* (self/soul) it changes the meaning to the following denotations: to protect oneself, to care for oneself, to be vigilant. *Muḥāsabah* therefore stands for settling account, calling for responsibility, examination of self (conscience), review, check, control, concern, and care; hence, self-reflection, self-examination, self-inspection etc.

¹ As for the root *ḥ-s-b* used in the Qur’an, it appears in eight derived forms 109 times. These forms are the following: first verbal class (*ḥasiba*) to think, to conclude, to view; third verbal class as mentioned earlier (*ḥasaba*) to take to account, to call for responsibility; eighth verbal class (*iḥtasaba*) to take into account, to expect, to think; noun I (*ḥasb*) sufficient, enough; noun II (*ḥusbān*) reckoning, calculation, (calamity); nominal noun (*ḥasīb*) reckoner, accountant; active participle (*ḥāsib*) reckoner; verbal noun [form III] (*ḥisāb*) reckoning, account, measure, due.²

***Muḥāsabah* as the spiritual training for self-perfection**

Within the traditional Islamic spirituality, there exist numerous systems developed by Muslim masters and mystagogues with the aim of assisting devoted disciples on their spiritual journey. These systems in principle, are all based on the teachings of the Qur’an and the prophetic Sunnah. Thus, the idea of *muḥāsabah*, although not in this specific form, frequently features throughout the Qur’an. For example, the Qur’an states: “O Believers! Be mindful of Allah and let every soul carefully consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow. And fear Allah: certainly, Allah is All-Aware of what you do” (59:18).³ Ibn Kathir suggested that this verse indicates the notion of self-reflection, or more precisely, reflection and evaluation of one’s deeds as a consequence of believers’ awareness of God, and their spiritual grounding for the Day of Judgement.⁴ The connection between self-reflection and the awareness of God becomes more evident in the following verse: “And be not like those who forget God, such that He makes them forget their souls. It is they who are the iniquitous” (59:19). The apophatic reasoning used in this verse shows that the forgetfulness of God and oneself, according to al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1319 AD), is directly caused by ignorance or negligence of the need of the soul and its proper treatment, that is, purification and spiritual nurturing.⁵ Another perspective on the above verse argues that “those who forget God, such that He makes them forget their souls is an inversion of the famous saying, sometimes regarded as a ḥadīth, “He who knows himself knows his Lord.” Since forgetfulness of God is the cause of forgetfulness of self, remembering the self-necessitates that God first remember the self, and God’s remembering the self-will itself necessitate the self’s remembering itself, as in 2:152: Remember Me, and I shall remember you. From this perspective, whoever does not have self-knowledge does not know God and will be unfortunate in the next life. Thus 8:45 enjoins, Be firm and remember God much, that haply you may prosper.”⁶

As for the Sunnah of the Prophet of Islam, it treats *muḥāsabah* practice more directly, by providing numerous ways of cleansing human soul and illuminating it on its path toward salvation. “Shaddād bin Aws narrated that the Prophet (S.A.W.S) said: ‘The clever person is the one who subjugates his soul, and works for what is after death. And the incapable is the one who follows his desires and merely hopes in Allah.’ [He said:] The meaning of his saying: ‘Who subjugates his

soul,' is to say the one who reckons with his soul in the world, before he is reckoned with, on the Day of Judgement. It has been related that 'Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb said: 'Reckon with yourselves before you are reckoned with, and prepare for the Greatest Inquisition. The reckoning of the Day of Judgement is only light for the one who reckoned with himself in the world.' And, it has been related that Maimun bin Mihran said: 'The slave (of Allah) will be a Taqī until he has reckoned himself, just as he would account for where his business partner got his food and clothing.'"⁷

