

THE ESSENCE OF MYSTICISM IN THE LIGHT OF ELIF SHAFAK'S NOVEL FORTY RULES OF LOVE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the mystical experiences within Elif Shafak's "The Forty Rules of Love", using K. Dabrowski's Positive Disintegration theory as the framework for analysis. We delve into the lives of key characters, particularly Ella Rubinstein and Rumi, examining how mysticism transforms them through disintegration. Ella, struggling with family issues, and Rumi, a respected Muslim cleric from Konya, are at the heart of this exploration. Their stories highlight a journey of spiritual awakening, personal growth, and the profound changes brought about by mystical experiences. By applying Dabrowski's theory, we gain new insights into the way these characters evolve, shedding their former selves and embracing the transformative power of mysticism. The thesis also uncovers the differences between Mysticism and Schizophrenia, exploring how spiritual unions that once seemed unbridgeable begin to transcend dogmatic boundaries. This research demonstrates how mysticism, as depicted in "The Forty Rules of Love", unites cultures and religions, pointing to a universal spiritual truth. Through Dabrowski's lens, we also reflect on how one can truly be called a mystic, emphasizing the characters' paths to self-discovery and the harmony that arises from pursuing a higher spiritual purpose.

Keywords: Mysticism, Sufism, Rumi, Spirituality, Divine, Positive Disintegration

INTRODUCTION

Mysticism is a philosophy in which individuals seek to change their lives, make peace within themselves, and unite with the omnipotent or the divine. It is viewed as a path to self-actualization and the purification of the heart. In mysticism, practitioners forsake worldly materialistic pursuits, aiming to connect with the divine without expecting anything in return. The core quest in mysticism is to understand one's identity, the purpose of life, and

the nature of existence after death. Spencer (1971) defines mysticism as "a specific method or approach to reality by making use of intuitive, emotional, and spiritual faculties. These faculties, generally dormant, can be called into play through training under guidance" (p.1). William James, in "The Varieties of Religious Experience" (1961), cites four characteristics of mysticism: Noetic quality, which conveys crucial information in an authoritative and informative manner; ineffability, where mystical

experiences defy words; transiency, since mystical emotions are transient and cannot endure for a lengthy period. In both formulations, emphasis is placed on reaching a higher state of awareness characterized by the presence of the divine essence. For mystics, God is not an external force but an omniscient consciousness that penetrates all phenomena in the world. According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1980), there are three methods to characterize mysticism. To achieve unity with the divine, it is first and foremost a spiritual practice that entails deep concentration or contemplation. Second, it is a method of approaching reality that relies more on intuition than on sensory awareness. Last but not least, mysticism involves flawed and irrational ideas stemming from superstitions and delusions. According to Stace (1960), mysticism can take on two different forms in daily life: introvertive and extrovertive mysticism. This is similar to how humans have introverted and extroverted personalities. According to Stace, the most prevalent and typical type of mysticism is introvertive mysticism, in which the mystic looks within in search of the divine. Extrovertive mysticism looks for signs of the divine in the natural world. Happold (1990) presents three categories of mysticism: Soul Mysticism, God Mysticism, and Nature Mysticism. In Soul Mysticism, the mystic seeks self-discovery, entering into complete isolation from external influences. God mysticism, is a psychological pursuit that seeks the all-powerful and learns about the supreme truth. The process of mystics becoming God involves union without loss of identity but transformation into something else. Nature Mysticism views everything as God, achieving unity with the divine in mystical experience. These categories offer distinct angles for understanding mystical experiences, although they often overlap. Regardless of the category, mysticism involves a psychological journey of self-discovery and spiritual development, transcending ordinary sensory and rational knowledge through a profound contemplative process.

Mysticism in Religions

Mysticism is the ultimate reality in which a mystic feels the presence of God in each and everything to quote this statement "Everything is the

manifestation of God" This idea of everything is the manifestation of God has been explored by many mystics, philosophers, and spiritual thinkers throughout history. This idea is not related to an individual but is the concept of various religions and philosophical traditions. While interpretations of this statement may vary across different belief systems, the underlying idea often centers on the belief that the divine, or God, is present in and as the essence of all existence. In broad terms, the idea of "mysticism" refers to the pursuit of direct experience, insight, or intuition in order to establish oneself as one with ultimate reality, the divine, spiritual truth, or God. It is an essential component of numerous religions. Several religions have a spiritual component known as mysticism. It involves searching for a firsthand, intimate encounter with the ultimate reality or the divine. While religion often encompasses a broader set of beliefs, rituals, and practices, mysticism focuses on the individual's direct connection with the divine through experiences of unity, transcendence, and spiritual insight. It is said that mystics are mostly driven by one desire that, "appears to be the prosecution of a certain spiritual and intangible quest: the finding of a way out or away back to some desirable state in which alone they can satisfy their craving for absolute truth" (Underhill, 1993, p.3). Evelyn Underhill, a British writer and theologian, is renowned for her work "Mysticism: A Look into the origins and evolution of human spiritual consciousness." Her work offers a thorough analysis of mysticism in many different religious traditions. She continues by saying that any religion that values spirituality and love is "...potentially a nursery for mystics: Christianity, Islam, Brahmanism and Buddhism each receives its most sublime interpretation at their hands." (p.96). From the above study, as we know, mystical interpretations typically draw from the profound aspects of religious policy. Christianity often involves a transformation of consciousness and life in faith and love. Hindu mysticism, or Vedanta, aims at the realization of the self and the ultimate reality, Brahman. Buddhism is more about achieving a state of perfect calm, freedom, and enlightenment, often through meditation. In Islam, particularly in Sufism, it's about knowing the reality of heavenly love and knowledge through firsthand, personal interactions

with God. Mystical union is therefore the reality related to the consciousness marked by the ultimate at the core of existence. Different religions have many differences in their beliefs, but when it comes to mysticism and union with God their belief and main goal is union with God and to know oneself. In Buddhism, mysticism is often intertwined with the pursuit of Nirvana, the ultimate goal of liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Through practices such as meditation and mindfulness, individuals seek direct, personal experiences of the transcendent and a deep understanding of the nature of reality. The mystical aspects of Buddhism emphasize the interconnectedness of all things and the impermanence of the self. Christianity defines mysticism as the search for a direct, intimate encounter with God that goes beyond conventional religious interpretation. Mystics, such as St. John of the Cross and Teresa of Ávila, sought a profound union with God through contemplative prayer and ascetic practices. The mystical union of the soul and the divine is emphasized in this mystical tradition and often involves profound spiritual insights. Practices like the “night of the soul” highlight the transformative nature of mysticism, guiding believers toward a deeper connection with the ineffable aspects of their faith. Mysticism in Christianity underscores the idea that faith goes beyond intellectual understanding, inviting believers into a more intimate, experiential relationship with the divine. Mysticism in Hinduism is deeply rooted in the belief that ultimate reality, or Brahman, can be directly experienced through personal spiritual insight. This mystical tradition is often expressed through practices such as meditation, yoga, and contemplation. The Upanishads, ancient philosophical texts, explore the nature of the self (Atman) and its connection to cosmic reality. Mysticism in Hinduism emphasizes the pursuit of direct communion with the divine, transcending the limitations of the material world. Saints and sages, like those in the Bhakti and Sufi traditions, have played a significant role in conveying mystical teachings and experiences, fostering a profound connection between the individual soul and the universal consciousness. Sufism, or Tasawwuf, is the main manifestation of mysticism in Islam and may be referred to as the inner, mystical, or psycho-

spiritual aspect of Islam. Sufism is a prominent movement within Islam that seeks the direct experience of God or the Truth through inward purification, love, and the practice of various spiritual exercises.

Sufism, often described as Islamic mysticism, plays a significant role in Islamic culture by emphasizing a deep spiritual connection with God. It focuses on meditation, introspection, and the pursuit of divine love. Central to Sufism is the idea of experiencing a personal, direct relationship with the divine, beyond the mere formalities of religious practice. Over centuries, the perception of Sufism has varied among Muslims and across different Islamic societies. For many Muslims and scholars, Sufism is seen as an integral part of Islam, highlighting its emphasis on inner spirituality and the pursuit of a heartfelt relationship with God. This path often goes beyond ritual worship, inviting followers to seek a more profound, internal experience of faith. Sufis have also contributed immensely to Islamic literature, particularly through poetry, using beautiful, expressive language to convey the mysteries of divine love and the spiritual journey. Throughout history, Sufis have played a pivotal role in spreading Islamic teachings, emphasizing compassion, humility, and love for all creation. Their influence has extended far and wide, contributing to the spread of Islam across various regions. Through their communities and teachings, Sufis have fostered a sense of unity and devotion, creating spaces for reflection, spiritual growth, and a deeper understanding of the divine essence in everyday life. However, Sufism has also faced criticism and opposition from certain quarters within Islam, particularly from more literalist or puritanical movements. Critics often argue that some practices associated with Sufism, such as the adoration of saints, the use of music in spiritual gatherings (Sama'), and certain ritual practices, deviate from the teachings of the Quran and the Hadith. These critics argue for a more literal interpretation of Islam, focusing on the law (Sharia) and the outward practices of religion. Regarding Hadiths, while there is no direct mention of “Sufism” or “mysticism” as we understand these terms today, since Sufism as a distinct movement developed after the time of the Prophet Muhammad, there are many hadiths that Sufis cite in support of

their emphasis on inner purity, love for God, and the position of following a spiritual leader. Some hadiths emphasize the importance of intention (niyyah) and the inner aspect of acts of worship, which Sufis interpret in support of their focus on the heart and internal states.

One famous hadith that is often cited by Sufis is the Hadith Qudsi where Allah says, "I was a hidden treasure; I loved to be known. Hence, I created the world so I would be known." Though its chain of transmission is debated among scholars, many Sufis use it to emphasize the importance of seeking God through love and knowledge. "Ihsan," or spiritual excellence, is another important idea in Sufism. It is described in a well-known hadith, where the Prophet Muhammad explains it as "to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion then you must consider that He sees you." This concept is central to Sufism's emphasis on being constantly aware of God's presence. Mysticism in Islam, as expressed through Sufism, is viewed in various ways across the Muslim world, ranging from an essential and deeply integrated aspect of Islam to a deviation from its perceived purity. While direct references to mysticism in the form of Sufism are not found in the Hadith literature, many of the principles that underpin Sufism are supported by hadiths emphasizing inner sincerity, love for God, and the pursuit of spiritual excellence.

Sufism and Positive Disintegration

Tasawwuf, another name for Sufism, is a mystical and contemplative branch of Islam that places a strong emphasis on spiritual intimacy and the internal search for God. In the novel Rumi is a Sufi and known cleric, we see how Shams Tabrizi helped Rumi in his spiritual transformative journey. Rumi is depicted as a deeply spiritual and intellectual figure who is searching for a deeper understanding of the divine. In *The Forty Rules of Love* Rumi's story is one of deep personal change. At first, Rumi feels unsatisfied with the standard religious practices in his life and desires a closer, more meaningful connection with God. This all shifts when he meets Shams of Tabriz, a traveling mystic who becomes his spiritual mentor and close friend. Shams doesn't simply introduce new ideas to Rumi, he challenges and breaks down Rumi's old beliefs. Through their strong bond, Shams teaches Rumi about true divine

love, helping him look beyond surface-level faith and dive into a deeper, more heartfelt spiritual experience. This life-changing friendship sparks Rumi's poetry, where he expresses the powerful, uplifting nature of love.

The relationship between Rumi and Shams mirrors Kazimierz Dąbrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration. Dąbrowski believed that true personal growth happens not during peaceful times but through inner struggles and conflicts. He saw these tough moments not as problems but as chances to develop and change. When our old ways of thinking collapse, it opens up the possibility to create a new, more meaningful perspective. Dąbrowski's theory suggests that intense emotions and sensitivity, which are often viewed negatively, can be the driving force for reaching deeper empathy, compassion, and self-awareness. In his view, facing mental challenges is a step toward building a more genuine, higher self. Rumi's transformation in the story is a great example of this idea. The arrival of Shams forces Rumi to confront his inner struggles and rethink his long-held beliefs. Shams encourages Rumi to go beyond his ego and see these inner challenges as opportunities for spiritual growth. This aligns perfectly with Dąbrowski's idea that crises can lead to significant personal development. Both Sufi teachings and Dąbrowski's theory see these moments of breakdown as necessary steps toward a higher level of being. The novel illustrates how Rumi's deep bond with Shams, along with the intense emotional challenges he faces, shows how love and inner conflict can lead to profound spiritual growth.

Research Objectives

1. To discover mysticism through positive disintegration in the novel "The Forty Rules of Love".
2. To ascertain the sources that lead to mysticism in the novel

Research Questions

1. What is the essence that leads to mysticism in "The Forty Rules of Love"?
2. What are the reasons for Mysticism?

Significance of the Study

This study explores how spirituality transforms lives, impacting personal growth and our search for meaning. It examines how spirituality, love, and growth are connected, offering insights into spiritual journeys and the role of love in personal transformation. By highlighting mysticism's deep, universal relevance and its power to connect and change us, this research provides valuable guidance for future seekers, researchers, and policy makers.

Delimitation of the Study

Our research delimitation is only bound to the theory of Positive Disintegration by K.Dabrowski.

Literature Review

This chapter is based on the literature review of our current thesis, here our main focus is on Mysticism and the theory of Positive Disintegration, other than these we will be discussing mysticism in different religions and the spiritual journey of different characters in the novel and how they have changed throughout the novel. In this novel, we have two main characters Rumi and Shams Tabrizi, Rumi was searching for a spiritual mentor to teach him more about Islam. Shams was a wandering mystic and later he became the mentor and companion of Rumi. We will be discussing mysticism and mystical experiences through psychological study. For in-depth knowledge and more information, we will use references from different scholars and old research papers related to this topic. In this chapter, we offer a review of literature regarding the particular novel "The Forty Rules of Love" by Elif Shafak.

Mysticism

Merriam-Webster defines mysticism as the belief that one can know God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality directly through subjective experiences like intuition or insight. A direct, intimate relationship with the divine or ultimate reality is the hallmark of mysticism, which is a spiritual or religious experience. It frequently entails an intuitive understanding that transcends conventional intellectual comprehension. Mystics emphasize the significance of internal, subjective experiences while pursuing a deep union with the divine. Mystic traditions can be found in many religious traditions, such as Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and

Hinduism. Because these experiences are difficult to articulate through traditional means, mystics frequently use metaphorical language to describe their encounters with the divine. Contemplative activities like meditation and prayer, which are meant to transcend the mundane and establish a connection with the sacred, are important components of mysticism. Intense spiritual transformations may occur in mystics, who feel a sense of unity with the universe or a higher force. Some well-known mystics are Rumi, Meister Eckhart, Teresa of Ávila, and Ramanuja. Widely differing practices and interpretations of mysticism reflect the various cultural and religious contexts in which it appears. Donald (1995) observes that several images are typically used to illustrate mysticism, such as an upward route or the passage from a lower to greater extent. An internal or psychological journey is another way to think of this path. "In the West, mysticism is most often described as a path or way consisting of the three steps or stages of preparation, illumination, and union [or communion], each being a preparation for the next" (p.15). The first step in almost all mystical traditions is purgation or purifying of the self. It is marked by the purging of ills from the mind, the renunciation of material possessions, and the surrender of self-will, self-assertion, and the sense of having distinct selfhood—all of which are significant prerequisites for mystical experiences. The Illumination of the self is the second stage or phase on the road. It comes after cleaning, when the mind is cleared of illusions and lies so that truth can fill it or shine upon it. Liberation from negativity is also connected to illumination. "... the mind and the self must be freed from passions, ill will, and negative attitudes such as jealousy and pride, if one is to become kind, compassionate, and humble in preparation for communion" (p.17).

The mystical journey culminates in the third step, where the mystic establishes a profound connection with the fundamental "Self" that lies enigmatically at the center of their existence. The unification with the Ultimate Reality is what distinguishes this. Many people confuse mysticism with some mental disorders like schizophrenia. However, they are distinct from one another, and several researchers concur that it should not be mistaken for other hysterical episodes or paranormal activity. The

difficult task of maintaining contact with the Absolute is mysticism. Mysticism, a profound and vague aspect of human spirituality, finds expression through the insightful works of various authors, each contributing to our understanding of the mystical journey. Evelyn Underhill, in her groundbreaking text "Mysticism: A Study in Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness," defines mysticism as "the art of union with Reality" and explores its universality across religious traditions. Underhill's comprehensive analysis delves into the psychological and spiritual dimensions, emphasizing the transformative process of achieving divine union. Renowned Persian poet and mystic Rumi provides poetic insights into the essence of mysticism in the thirteenth century. In Rumi's "The Mathnawi" the soul's desire for oneness with the holy is beautifully expressed, "The wound is the place where the light enters you." His verses illuminate the overjoyed and love-infused dimensions of mystical experiences, emphasizing the transformative power of divine love. Jalal Uddin Rumi, a 13th-century Persian poet, theologian, and Sufi mystic, has left an indelible mark on the world through his profound insights into the nature of the divine and the human soul's journey toward it. Rumi's concept of mysticism is deeply tied to his life experiences, the spiritual teachings he absorbed, and the transformative events that shaped his outlook. This blend of personal experience and spiritual practice is vividly expressed in his poetry, which remains a powerful source of mystical thought and expression. At the heart of Rumi's mysticism is the belief in the unity of all existence and the idea that the divine presence can be found in every part of the created world. He viewed the soul's journey as a quest for the Beloved, a metaphor for God, and emphasized that this quest was not a physical journey but an inner exploration of the self. Rumi's mysticism centers on the idea that love is the most powerful force in the universe, capable of transforming the human soul and guiding it back to its divine origin. For Rumi, love was the essence of mysticism. He saw it as both the path and the destination for any spiritual seeker. He believed that love could awaken the soul's longing for the divine, setting it on a path of spiritual discovery and union. His poetry is filled with references to love as a divine spark present in every individual, capable of

dissolving the ego and revealing the oneness of all creation. A pivotal moment in Rumi's life was his meeting with Shams of Tabriz, a wandering dervish who became his spiritual mentor and close companion. This encounter was transformative for Rumi, deepening his understanding of mysticism and pushing him into new realms of spiritual insight. The disappearance of Shams profoundly affected Rumi, leading him to express his spiritual longing and insights through poetry. This resulted in some of the most profound and beloved mystical literature in history. His works, including the *Masnawi* and *Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi*, are not just literary achievements but also serve as guidebooks for spiritual seekers. Through his poetry, Rumi encourages readers to look beyond the surface of life and embark on a journey of introspection and spiritual enlightenment. His approach to mysticism, characterized by an all-embracing and universal love, has transcended cultural and religious boundaries, resonating with people across the world. His teachings continue to inspire those on the spiritual path, offering guidance on the nature of existence, the power of love, and the journey back to the divine source.