The concept of *muḥāsabah* as part of self-purification in Hadith literature has been portrayed through several terms, including, ablution (*wudū'*),⁸ cleanliness (*tahārah*),⁹ purification (*tazkiyah*),¹⁰ and others. However, its methodical aspect, as one of the crucial techniques in spiritual path was developed by early Muslim scholars and Sufī sages such as Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 728 AD) and Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 857), and later additionally enriched by great philosophers and Sufī masters like al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 AD), al-Jilānī (d. 1166 AD), Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240 AD), and many others. Al-Baṣrī was one of the most prolific spiritual authorities in early Islam, who, ironically earned his prominence due to the religious and socio-political upheavals brought about by the internal conflicts within Muslim community. It might have been that these struggles in fact, contributed in shaping his deeply sensitive personality to emphasize the significance of self-reflection as a form of protection from misunderstanding of the right path in Islam. For him, as noted by D.A. Ede, "the true Muslim must not only refrain from committing sin but must live in a state of lasting anxiety, brought about by the certainty of death and the uncertainty of one's destiny in the hereafter."¹¹ He used to say: "O son of Adam, your deeds are witness for you, so be wary as to how they reach your Lord."¹² For Hasan, the aim to perfect one's daily behavior, not only one's words and deeds, but also thoughts and inner desires, to avoid falling into a trap of hypocrisy, in addition to one's interaction with others, represent a sort of practical interpretation of the Qur'anic "*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf, wa nahy 'an al-munkar*" (enjoining/doing good and forbidding/avoiding wrong¹³): "Son of Adam, refrain from the prohibitions of Allah by being a true servant (*al-'abd*), and be grateful for the provisions that has been portioned for you by Allah. Only then shall you be rich. Be good to your neighbor and love for the people what you love for yourself..."¹⁴ Here, as in many other occasions, al-Baṣrī underlines the importance of purifying inner qualities of the self as its positive or negative impact through the process of various interactions is manifested on both, the individual and the societal levels.

Further systematization and expansion of the doctrine of *muḥāsabah* was seen through the writing by al-Muḥāsibī, whose very name, or rather his appellation,¹⁵ reveals the role he played in solidifying the framework of self-reflection or self-inspection as expressive and behavioral processes vital in strengthening emotional and spiritual intelligence. Al-Muḥāsibī was yet another polymath in early Islam, following the footsteps of his predecessors. He excelled in several disciplines, including, theology, jurisprudence, philosophy and spirituality and has written nearly two hundred works. Al-Muḥāsibī was well aware of the bifurcation between the outward and the inward forms of asceticism (*al-zuhd*), that was felt during his time. He believed that the exoteric form of ascetic devotion is disposed to possible deficiencies and as such it is unlikely to serve the purpose of spiritual path. "As soon as outward piety becomes a part of a person's image," writes J. Vaan Ess, "it can act as a screen for the hidden intentions of the ego. Man has to recognize that sinful actions are frequently defined not by their objective reality but by the subjective attitude of

the sinner.”¹⁶ In order to seal any opportunity to allowing those vicious aims of lower self be manifested under the pretext of spirituality, al-Muḥāsibī reinforce the practice of *al-muḥāsabah* as a spiritual exercise on daily basis, intended to purify not only one’s outward actions, but more importantly, inward intentions of a believer.¹⁷

The alchemical power of *muḥāsabah* in relation to self with all its spiritual benefits may be summarized by al-Junaidi’s (d. 910 AD) definition of Sufism, who himself was al-Muḥāsibī’s most prominent student and follower: “Sufism means that God makes you to die to yourself and to become alive in Him. It is to purify the heart from recurrence of creaturely temptations, to bid farewell to all natural inclinations, to subdue the qualities which belong to human nature, to keep far from the claims of the senses, to adhere to spiritual qualities, to ascend by means of Divine knowledge, to be occupied with that which is eternally the best, to give wise counsel to all people, faithfully to observe the Truth, and to follow the Prophet in respect to the religious Law.”¹⁸ Here, several notions are used to indicate the lower self, namely, dying (annihilation of lower self), living (submitting to Divine will), heart (here used as a soul), natural inclinations (desires of lower self), human qualities and senses (appetites of lower self). The second part of definition designates the spiritual orientation and aims to be sought: spiritual qualities, awareness of God, Divine knowledge, eternal contentment, wisdom, equal treatment of people, devotion and trust, and following the Sunnah of the Prophet. As long as any of the negative attributes remain within the self, the spiritual battle between good and evil persists. Thus, the practice of *muḥāsabah* together with other spiritual methods, aids the soul to become a victor in this enduring psychological contest. In this context Ibn ‘Arabi in addressing his close friend al-Mahdawī (d. 1224 AD) underlines the noble qualities of those who were successful in their spiritual journey: “You have gained (i.e. spiritual gains), my brother... your submission to God, your humility and compliance to Him in respect of who you find, regardless of whether he is one whom people notice or nobody cares about. Also, you do not consider your worldly position that is, peoples’ praising of you, kissing your hand or the coming of Sultans to your door. This is the height of just treatment, may God keep you firm... By God, you have gained, my friend, qualities which cause heads to soar from necks, a station (*maqām*) which is unaffected by the states (*al-aḥwāl*), whose brilliance is not exceeded by supererogatory works...”¹⁹ In the other words, the aim of the spiritual treatment of the soul in Islam is to provide holistic benefits not only to oneself alone, but to its surrounding, be it an individual body, family, society, state or the natural environment as a whole.