Aldous Huxley, in *The Perennial Philosophy*, emphasizes the shared foundations of mysticism across different faiths. Huxley argues, "The metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds" underlies mystical experiences, highlighting the timeless and universal nature of these encounters. Published in 1945, *The Perennial Philosophy* explores the universal truths that lie at the core of all major religions and spiritual traditions. Huxley presents the idea of a "Perennial Philosophy," which suggests that a divine reality exists beneath the world of appearances and that the ultimate goal of human life is to directly experience this reality. Huxley believed that the essence of mysticism is the direct, personal experience of the divine or ultimate reality. He argued that this mystical experience is at the heart of all religions and is characterized by a sense of oneness with the universe, the transcendence of the individual ego, and an encounter with a deeper reality beyond the material world. Unlike the dogmatic and ritualistic aspects of religion, which can often create division, Huxley emphasized mysticism's direct, experiential

knowledge of the divine as a unifying force. He believed that this direct encounter with the divine is accessible to everyone, regardless of their religious background, through practices such as contemplation, meditation, and spiritual reflection. Huxley's perennial philosophy acknowledges both the transcendence of the divine (existing beyond the physical world) and its immanence (being present within the world and within each person). He believed that mysticism reconciles these aspects through the experience of unity with the divine, which encompasses and transcends all dualities.

For Huxley, mysticism was not only about achieving individual enlightenment or salvation but also had significant ethical implications for everyday life. He believed that mystical experiences lead to a profound sense of interconnectedness with all life, fostering compassion, altruism, and a sense of responsibility towards others and the environment. Huxley was critical of the materialism and reductionism of modern Western society, which he saw as barriers to the mystical quest for deeper meaning and truth. He argued that the perennial philosophy offers a counterbalance to these trends, providing a holistic and spiritually enriched perspective on life. In "The Perennial Philosophy," Huxley presents mysticism not as a peripheral or esoteric practice but as the central and most important pursuit of human life, offering a path to peace, understanding, and unity in a fragmented world. His work has had a lasting impact on spiritual seekers and thinkers, contributing to a broader appreciation of the mystical dimensions of human experience and the common ground shared by the world's spiritual traditions. Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, and mystic, in "New Seeds of Contemplation," explores the contemplative aspects of mysticism. Merton reflects on solitude and silence, stating, "Solitude is not something you must hope for in the future. Rather, it is a deepening of the present, and unless you look for it in the present, you will never find it." His writings delve into the intersection between solitude, silence, and the deepening of spiritual awareness. Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, writer, theologian, mystic, poet, social activist, and scholar of comparative religion, is one of the most influential Catholic authors of the 20th century. In "New Seeds of Contemplation," one of his most profound and insightful works, Merton delves into

the nature of contemplative prayer, the journey of self-discovery, and the deepening relationship with God. This book, a revised and expanded version of his earlier work "Seeds of Contemplation," reflects Merton's evolving spiritual insight and his quest for authenticity and inner peace. Thomas Merton sees contemplation as a deeply personal experience with God that goes beyond what the mind can understand. For Merton, it's not something that can be achieved through effort or study rather, it's a pure gift from God.

In this state, the soul feels God's presence in a powerful and life-changing way. He describes this experience as an awakening to our true self—a deeper realization that our identity is rooted in God and not defined by the roles or labels given by the world around us. One of the main ideas in "New Seeds of Contemplation" is Merton's distinction between the "true self" and the "false self." The true self, according to him, is our deepest being, connected with God and resting in His love. On the other hand, the false self is the part of us shaped by society's expectations and the illusions we create about ourselves. Merton believes that the journey of contemplation involves shedding these external layers of the false self to uncover the true self, which reflects our real identity in God.

Merton also highlights the importance of solitude in the life of contemplation. However, he clarifies that solitude isn't just about being physically alone. Instead, it's a state of inner silence and openness to God, where we can connect with Him on a deeper level. In this quiet space within us, we can experience God's presence more fully and gain a clearer understanding of our true self.

Merton talks about a mystical awareness that everything in the world is united in God. Through the practice of contemplation, we begin to sense this unity, which goes beyond all the divisions and separations we see around us. He explains that this realization—that all things are interconnected in God's love—leads to a deep feeling of compassion and a strong sense of responsibility towards all of creation. When we see this unity, we start to feel a profound connection to every living thing, driven by love and a desire to care for the world as part of our shared existence in God's love. Merton discusses the concepts of spiritual freedom and detachment, suggesting that true freedom comes from

detachment from the false self, desires, and possessions. This freedom is not indifference but an active engagement with the world, driven by love and the desire to serve God in all things. Love is the foundation of a contemplative life for Merton. Through love, the soul is drawn into a deeper relationship with God, leading to transformation and union. Love is both the path and the goal of the spiritual journey, culminating in the realization that to love is to be fully alive and fully oneself.

"New Seeds of Contemplation" offers a profound exploration of the contemplative path, characterized by the pursuit for authenticity, the discovery of the true self in God, and the transformative power of love. Merton's insights provide a guide for those seeking to deepen their spiritual life and to live more fully in the presence of the divine. These above authors, through their profound insights and poetic expressions, contribute to a rich tapestry of mystical literature, shedding light on the ineffable and transcendent experiences that captivate spiritual seekers across cultures and eras. Many scholars and authors have wonderful and rich writings on mysticism, but as we are here discussing mysticism in the forty rules of love, we can't forget Elif Shafak, the author of the text. She has written on mysticism in this book and quoted it in some rules too. Elif Shafak, in "The Forty Rules of Love," presents a contemporary perspective on mysticism, drawing inspiration from the timeless wisdom of Rumi and his spiritual guide, Shams of Tabriz. Shafak's portrayal of Rumi in the novel mirrors the ecstatic and love-infused dimensions of mysticism discussed earlier. Rumi's poetic insights, such as "The wound is the place where the light enters you," echo the mystical theme of embracing vulnerability and suffering as a means of attaining enlightenment. Shams of Tabriz, a mystic in his own right, imparts the titular "forty rules of love," each offering a profound perspective on the nature of existence, the divine, and the transformative journey toward self-realization. In Shafak's narrative, the characters grapple with the challenges and joys of love, echoing the mystical notion that love serves as a path to divine union. As the characters undergo personal and spiritual transformations, the novel provides a contemporary lens through which readers can explore the complexities of mysticism in the modern world. Moreover, Shafak's work adds another layer

to the shared foundations of mysticism across different faiths, a theme previously highlighted by Aldous Huxley. By blending the historical with the contemporary, "The Forty Rules of Love" underscores the timeless and universal nature of mystical experiences, contributing to the ongoing tapestry of mystical literature.

Mystical Practices

Mystical practices refer to the practices that mystics encounter in their life with higher or divine reality. Geels (2014) defines mystical experiences as the experiences "that are immediately or subsequently interpreted by the experiencers as a direct, unmediated encounter with a higher or ultimate divine reality" (p.218). The Mystical experiences that a mystic feel, are different from ordinary life experiences. In these experiences, a mystic unit himself with the divine. Mystical experiences manifest in various forms, ranging from intense moments of unity with the universe to a deep sense of connection with a higher force. In Buddhist contemplative practices, for instance, adherents may articulate experiences of profound stillness and emptiness, surpassing the egoic self and entering a state of oneness with all existence. Within Christian mysticism, exemplified by Teresa of Ávila and Meister Eckhart, descriptions of divine union often revolve around ecstatic love and a sense of merging with the divine essence. Teresa of Ávila, in her writings on prayer and contemplation stages, speaks of attaining a "spiritual marriage" with God, symbolizing the pinnacle of the mystical journey. Islamic mysticism, known as Sufism, focuses on a deep, personal connection with the divine. Two key concepts in Sufism are "fana" (annihilation of the self) and "baqa" (continuing existence in God). *Fana* involves letting go of one's ego and personal desires to dissolve into the divine presence, while "baqa" represents a state of living in constant awareness of God. Sufi mystics often express their intense love and closeness to God through poetry and music. A prime example is the poetry of Rumi, whose works are filled with themes of divine love and spiritual longing.

In Hindu mysticism, as taught by spiritual figures like Ramanuja, mystical experiences range from deep meditation to devotional practices known as "bhakti". Devotion or "bhakti" involves a loving,

heartfelt connection with a personal deity, often expressed through songs, chants, and prayers. Another important concept in Hindu mysticism is “moksha”, or liberation, which is the ultimate goal of merging the individual self with the divine essence. This idea reflects the desire for spiritual freedom and union with a higher reality. Mystical experiences across various traditions often involve practices like meditation, prayer, or specific rituals. These activities aim to transcend everyday reality and establish a direct, personal link with the sacred. They serve as a way to purify or cleanse the self, which is considered an essential first step in many mystical paths. This purification involves letting go of the ego, worldly desires, and negative thoughts or behaviors, creating an open, receptive space for experiencing the divine. By releasing attachments to material and ego-driven desires, practitioners can prepare their inner selves for a deeper spiritual experience. This process of purgation is seen as necessary for allowing the divine presence to unfold within, bringing the seeker closer to a profound, mystical union with the sacred. The second stage, commonly known as illumination, entails clearing the mind of falsehoods and misconceptions. This process enables the mystic's consciousness to be filled with or illuminated by truth, leading to heightened awareness of the divine presence. The third and final stage culminates in union with the Ultimate Reality, where the mystic profoundly connects with the essential 'Self' at the enigmatic core of their existence. It is imperative to recognize that mystical experiences are profoundly subjective and can vary widely among individuals and cultural contexts. Despite the diversity in descriptions and practices, the common thread across mystic traditions is the pursuit of direct, personal communion with the Absolute, underscored by the transformative and transcendent nature of these encounters.

Mystics in the Book

A mystic is a person who practices mysticism in his life and attains a belief in the ultimate reality and wants a direct communion or union with the divine reality. The mystic achieves these things through meditation and contemplation. Mystics often seek personal or direct experiences of the divine that go beyond intellectual understanding and religious

rituals and beliefs. (Underhill, 1960, p.3). The bond that mystics claim to have with the Ultimate Reality is beyond words. It is only completely understood by experiencing the event oneself. The ineffability of such experiences is also influenced by the limitations of spoken language. The lone visionaries of their various religious systems are known as mystics. The world's huge philosophical and theological systems are frequently inspired by their insights and the sheer process of embarking on mystical journeys. “The very beginning, the intrinsic core, the essence, the universal nucleus of every known high religion has been the private, lonely, personal illumination, revelation, or ecstasy of some acutely sensitive prophet or seer”. Therefore, a mystic—whether an adept or a follower—is someone who “Strives to reach conscious personal communication with a Higher Intelligence in the universe, and to receive assurance, advice, and assistance from It, not only in spiritual matters but in the practical affairs of life as well” (Politella, 1964, p.11). As Underhill (1960), in her evaluation of the mystics, claims that: “...in mystics, none of the self is always dormant. They have roused the Dweller in the Innermost from its slumbers, and round it has unified their lives ... Only the mystic can be called a whole man, since in others half the powers of self always sleeps. This wholeness of experience is much insisted on by the mystics”. (p.63). In the above statement, Underhill states that the self is not dormant, an individual or mystic previous life experiences or way of life were just an illusion and a deep sleep. When a mystic finds his actual self through the process of positive disintegration and union with the divine as a result he wakes up to his new life. In his mystic life, he finds a whole new experience and a way of living life. In “The Forty Rules of Love,” the mystical journey of Rumi and his spiritual companion, Shams of Tabriz, unfolds as a captivating exploration of unconventional spirituality and the transformative power of love. Shams, the wandering dervish, emerges as a charismatic and enigmatic figure whose unorthodox approach challenges the societal norms and rigid religious practices of the time. His introduction into Rumi's life becomes a turning point, initiating a profound friendship that sparks Rumi's spiritual awakening and poetic expression. In the 13th-century Islamic world, Rumi was known as a highly esteemed scholar and

religious figure, embodying traditional wisdom and orthodox teachings. However, the arrival of Shams of Tabriz, a wandering mystic, completely disrupts Rumi's conventional life. Shams challenges Rumi to look beyond established norms and pushes him toward a deeper, more mystical understanding of spirituality. The bond between Rumi and Shams is intense and transformative, acting as a powerful catalyst for Rumi's shift from a conventional scholar to a spiritual poet and leader. Their unusual and profound friendship serves as a backdrop for exploring the mystical aspects of love. Shams introduces Rumi to "The Forty Rules of Love", a set of teachings that guide him on his spiritual journey. These rules challenge Rumi's previous beliefs and expand his perspective, leading him to experience divine love on a new level. Shams, with his enigmatic presence and deep spiritual insight, acts as a mentor who guides Rumi through the complexities of understanding and experiencing this divine love. As Rumi and Shams delve into these rules, their discussions and interactions highlight their personal and spiritual growth. The novel illustrates how Rumi's understanding of love and spirituality transforms through his relationship with Shams. This process is reflected in Rumi's evolving poetry, which shifts from traditional scholarly themes to expressions of deep spiritual insight and mysticism, showing the profound influence of Shams' teachings. The novel intricately weaves the wisdom and poetry of Rumi, giving readers insight into the rich world of Sufi mysticism. Through the interactions of Rumi and Shams, the narrative explores themes of love, spirituality, and the mystical journey toward understanding the divine. *The Forty Rules of Love* act not only as a central element of the plot but also as a source of timeless spiritual wisdom, embodying core principles of Sufi teachings. Elif Shafak masterfully uses language and storytelling techniques to convey the depth of Rumi and Shams' spiritual experiences. Her use of vivid imagery and metaphorical language creates a mystical atmosphere that immerses readers in the transcendent journey of the characters. Through this narrative, the novel offers a captivating look at the transformative power of love and the profound spiritual wisdom found in the teachings of Rumi and Shams.

Mawlana Jala ad-Din Muhammad Rumi

Jala ad-Din Muhammad Rumi or simply Rumi was a 13th-century Persian poet, Hanafi fiqh, Islamic scholar, Maturidi theologian, and Sufi mystic who was born in Balkh which is now Afghanistan, on September 30, 1207. Later he settled in Konya and died there on December 17, 1273. Rumi's works, including the famous "Masnavi" spiritual couplets and his collection of poems known as the "Divan-e-Rumi," explore themes of love, spirituality, and the search for truth. His poetry has transcended cultural and religious boundaries, gaining widespread appreciation worldwide. Rumi passed away in 1273, but his impact on literature and spiritual thought endures.

Shams of Tabrizi

The spiritual guide of Mawlana Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi, popularly known as Rumi, is Shams-i-Tabrīzī, also called Shams Tabrizi or Shams, a Persian Muslim. Shams is a mysterious figure in many ways, with much of his life story pieced together from the works of Rumi, historical texts, and traditional stories. His views on mysticism, particularly Sufism, have been primarily gleaned through these sources, especially given that Shams himself wrote very little that has survived. Shams of Tabriz, the mystic who profoundly influenced Rumi, centered his teachings on the idea that each person can have a direct, personal experience of the Divine. He believed that connecting with God did not require rituals, intermediaries, or the established religious hierarchy. This focus on direct experience mirrors a fundamental belief in Sufi mysticism, where "ma'rifa" (inner, personal knowledge of God) is valued more than "ilm" (theoretical or book knowledge). For Shams, spirituality was about discovering and experiencing the Divine presence within oneself. A key element of Shams' philosophy was the power of love as a transformative force. To him, love was more than just an emotion; it was a path leading the soul toward union with the Divine. His relationship with Rumi is a profound example of this belief, as their bond opened Rumi to deep mystical insights and inspired much of his poetry. Love, in Shams' teachings, was the ultimate guide, capable of dissolving the ego and revealing the divine essence within every individual. Shams also highlighted the importance of having a spiritual

guide or master ("Murshid") in the journey toward God. A true spiritual guide, according to Shams, is not just a teacher but a living embodiment of divine love and wisdom. In his relationship with Rumi, Shams played this critical role, becoming the catalyst for Rumi's spiritual awakening and leading him deeper into the mystical practices of Sufism. Shams believed that a guide helps the seeker see beyond the surface, enabling them to confront their ego and move closer to the Divine.

Known for his unconventional and often provocative approach, Shams frequently challenged the orthodox religious practices of his time. He felt that when rituals and formal practices were done without genuine love or understanding, they could become obstacles rather than aids in experiencing God. Instead, he taught that true spiritual practice involves heartfelt devotion and a direct connection with the Divine. Shams also held the belief that suffering and hardship have a transformative power, bringing one closer to God. He saw life's difficulties as opportunities to shed the ego and detach from worldly concerns, thus making space for the Divine to enter one's heart. This idea is a common theme in Sufi mysticism, where trials are seen as steps on the path to spiritual growth. One of Shams' core teachings was the idea that the beloved—whether it is God, a spiritual master, or a close companion—acts as a mirror. Through this mirror, individuals can see their true selves, including their flaws, strengths, and deeper spiritual nature. In this reflection, one can encounter the truth of the Divine, recognizing the interconnectedness of all creation and the oneness that lies at the heart of existence. This teaching emphasizes the role of love and relationships in the journey toward spiritual enlightenment, illustrating how the bond between the seeker and the beloved can be a pathway to discovering the Divine within. While much of what is known about Shams Tabrizi comes through the lens of Rumi's work and the tradition that followed, his impact on Rumi and Sufi mysticism is profound. His teachings continue to inspire seekers of spiritual truth and emphasize the path of love, direct experience, and the breaking away from mere formalism towards a heartfelt, transformative relationship with the Divine.