Due to its efficiency on the spiritual path, the idea of *muḥāsabah* never ceased to attract Muslim scholars, particularly Sufis, who were persistent to provide their audience with the finest methodology related to the *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*, covering minutest intricacies of the scheming nature of the soul and providing adequate solutions for it. Numerous other Sufi scholars have written on the subject, exploring it further as new challenges emerged. Al-Ghazālī for example devoted numerous chapters in his *Iḥyā’* to the nature of the soul and its purification such as *Kitāb al-Murāqabah wa’l-Muḥāsabah* (Vigilance and Self-Examination), *Kitāb Riyāḍat al-Nafs* (On Disciplining the Soul) and many others throughout vols. 3 and 4 of the *Ihya*.²⁰ In similar fashion, Ibn ‘Arabī, who dedicated several chapters in his *al-Futūḥāt*, to *muḥāsabah* and other methods of *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*, composed an exclusive work on the subject entitled *Rūḥ al-Quds fī Munāṣaḥat al-Nafs* in which the author expounded his critique of certain Sufi practices of his day, but

nevertheless, underlined the importance of self-reflection: “Those who have maintained the “foundations” are those who subject themselves to a kind of constant self-questioning of their inner aims and motives... The true wayfarers are those who maintain the “Sufi” or “Holy” spirit (*Rûh al-Quds*), who maintain this indispensable self-interrogation (*muhāsaba, ijtihād*).”²¹

***Muḥāsabat al-nafs* and its role in conflict resolution**

The notion of human conflict involves a psychological state or sociological situation where conflicting ideas or interests exist without a possibility resolving them altogether. The conflict may be “an active disagreement between people with opposing views and principles,” or “a situation in which beliefs, needs, facts, etc. are very different and cannot easily exist together or both be true.”²² There are numerous kinds of conflicts such as individual, social, or natural, each being divided into several categories, but they all belong to either internal or external type of disagreement. The conflict is usually comprised of three main elements, namely, a cause, crisis, and outcome, and each usually goes through three main stages i.e., tension, dispute, and actions.²³ However, there is no doubt that most conflicts related to human beings are simply the outward manifestations of the inward states or stages of a self. Thus, the resolution of a conflict according to most conflict analysts, necessitates first of all, the investigation of cause/s in order to arrive to most effective resolution.²⁴ In this approach to the conflict resolution, we will investigate how the practice of *al-muḥāsabah* which in itself is none other than active participation in the conflict between virtues and vices of soul, can contribute to the solutions of conflicts, regardless of their nature, and how it can help to minimize detrimental consequences of conflicts such as pain, violence, life and property loss. As conflicts are natural in almost all hierarchy of creation, from physical worlds to that of subtle and spiritual kinds, it would be therefore futile to speak about avoiding conflict per se, but rather avoiding its damaging aspects and outcomes.

In their meticulous analysis of human self, Muslim scholars discovered that it is endowed with numerous powers, qualities and attributes that can produce, similar to a conflict, either positive or negative results. They have studied in detail all the said qualities and provided the proper methodical treatments of it, known by a few terms such as *munaṣaḥat al-nafs* (counseling the self), *murājaʿat al-nafs* (observing of the self), *muḥāsabat al-nafs* (self-reflection/self-evaluation), *mujāhadat al-nafs* (struggle against the self) and others, all of which are regarded as methods or methodologies of *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*, as mentioned earlier.