Elif Shafak Forty Rules of Love

"The Forty Rules of Love" by Elif Shafak is an enchanting novel that intricately weaves together two narrative strands, transporting readers across time and space to explore the timeless themes of love, spirituality, and self-discovery. Set against the backdrop of 13th-century Konya, Turkey, and modern-day Massachusetts and Istanbul, Shafak masterfully crafts a story that resonates with depth, emotion, and profound insight. At the heart of "The Forty Rules of Love" is Ella Rubinstein, a middle-aged Jewish woman feeling stuck in her unfulfilling life. Ella, who has been a housewife for most of her adult years, feels a deep sense of dissatisfaction and restlessness. When she takes a job as a reader for a literary agency, she is assigned to review a manuscript titled *"Sweet Blasphemy"*. This novel, written by the mysterious author Aziz Zahara, introduces her to the compelling story of Rumi, the renowned 13th-century Sufi poet, and Shams of Tabriz, an unconventional dervish who profoundly impacts Rumi's life and work. "Sweet Blasphemy" takes readers back to 13th-century Konya, weaving the narrative of Rumi's spiritual awakening. The bond between Rumi and Shams is depicted as one that defies societal norms and expectations, guiding Rumi toward a deeper, mystical understanding of love. Through the eyes of Ella, who becomes engrossed in this historical tale, we witness her own introspective journey as she grapples with the ideas presented in the manuscript. The teachings of Rumi and the philosophy of Shams begin to resonate with her, sparking a transformation in her own outlook on life. A key element of "Sweet Blasphemy" is the "Forty Rules of Love," which are scattered throughout the novel as guiding principles. These rules offer timeless insights into love, spirituality, patience, and the nature of the human heart. They challenge both the characters in the story and readers to reflect on their own understanding of these concepts. Some memorable rules include: "The path to the Truth is a labor of the heart, not of the head," and "Patience does not mean to endure passively. It means to look at the end of the process." Another notable rule is the distinction between loneliness and solitude: "Loneliness and solitude are two different things. Solitude allows us to be alone without feeling lonely, offering space for introspection and connection with the divine." As

Ella reads deeper into the manuscript, she becomes captivated by the wisdom and spirituality that the story offers. Her own journey begins to mirror the transformative experiences of Rumi and Shams. Through her virtual correspondence with Aziz Zahara, she explores her own beliefs and faces the discontent she feels in her marriage and personal life. Aziz, much like Shams was to Rumi, becomes a spiritual guide for Ella, encouraging her to seek out her true desires and confront the emptiness she feels. In parallel, the historical story of Rumi and Shams unfolds with its own challenges and emotional depth. Their profound spiritual bond brings about jealousy and tension among Rumi's followers, who cannot understand the unconventional relationship between the two men. The intense connection between Rumi and Shams leads to moments of deep spiritual insight but also incites conflict, ultimately culminating in tragedy. Despite this, their union transcends earthly constraints, reaching a state of divine love that continues to inspire spiritual seekers even today. By contrasting the past with the present, Elif Shafak skillfully highlights universal themes of love, longing, and the search for deeper meaning. As Ella delves into the manuscript and reflects on her life, she begins to find solace and direction in the wisdom imparted by Rumi and Shams. Their teachings become a source of strength for her as she navigates her personal struggles with identity and fulfillment. In essence, "The Forty Rules of Love" is more than a historical novel; it serves as a meditation on the power of love to break down barriers and connect people across time and culture. Through rich characters and thought-provoking prose, Shafak invites readers to explore their own spiritual paths and to consider the transformative potential of love. The novel is a reminder that the journey to enlightenment and true self-discovery often begins with the courage to listen to one's heart and to embrace the deeper, mystical aspects of life.

Research Methodology

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the theoretical foundations underlying the current research. The primary framework employed in this study is Kazimierz Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration, first introduced in 1964. This psychological theory is applied to various characters in the book from a psychoanalytic perspective,

offering a deep analysis of their developmental processes. According to Dabrowski's theory, personality development is a dynamic process that involves a breakdown of existing psychological structures followed by their reconstruction in a more integrated and mature form. The central idea is that disintegration, or a breakdown of the current self, is a necessary and positive step towards growth. Dabrowski outlines five stages of development that individuals may go through as they experience this process.

The Theory of Positive-Disintegration

Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration offers a compelling and distinct approach to understanding human development, particularly emphasizing the role of inner conflict in driving personal transformation. Created by Polish psychologist Kazimierz Dabrowski in the mid-20th century, this theory deviates from traditional, linear views of personality development. Instead of viewing growth as a straightforward, upward progression, Dabrowski argues that true personal evolution often occurs through periods of disintegration, followed by reintegration at higher levels of awareness.

Framework to the Theory of Positive Disintegration

Dabrowski's "Theory of Positive Disintegration" offers an innovative approach to understanding human development, highlighting the potential for personal growth through inner conflict and transformation. Introduced by Polish psychologist Kazimierz Dabrowski in the mid-20th century, this theory challenges the traditional idea of a linear progression in personality development. Instead, it suggests that true growth happens through a process of breaking down and rebuilding at increasingly higher levels of self-awareness. A key element of Dabrowski's theory is the concept of "multi-levelness", which indicates that development occurs across different levels, each with distinct values and obstacles. Advancing through these stages requires individuals to face internal conflicts, prompting introspection and driving personal growth. Dabrowski underscores the importance of integrating both intellect and emotions, believing that this interplay aids individuals in making purposeful decisions and effectively navigating their

personal development. Contrary to deterministic theories, Dabrowski asserts that individuals can rise above external influences such as biological predispositions and environmental factors, relying instead on their capacity for inner growth. This aspect of the theory is particularly applicable to individuals with high developmental potential, as it stresses the significance of self-awareness, empathy, and authenticity in personal evolution. The idea of "Positive disintegration" is central to the theory, describing the process where existing psychological structures break down, allowing for the emergence of higher levels of consciousness. This involves a deep re-evaluation of one's beliefs and values, as well as an acceptance of conflicting aspects within the self. Through this restructuring process, individuals can attain a greater sense of purpose and fulfillment. Beyond individual development, Dabrowski's theory has broader implications in fields such as education and counseling, particularly in supporting gifted individuals who face unique developmental challenges. The theory advocates for creating environments that promote self-exploration, authenticity, and the pursuit of self-actualization. Overall, Dabrowski provides a detailed framework for understanding the complexities of human growth and transformation, emphasizing the significance of five distinct levels of development.

Five Levels in the Theory of Positive Disintegration

Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration outlines five different stages of personality development. The initial stage, termed primary integration, is characterized by the dominance of biological impulses, with other mental activities remaining subordinate. Subsequent phases two through four involve the process of personality disintegration, culminating in the final stage of reintegration. In this reintegration stage, individuals exhibit attributes such as self-possession, self-control, responsibility, and autonomy, emerging effortlessly from what Dabrowski terms "the personality ideal." However, it's important to note that not everyone progresses through these stages automatically. Many individuals remain in the first stage throughout their lives, while others may struggle to progress beyond the second stage. Only a select few reach the third stage and beyond. Overall, personality development according to Dabrowski is

neither spontaneous nor automatic, requiring deliberate effort and introspection to progress through the various stages of disintegration and ultimately achieve reintegration. This theory has the following levels. Integration is divided into two levels: Level I and Level V. There are distinct differences between the two levels, even though people are free from internal turmoil and behave naturally in both. At Level V, people have evolved to the point that the fully realized personality ideal guides their desires and impulses, while at Level I, they are entirely affected by their primitive instincts. Moreover, some dynamisms—like emotions, imagination, and cognition—are differentiated and developed. At level I, these features are not entirely developed. Most individuals are not interested in philanthropic endeavors anymore.

Level I: Primary Integration

Level II: Uni-level Disintegration

Level III: Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration

Level IV: Organized Multilevel Disintegration

Level V: Secondary Integration

Level I: Primary Integration

The first level of personality development, termed primary integration, involves no disintegration or conflict. Individuals at this level are largely governed by basic instincts and exhibit a conforming attitude toward social norms and values. Their behavior is controlled by primitive drives, and they accept societal conventions uncritically. Adjustment to society can take two forms: negative adjustment, where individuals conform to social norms without questioning them, and negative maladjustment, where individuals disregard social norms for base and degrading pursuits, often leading to criminal or psychopathic behavior.