The soul from the spiritual perspective in Islam is endowed with countless qualities and attributes, not to mention its several divisions based on various considerations, its states, stages, and other characteristics of which voluminous works have been composed over the centuries. Among the positive or beneficial qualities of the soul, which may be termed here as *al-nafs al-tayyibah* (good self/soul), are faculties of perceptions (abilities to know [*al-ʿilm*], comprehend [*al-idrāk*], believe [*al-īmān*], to love [*al-ḥubb*] to worship [*al-taʿabbud*] etc.), gratitude (*al-shukr*), mercy (*al-raḥmah*), generosity (*al-jawd*), regret (*al-nadam*), grief (*al-tahassur*), sadness (*al-ḥuzn*) and others. In contrast to the good self stands *al-nafs al-khabīthah* (despicable soul) with its negative attributes such as ignorance (*al-jahl*), hate (*al-kurh*), enmity (*al-ʿadāwah*), disbelief (*al-*

kufr), disobedience (*al-‘isyān*), ingratitude (*al-juhūd*), cruelty (*al-qiswah*), jealousy (*al-ḥasad*), vanity (*al-kibr*) and other vices.²⁵ The prevailing attributes in the analysis of a certain soul or self may be taken as a criteria for its proper designation, classification, state and station.

In his treatment of the soul, al-Muḥāsibī for example, focuses on the concept of desire (*al-hawā’*) as he considered it to be the primary cause of disobedience and the rest of corruptive traits: “He defined desire as “the attachment of the soul to its appetites (*al-shahawāt*) and its inclination to ease and comfort. Thus, according to the strength of the appetites, the soul will be afflicted with weakness and then the desires (*al-hawā’*) will overpower it.”²⁶ He further explained his stance on the soul by stating: “Strict adherence to the desires (*ittibā’ al-hawā’*) that are concealed within souls (*al-nufūs*), which are consequently pursued by the heart such as: conceit (*al-kibr*); malice (*al-ghill*); envy (*al-ḥasad*); ostentation (*al-riyā’*); having a bad opinion [of someone] (*sū’ al-ẓann*); believing in the evil of the conscience (*i’tiqād sū’ al-ḍamīr*); fallacious flattery (*al-mudāhana*); the love of praise (*ḥubb al-maḥmada*); the love of accumulating wealth (*ḥubb jam’ al-māl*); excess (*al-takāthur*); bragging (*al-tafākḥur*) and the love of rank (*ḥubb al-sharaf*.”²⁷

Since all of the vicious attributes of soul are in conflict with the spiritual motives of Islam, the principal aim of *muḥāsabah* or any other methods for healing the soul is strictly spiritual or religious. However, the impact of such healing treatment extends to all other aspects of human life, from one’s personal development, interaction with family, community, natural environment, to more advanced relations in professional occupations such as public or private organizations, state governance, international affairs and others. If a conflict occurs in any of the said domains, the quality of its resolution in principle by virtue of *muḥāsabah* does not change, since the methodology of *muḥāsabah* deals not only with consequences of conflict, but primarily with its main cause, which, in almost all cases, is associated with negative attributes of human soul. Thus, in order to prevent harmful consequences of given conflict, one is to determine a cause within a soul and instigate its appropriate treatment. The proper analysis of the problem in this process is crucial to solve the case. In this regard, al-Muḥāsibī for example, in reference to the patient-soul, offers his masterly advice: “Don’t be deceived by what it makes manifest to you, do not hope for what it wishes, if you released it you will have gone astray and if you fulfilled its request you will be destroyed. If you became heedless of taking it to account, then you will have fled [responsibility], if you were unable to oppose it, you will be drowned and if you submitted to its desires you will have been appointed [a place] in the hellfire. It [the *nafs*] has no truth and no good can come from it; it is the cause of every tribulation, a treasure trove of disgrace, the vault of Iblīs and the abode of every evil. It is as its Creator described it [i.e. *ammāra bi’l-sū*], every time it manifests fear then you are secure, every time it claims to be truthful it is lying and every time it mentions sincerity it is ostentation and self-conceit.”²⁸