Level II: Uni-level Disintegration

At this stage, individuals often face a profound existential crisis, where their long-held beliefs about themselves, society, and life start to crumble. They become increasingly critical of the world around them, noticing a disconnect between reality and the ideals they envision. This sense of dissatisfaction drives them to question societal norms and moral standards, frequently perceiving these norms as insufficient or even hypocritical. As explained by Dabrowski (1996), this period marks the beginning

of the breakdown in their existing personality structure. During this phase of inner turmoil, individuals may experience strong feelings of doubt, skepticism, and ambivalence, along with fluctuating moods. This time is ripe for personal growth but is also characterized by the disintegration of previous beliefs and perceptions. Many individuals may sense a vague dissatisfaction with their lives, feeling that something important is missing, but they might not know how to address or resolve this feeling. This uncertainty often results in indecision and a lack of clear direction, making it a challenging period to navigate. As the internal struggle intensifies, individuals who progress toward level III of Dabrowski's theory develop a strong urge to resolve these conflicts and seek personal transformation. However, if they become stuck at this stage, the unresolved issues can lead to serious psychological distress. Dabrowski cautions that these unresolved inner conflicts can create a feeling of being trapped in a "no exit situation," which may result in significant mental health problems. Thus, while this stage presents growth opportunities, it also carries substantial psychological risks for those unable to advance beyond it.

Level III: Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration

In Level II of Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration, people begin to feel a deep dissatisfaction with the world around them and start questioning the values and norms they've previously accepted. They often sense a gap between the way things are and how they believe things should be, sparking a strong desire for change. This discomfort pushes them to compare societal behaviors with their higher ideals, leading them to reassess their beliefs and actions. This process is usually triggered by significant life events such as a personal loss, illness, or a major setback, which force them to confront the inconsistencies in their values and reality. As the inner conflict intensifies, individuals find themselves grappling with moral dilemmas and engaging in deep self-reflection. They become more aware of their capacity for both good and bad, which can create feelings of guilt and inner turmoil. This painful process, known as positive disintegration, is essential for growth because it breaks down outdated aspects of their personality, making space for new values and higher-level thinking. Though this stage

can be challenging and uncomfortable, it's a critical step towards personal transformation, as individuals work to align their actions with the ideals they aspire to live by.

Level IV: Organized Multilevel Disintegration

At this stage, called the "organized" stage, previously scattered emotions become integrated through conscious choice. Conflicts decrease as individuals make their own decisions and develop a clear sense of "what ought to be." Altruism and empathy replace self-centeredness, and the person becomes more objective, achieving self-realization and taking control of their growth. Impulsiveness, anger, and other involuntary reactions give way to a conscious, self-directed approach to life. Individuals begin to live according to the ideals set in the previous stage, following their own values rather than external norms, unless those norms align with their higher principles. Here, individuals make deliberate efforts to shape their behavior for self-transformation. They resolve internal and external conflicts, becoming clearer about their goals and core beliefs. As they adopt the highest human values, self-autonomy becomes central. Positive adaptation to these personal standards marks a significant stage in their development.

Level V: Secondary Integration

Dabrowski (1996) claims that only a rare few reach the final stage of personality development, which represents the peak of personal growth. At this stage, individuals overcome challenges and achieve deep joy and tranquility, fully realizing "what ought to be." This level is marked by qualities like authenticity, autonomy, and responsibility, with a complete integration of all aspects of their personality. In this stage, individuals align with their ideal self, accepting every part of themselves and breaking free from societal norms. They become trendsetters, prioritizing the welfare of others and remaining unaffected by external criticism due to their heightened empathy and self-awareness. Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration suggests growth through breakdown and achieving ideals through love and empathy. Selflessness replaces egocentrism, and emotional development is essential for reaching self-perfection. Applying this theory to mystical experiences in fiction involves

examining the spiritual development of characters as they mature through various stages.

Analysis/Discussion

In the selected text, Rumi's spiritual evolution is portrayed as a transformative journey that aligns closely with Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration. Initially, Rumi appears to embody characteristics of the lower levels of this theory, showing a lack of deep purpose and inner harmony. However, as he encounters life-changing experiences, these moments of crisis serve as catalysts for his inner growth. Rumi faces a profound existential dilemma, which forces him to confront his previously held beliefs and embrace higher spiritual principles. Through the painful yet necessary process of disintegration and reintegration, Rumi gradually transcends his earlier self, reaching a higher level of autonomy, self-awareness, and spiritual enlightenment. Similarly, the character of Ella Rubinstein undergoes her journey of disintegration and growth. At the beginning of the narrative, Ella is depicted as experiencing inner dissatisfaction and turmoil, questioning the meaning of her existence. Her initial crisis triggers a deeper introspection, prompting her to reevaluate her values and seek greater spiritual truth. As the story progresses, pivotal moments in her life push her further into this state of

disintegration, allowing her to shed her previous beliefs and open herself to new insights. Through this challenging but transformative process, Ella eventually reaches a state of spiritual awakening, emerging with a renewed sense of purpose and integrity, much like Rumi's journey in the historical narrative. In this chapter, the transformation of mystics is viewed through the theoretical lens of the Theory of Positive Disintegration. The mystics' journey is described as a psychological change characterized by "uni-level" disintegration," leading towards "secondary integration." This process involves the disintegration of personality fueled by individual developmental potential, ultimately resulting in self-transformation or re-integration.

The chapter also goes into great length about schizophrenia, examining its many facets, well-known symptoms, and essential traits. In light of the previous debate on mysticism, a comparison between schizophrenia and mystical experiences is made, emphasizing both of their parallels and distinctions. The chapter's final section of data pertaining to schizophrenia attempts to offer a methodical and impartial way to verify the study's claim. The following figure, each corresponding to a key feature of the Theory of Positive Disintegration, summarizes the levels of development:

[Diagram of levels of development in the Theory of Positive Disintegration]

Levels of Development in Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration

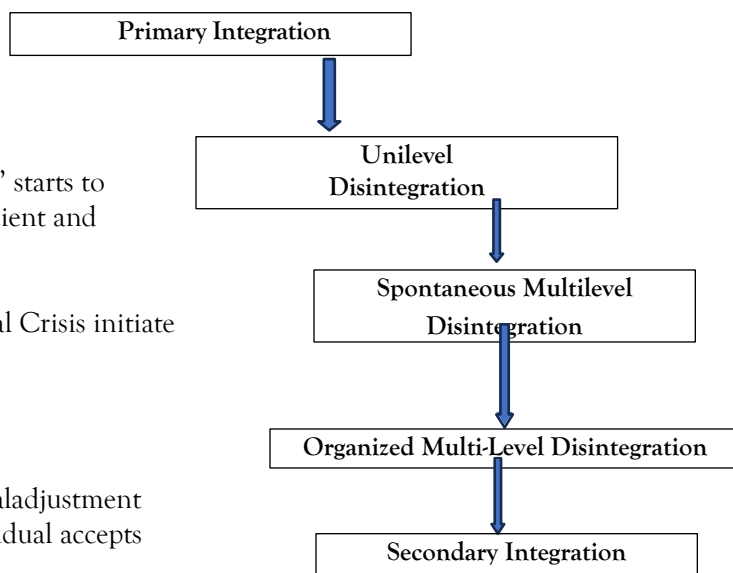
Adherence to Social norms.
Absence of introspection
adaptation to "what is" pride.
Stereotypical ideas gradually disintegrate.

The difference between "What is" and "what ought to be" starts to become obvious. Individuals view common ethics as deficient and contradictory. The first step is

"Individual scrutiny of the way things are." The Existential Crisis initiate
The higher idealized alternatives are
selected by the true self.

Common behavior and higher
idealized choices are compared.

A rising feeling of "what ought to be" "develop Positive maladjustment
takes place. Developmental potential increases. An individual accepts
all accountability for their individual personal growth.



Conscious self-directed living replaces involuntary spontaneous reactions.
Conflicts both internal and external diminish as self-autonomy is attained.
Life is guided by the highest human values

personality and the ideal personality within equilibrium.
Self-perfection and autonomy took on a guiding role.
People are not constrained by social norms.
minimal or nonexistent internal strife. psychological health.
Self-improvement.

Analysis of the Forty Rules OF Love (2010)

In "The Forty Rules Of Love," the characters of Ella Rubinstein and Jalaluddin Rumi serve as central figures whose lives intertwine through the exploration of mysticism and the pursuit of inner transformation. Initially, both characters appear to conform to societal norms and expectations. Rumi, a celebrated 13th-century Sufi poet and cleric, enjoys widespread admiration and followership, while Ella, a middle-aged American housewife, prioritizes her family's needs and societal reputation over personal fulfillment. As expressed in the novel, Ella is depicted as someone who "lacked any survival techniques to help her cope with life's hardships on her own" (Shafak, 2010, p.3), indicating her reliance on familial structures for support and identity. Their adherence to societal norms aligns with Dabrowski's theory of personality development, specifically Level I characteristics, which emphasize conformity and the preservation of tradition. Ella's primary focus revolves around fulfilling her domestic duties and upholding societal expectations, mirroring Dabrowski's concept of being self-centered and driven by basic needs. However, beneath this surface, conformity lies a deeper mystical inclination, evident in both characters' inner questioning and dissatisfaction with their lives. Ella's introspective musings, such as "No matter who we are or where we live, deep inside we all feel incomplete" (Shafak, 2010, p.43), suggest a profound yearning for spiritual fulfillment and self-discovery. The desire for a deeper connection with the divine is a central theme in the novel, guiding the characters' journeys toward self-realization and the pursuit of their ideals, as outlined by Dabrowski. Ella's internal struggle, marked by existential questioning and feelings of loneliness, mirrors the early stages of personality development. Similarly, Rumi's willingness to embrace Shams'

unconventional teachings reflects his thirst for self-discovery. Both characters grapple with societal pressures and a desire for external validation, revealing their conflict between fitting in and pursuing personal growth. As the story progresses, their paths cross, sparking transformative experiences that challenge their beliefs. Through interactions with spiritual guides and self-reflection, they begin to question established norms and embark on a journey of enlightenment. The stories of Ella and Rumi exemplify the tension between conformity and spiritual evolution, highlighting the universal search for meaning and fulfillment. Similarly, Rumi's eagerness and genuine desire to go deeper into self-discovery are revealed by his quick and open response to Shams' unusual lessons. "The dissatisfaction with the way things are results in inner conflict which both Ella and Rumi feel. Both have an inclination towards seeking answers to the broad human questions even prior to meeting with their respective spiritual guides" (Shafak, 2010, p.197). This inner turbulence is a key component of what Dabrowski and Piechowski (1977) refer to as "ambitendencies," which are defined as oscillating between opposing wishes or perceptions. "Wanting and not wanting, or wanting two irreconcilable things at once" (p.41). Ella's fluctuating mental state is palpable in her plea to Aziz for guidance, captured in her lament, "I don't know why I'm down in the dumps today. I cannot give you a reason... I guess this is what they call midlife crisis" (Shafak, 2010, p.114). Additionally, another notable characteristic of unilevel disintegration is articulated as "... the susceptibility to social opinion, the guidance of one's behavior based on a need for recognition and approval, and internalization of values from external sources" (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977, p.41). As the inner conflict intensifies, individuals are driven to scrutinize their surroundings more critically,

embarking on a battle against their external environment. This marks the onset of an existential crisis, where individuals strive to align their reality with their idealized vision of how things should be. Similarly, in the mystic's journey toward union with Reality, this inner conflict transforms into a profound struggle against existing structures. The existential crisis, as depicted by Shams through his analogy, is described as a necessary hardship for the birth of a new Self: "The midwife knows that when there is no pain, the way for the baby cannot be opened and the mother cannot give birth. Likewise, for a new Self to be born, hardship is necessary. Just as clay needs to go through intense heat to become strong, Love can only be perfected in pain" (Shafak, 2010, p.86). This idea of the creation of a new Self is consistent with Dabrowski's theory of secondary integration, which holds that an individual's preexisting personality structures break down until they yearn for a mystical union. Thus, the idea of good dissolution of personality arising from secondary integration is similar to the concept of "rebirth" in mysticism. Under the guidance of their teachers, Ella and Rumi experienced a significant shift in the caliber and severity of their internal conflicts. Rather than focusing on issues of persona or reputation, they participate in a multifaceted fight. For example, Rumi thinks it "flattering to hear people praise (his) preaching skills" (p.99), which suggests a multidimensional breakdown that happens on its own as people start to realize there's a difference between who they are and what other people think of them. Driven by a renewed faith in oneself to learn about the Divine, Ella, and Rumi set out on a voyage of self-disentanglement from thoughts that have disturbed them. As their dissatisfaction grows, they are able to rise above their limitations and become more in tune with their innermost self, the Divine energy. As evidenced by the belief that "those who submit to the divine essence of life will live in unperturbed tranquility and peace," submission to this idealized value denotes a feature of this level (p. 292). At the fourth stage of personality development, people have a firm grasp on their ideal selves and are able to influence their external surroundings through their inner psychological environment. They take a completely autonomous course that is characterized by increased self-awareness and control over their own

growth. This level of the spiritual journey is reached when all idols—such as fame, fortune, rank, and even religion—that stand between the person and God are destroyed. Idealized values now prevail over ordinary ones, and mystics are prepared to toss the latter out of hand if they find it to be at odds with their principles. Inspired by the story of Shams and Rumi, Ella sets off on a transforming psychological trip. Rumi himself says, "Religious rules and prohibitions are important, but they should not be turned into unquestionable taboos" (p. 246). According to the notion of positive disintegration, this stage denotes conscious control over the process of growth and commitment to one's values. Mystics adhere to comparable moral standards, upholding their beliefs and regulations without forcing them upon others. Ella and Rumi develop independence and confidence in their idealistic decisions under the watchful eye of their gurus, honing their ability to perceive the Divine inside and listen to its voice. By following their personality values, they demonstrate psychological strength and faith in their mystical attitude, all while being conscious of their developing process. They exhibit magnificent faith in their principles, as opposed to becoming docile followers. This is best illustrated by Shams' comment, "Do not follow the flow." "Be the flow" (p.136) emphasizes the mystic's sense of independence and belief that they are active seekers who co-create their own destiny in harmony with the Divine.

Mysticism and Schizophrenia

For a considerable time, psychologists have been interested in the connection between mystical experiences and schizophrenia. The definition of "schizophrenia," as well as its causes and consequences for personality disintegration, are covered in the first chapter of this thesis. The second chapter explores earlier studies on this subject and offers a thorough overview of pertinent works. This thesis contends that mystical encounters substantially impact the process of individuation and are closely linked to the development of personality. This frame of view disagrees with the tendency to conflate spiritual experiences with mental diseases such as schizophrenia. Mystic experiences, on the other hand, can be understood as deliberate endeavors to establish direct

communication with the Absolute. Techniques like yoga, chanting, asceticism, meditation, and prayer are discussed as ways to help this process along, as long as they are seen as routes to a deeper spiritual connection rather than just rituals. For instance, yoga is presented as a "union" practice in the words of modern mystic Vasudev (2016). Vasudev claims that despite its ancient origins, yoga is still relevant today and is practiced worldwide. He asserts that yoga is "This system of self-alignment is capable of activating inner energies in a way that your body and mind function at their optimal capacity" (p.16). Even though mysticism is frequently seen as being religiously neutral, it's important to recognize that religious and cultural settings often have an impact. While it's not always the case, mystical experiences can occasionally become intricately linked to a particular religious tradition. There may be mystics who are not affiliated with any formal religion. Mystic experiences can happen to anybody, regardless of training or allegiance with a particular religion, as James (1901) indicates, highlighting their potential universality. A vivid realization of a higher, non-physical power that is both immanent and transcendent is a component of mysticism. Because these experiences are so highly subjective, there is frequently little scientific support for them, and some people may even perceive them as symptoms of mental illness. It's not a recent development that mystical experiences and mental illnesses are linked. According to James, there are two types of mysticism: religious mysticism and the other half that is frequently linked to signs of mental disease as listed in insanity textbooks. Scholars have long been interested in the relationship between mystical experiences and psychotic states, which has prompted ongoing investigation from a variety of angles. The aforementioned correlation has maintained the research domain's vibrancy and stimulated inquiries into the intricate interactions among spirituality, psychology, and mental health.

Schizophrenia: Symptoms, Characteristics, and Comparisons with Mysticism

Schizophrenia is a term used to describe a group of debilitating mental disorders characterized by hallucinations, delusions, and various cognitive impairments (Carr, 2001; Linder & Braun, 1975). It encompasses a range of psychological disorders,

including attention deficiencies, cognitive disorders, and unusual motor behavior (Linder & Braun, 1975). Delusions and hallucinations, disorganized thinking, emotional disturbances, and reduced enjoyment and interest are the three primary psychological issues associated with schizophrenia (Lahey, 2001). Schizophrenia is often considered a catch-all term for psychoses characterized by severe distortions in mood, thought, perception, unusual behavior, and social withdrawal (Alloy, Jacobson, & Acocella, 1999). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) identifies five core symptoms of schizophrenia: hallucinations, delusions, disorganized behavior, distorted speech, and negative symptoms such as the loss of normal functioning (Alloy, Jacobson, & Acocella, 1999). One of the hallmark features of schizophrenia is hallucinations, which are sensory experiences occurring in the absence of external stimuli. Individuals may perceive voices or sights that others do not perceive, and these hallucinations are perceived as real by the affected individual, even though they are spontaneous and unrelated to external stimuli (Linder & Braun, 1975). The perception of the environment by people with schizophrenia often differs significantly from that of neurotypical individuals. Hallucinations can affect any sense, but visual and auditory hallucinations are the most prevalent. Auditory hallucinations involve hearing voices others cannot hear, while visual hallucinations involve seeing images or scenes that are not real. Social withdrawal is another common symptom of schizophrenia, marked by a person's detachment from and lack of interest in their surroundings. People with schizophrenia often retreat from social interactions, showing disinterest in engaging with others and rarely initiating conversation, sometimes acting as if no one else exists (Alloy, Jacobson, & Acocella, 1999). This social withdrawal is closely related to attention deficits, which further complicate communication for those with schizophrenia. They may feel unable to communicate their thoughts effectively and anticipate negative responses from others, leading them to avoid social interactions entirely (Alloy, Jacobson, & Acocella, 1999). Consequently, individuals with schizophrenia may reduce their involvement in life activities, relationships, and family interactions, sometimes becoming completely