Needless to say, al-Muḥāsibī here does not consider the soul as such to be negative, but rather its harmful features and traits. In this context, scholars have employed a number of other terms such as *al-‘aql* (intellect/mind), *al-qalb* (heart), *al-rūḥ* (spirit), *al-nafs* (soul) are used to distinguish between various aspects of the self.²⁹ Nevertheless, the multiplicity of terms, as noted by W.C. Chittick, “does not imply a multiplicity of independent entities. Instead, the words [i.e. terms] are names given to a single reality – the unseen dimension of the human being – in respect

of its different attributes, dimensions, or stages.”³⁰ In similar way, the notion of conflict is regarded, despite its numerous types and categories. Thus, in order to approach a proper resolution of it that will last and benefit both the self and its surrounding, not only one side of those involved in it, especially if the conflict is of violent and harmful nature such as wars and other human perpetrations. There are numerous examples of this sort of failed resolutions whereby only the interests of one side, usually more powerful one, is taken as a condition for the given resolution. The Palestine-Israel conflict may serve as the most fitting case for the most futile attempts in crisis resolution. However, as long as the mundane interests such as socio-political or economic domination serve as the main platforms for conflict resolutions instead of the fundamental human rights such as justice, equality, equity, and freedom regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, or any other rank, that can only be realized by virtue of the spiritual purification of the self through *muḥāsabah*, *munāṣahah*, *mujāhadah*, *murāqabah*, *murāja’ah*, there remains a little hope for just and fair approaches to conflicts, let alone their successful and lasting resolutions.

Bibliography

Al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid. *Vigilance and Self-Examination*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2015.

Al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid. *On Disciplining the Soul and Breaking the Two Desires*. Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1995.

Al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid. *Revival of Religious Learning (Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn)*. Karachi: Darul-Ishaat, 1993.

Al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid. *Adapted Summary of Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn: The Forty Principles of Religion*. London: Turath Publishing, 2016.

Chittick, William C. “On Sufi Psychology: A Debate between the Soul and the Spirit.” Ashtiyani, S.J. et al (Eds.). *Consciousness and Reality: Studies in Memory of Toshihiko Izutsu*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998.

Ibn Al-Jawzī, Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū’l-Faraj. *The Beacon of Basra: Etiquette, Wisdom and Asceticism of Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī*. Birmingham: Dar As-Sunnah Publishers, 2019.

Mishra, Anil Kumar. *MGPE 008: Gandhian Approach to Conflict Resolution*. Bangalore: Gyaniversity Publications, 2021.

Mrahorović, Senad. “The Concept of Fiṭrah in Spiritual and Rational Orientation: An Islamic Perspective.” *Religions: A Scholarly Journal*. Issue 17, August, 2023.

Nasr, S.H. (Ed.). *The Study Qur’an: A New Translation and Commentary*. New York: HarperOne, 2017.

Picken, Gavin. *Spiritual Purification in Islam: The Life and Works of al-Muḥāsibī*. London: Routledge, 2011.

Smith, Margaret. *Al-Muḥāsibī: An Early Mystic of Baghdad*. Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1980.

<https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/محاسبة/>?

<https://corpus.quran.com/qurandictionary.jsp?q=Hsb>.

<https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:2459>.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/al-Hasan-al-Basri>.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/muhasabah>.

<https://ibnarabisociety.org/three-dimensions-of-the-ruh-huzayfa-mangera/>.

<https://ibnarabisociety.org/three-dimensions-of-the-ruh-huzayfa-mangera/>.

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/conflict>.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/conflict-escalation-stage-1-tension-tristan-bagnall>.

¹ <https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/محاسبة/>?

² <https://corpus.quran.com/qurandictionary.jsp?q=Hsb>.

³ In *Sūrat al-Shams*, the Qur'an clearly stresses the significance of the purification of the self by stating: "And by the soul and 'the One' Who fashioned it, then with 'the knowledge of' right and wrong inspired it! Successful indeed is the one who purifies their soul, and doomed is the one who corrupts it! (91: 7-10).

⁴ S.H. Nasr (Ed.) *The Study Qur'an: A New Translation and Commentary* (New York: HarperOne, 2017), pp. 1355.

⁵ S.H. Nasr (Ed.), *Ibid.* pp. 1355.

⁶ S.H. Nasr (Ed.), *Ibid.* pp. 1355.

⁷ <https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:2459>.

⁸ "If a Muslim performs ablution and does it well and offers prayer, all his (sins) during the period from one prayer to another would be pardoned by Allah" (Sahih Muslim, 227a / <https://sunnah.com/muslim/2>).

⁹ "Purity/Cleanliness is half of faith" (<https://sunnah.com/muslim:223>).

¹⁰ "One night, when he (ﷺ) exited his Salat, I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: 'O Allah, I ask You of Your mercy, that You guide by it my heart, and gather by it my affair, and bring together that which has been scattered of my affairs, and correct with it that which is hidden from me, and raise by it that which is apparent from me, and purify by it my actions...'" (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, 3419 / <https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:3419>).

¹¹ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/al-Hasan-al-Basri>.

¹² Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī, *The Beacon of Basra: Etiquette, Wisdom and Asceticism of Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī* (Birmingham: Dar As-Sunnah Publishers, 2019), pp. 34.

¹³ "Let there be a group among you who call 'others' to goodness, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil—it is they who will be successful (Ali 'Imran: 104).

¹⁴ Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī, *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁵ Gavin Picken, *Spiritual Purification in Islam: The Life and Works of al-Muḥāsibī* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 77.

¹⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/muhasabah>.

¹⁷ In his autobiographical reference al-Muḥāsibī wrote: "[A]fter a long consideration it was made clear to me, through the Word of God, and the Sunna of His Prophet, and the consensus of opinion of the faithful, that following after passion makes a man blind to the true path, and leads him away from the Truth..." (Margaret Smith, *Al-Muḥāsibī: An Early Mystic of Baghdad* (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1980), pp. 19).

¹⁸ Margaret Smith, *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18. Margaret Smith believed that this definition was perhaps based on al-Muḥāsibī's life as every aspect in it seems to reflect his noble and saintly character.

¹⁹ <https://ibnarabisociety.org/three-dimensions-of-the-ruh-huzayfa-mangera/>.

²⁰ Al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid, *Vigilance and Self-Examination*, translated by A.F. Shaker (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2015); *On Disciplining the Soul and Breaking the Two Desires*, translated by T.J. Winter (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1995); *Revival of Religious Learning (Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn)*, translated by Fazl-ul-Karim (Karachi: Darul-Ishaat, 1993).

²¹ <https://ibnarabisociety.org/three-dimensions-of-the-ruh-huzayfa-mangera/>.

²² <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/conflict>.

²³ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/conflict-escalation-stage-1-tension-tristan-bagnall>.

²⁴ Anil Kumar Mishra, *MGPE 008: Gandhian Approach to Conflict Resolution* (Bangalore: Gyaniversity Publications, 2021), pp. 49-50.

²⁵ Gavin Picken, *Ibid*, pp. 174; Al-Ghazali, (Adapted Summary of *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*) *The Forty Principles of Religion*, translated by Nasir Abdussalam (London: Turath Publishing, 2016), parts 3 and 4.

²⁶ Gavin Picken, *Ibid*, pp. 175.

²⁷ Gavin Picken, *Ibid*, pp. 175.

²⁸ Gavin Picken, *Ibid*, pp. 185.

²⁹ For detailed exposition of this problem see al-Ghazali's chapter entitled "Soul and its attributes," in his *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* [translated by Fazl-ul-Karim], (Karachi: Darul-Ishaat, 1993), vol. 3.

³⁰ William C. Chittick, "On Sufi Psychology: A Debate between the Soul and the Spirit," in S.J. Ashtiyani et al (Eds.), *Consciousness and Reality: Studies in Memory of Toshihiko Izutsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998), pp. 344. See also S. Mrahorović, "The Concept of Fiṭrah in Spiritual and Rational Orientation: An Islamic Perspective," in *Religions: A Scholarly Journal*, issue 17, August, 2023.