detached from these aspects of life, which exacerbates feelings of isolation and disconnection from the world around them. Freud (1927) describes the mystical impulse in humans as a type of obsessive neurosis related to satisfying personal needs and desires. Buckley (1981) notes that while there is no direct connection between schizophrenia and mystical experiences, there is enough overlap to warrant detailed examination from medical and psychological perspectives. Both schizophrenic patients and mystics may share certain traits, such as a profound sense of knowing, a feeling of connection to something beyond themselves, intense bliss, hallucinations, out-of-body experiences, and altered perceptions of time. However, he also points out differences, such as cognitive disruption occurring only in psychosis, while mystics report more visual than auditory hallucinations. Assagioli (1989) links spirituality with several psychological conditions, suggesting that spiritual experiences can lead to exaggerated or grandiose psychological states resembling delusions. Similarly, Deikman (1971) posits that both mystical and psychotic states may stem from unresolved issues that cause despair and lead to social withdrawal and a lack of interest in life. Breggin (1991) highlights the importance of linguistic analysis in understanding this crisis, proposing that all psychological distress represents a form of spiritual crisis. He suggests that people with mental illnesses may be more sensitive and creative, akin to some mystics. James (2007) similarly describes religious mysticism as only one aspect of mysticism, with the other aspect being characterized by symptoms indicative of pathological and delusional mental states.

Mysticism and Positive Disintegration in "The Forty Rules of Love"

Mysticism is a personal journey in which an individual seeks to uncover their true self and understand a deeper purpose in life. It's a path that allows one to transcend the material world, using heightened consciousness to grasp the true essence of existence. Many mystics describe this journey as life-changing, offering insights that go beyond ordinary perception and reshaping how they view the world. Evelyn Underhill defines mysticism as "the way of union with Reality," capturing the deep

connection that mystics aim to achieve with a higher truth. In "The Forty Rules of Love", Rumi's spiritual journey embodies this mystical path. At first, Rumi is a respected scholar, content with his life. However, his encounter with Shams of Tabriz completely alters his perspective. Rumi leaves behind his family, reputation, and worldly comforts to pursue a deeper connection with the divine. His journey is challenging, filled with struggles, rejections, and the pain of losing Shams. Yet through these trials, Rumi discovers the true meaning of life and achieves a profound spiritual awakening. Margaret Smith describes mysticism as "an innate tendency of the human soul, which seeks to transcend reason and attain a direct experience of God." This longing for a deeper connection with the divine is exactly what Rumi undergoes throughout his journey.

Dąbrowski's theory of Positive Disintegration provides a useful framework for understanding this kind of transformation. He proposes that personality development occurs in five stages, with the final stage being a state of self-awareness and authenticity, called the "personality ideal." The journey through these stages is marked by inner conflict, chaos, and crises, which are necessary for growth. This mirrors Rumi's journey, especially after the emotional turmoil caused by Shams' departure. His suffering becomes an essential part of his transformation, pushing him toward a higher state of spiritual understanding. Dąbrowski (1972) suggests that suffering is key to self-realization, and Rumi's experiences reflect this idea as his pain leads him to deeper truths about life and his place in the world. Ultimately, Positive Disintegration aims for what Dąbrowski calls secondary integration, where a person aligns with higher values and lives authentically. Rumi's transformation mirrors this process. Through his journey, he becomes more spiritually intuitive and enlightened, as expressed in his poetry and teachings. His life reflects the wisdom and love he discovered along the way. Dąbrowski (1972) also emphasizes that love, in its many forms, drives personal development. For Rumi, love for Shams and the divine is what guides him toward a higher level of consciousness. Both Rumi's story and Dąbrowski's theory show that suffering and love lead to personal growth. They highlight those enduring hardships is necessary for true transformation,

ultimately allowing us to better understand ourselves and the world around us.

Findings

In the context of mysticism, positive disintegration is a means of achieving spiritual enlightenment through self-examination, acceptance of one's whole self, and assimilation of these elements into one's collective identity. True self-awareness, which includes both the light and shadow sides of the psyche, leads to a profound consciousness, as Shafak (2009) proposes. Opening out to one's deepest self is another aspect of this process. It is clear from the analysis that mystics are unique people whose spiritual pursuits are based on self-realization. Acknowledging their potential, they direct it towards a mystic union. Under Dabrowski's thesis, mystics must undergo both positive and negative disintegrations to comprehend who they are fully. Mystics can fully comprehend themselves by bringing the unconscious into waking awareness and transcending egoistic and archetypal identities to merge into a greater being. They are individuated beings who represent the highest forms of love, humility, altruism, and humanity. This path represents a deep metamorphosis in which the person becomes a single, integrated whole that embraces their whole self.

Secondly, despite their diverse terminology and distinct cultural and theological influences, the fundamental principles of both mystical traditions—Sufism and Buddhism—have notable similarities, as per investigation findings. While Buddhism has a foundation in any traditional religion, the mystical interpretations derived from the esoteric aspects of Islam and the worldviews of Sufis bring the two traditions closer together, if not entirely. The current study concludes that the two traditions have the following characteristics, which can be summarized as follows:

In both mystical traditions, misery is attributed to "desire." A Buddhist and a Sufi both make different attempts to transcend innate level behavior and conquer desires. For them, the satisfaction of desires results in the end of pain. Both faiths support the pursuit of spirituality by disciplines including asceticism, meditation, and mental training. While it's not a requirement in Sufism, conforming to the detachment and renunciation of worldly life

concepts is sometimes seen as a prerequisite for entering the spiritual life. Shams the Sufi alludes to the comparable idea found in The Forty Rules of Love, which states that one should give up whatever they value most in life before embarking on the mystical path of "fame, fortune, power, extravagance, or sensual pleasure" (Shafak, 2010, p. 90). Battling against the evils within oneself, or engaging in an inner "jihad," is the main emphasis of Sufism. "Rumi stood up for an inner-oriented jihad where the aim was to struggle against and ultimately prevail over one's ego, nafs," Shafak (2010) (page 20). This idea is comparable to the Buddhist concept of controlling the soul's bad tendencies and eliminating its baser aspects. Sufi and Buddhists experience a process of self-realization in which they become conscious of their inner selves, which are made up of a variety of ideas, desires, impulses, feelings, sensations, intuition, insights, and so forth. Sufism and Buddhism both stress how pointless language is for conveying the experience of enlightenment. They use highly symbolic poetry, music, dance, rituals, and artifacts to compensate for this. "Thoughts are not well expressed by words" (Hesse, 1951, p. 117). Furthermore, Shafak (2010) refers to a Sufi saying that states, "Language as we know it becomes obsolete when you step into the zone of love" (p. 65). The pursuit of spirituality is illustrated by a disintegration of personality that eventually results in reintegration or a higher degree of personality development. "You learn how to die before death in Sufism" (p. 325). The practitioners of both faiths become aware of their darker sides. Rather than shunning these components, they embrace and incorporate them to become whole. "There comes a moment when the heart has to concede the unacceptable. This is the test because the heart does not make its meal out of either/or. All are included" (Maufroy, 2005, p. 129). Buddhists seek the spiritual source within their "Self," rejecting the idea that there is a transcendent entity "out there," in the same way as mystics emphasize the immanent component of Reality, rejecting its nature and believing it to be present within as an all-pervasive force. "God is not high in the sky somewhere. Every single one of us has him inside of us" (Shafak, 2010, p. 30). They both place priority on encouraging kindness and love. These two traditions have no

place for hostility or violence. The foundations of both are selflessness and love for humanity. In the same way, love is necessary for wisdom in Sufism. "We cannot truly love or know God unless we learn to love God's creation" (Shafak, 2010, p. 110).

Conclusion

In summary, a Buddhist and a Sufi both set out on a path of self-discovery that culminates in an awareness of the higher consciousness. The "ultimate quest of the Sufi is to gain absolute and direct knowledge of the Reality of existence by fully understanding the Self," according to psychologist and Sufi author Pryor (2000) (p. 3). The contact with Reality, which is enigmatic and resides at the very center of the human person, is the culmination of the Sufi path. Thus, the trip might be defined as a quest for experiential knowledge to understand the Self or as a discovery of one's essence. And this is exactly the essence of the Buddha's teachings—setting out on a singular, individual quest to find who they are. The thesis's last section provides an overview of the symptoms of schizophrenia that have been documented in the psychiatric literature. These symptoms have been compared to the consciousness levels associated with mystical experiences that have been examined. The following traits are considered to distinguish mystical experiences from the mental states of the mentally ill, particularly schizophrenia, in light of the theory of personality disintegration by K Dabrowski. Stress is more acute for those with schizophrenia. They frequently experience severe psychological anguish, which may also disturb other people. While distress related to struggle or conflict may exist in mystical states, it takes on a distinct form. In this context, it is closely associated with "curiosity" and "dissatisfaction," which heightens mystics' desire to solve the puzzles and break free from the established frameworks. Distress, as opposed to schizophrenia patients, thus, results in a freeing sensation. In addition, mystics typically lack the tendency to hurt other people since they have a high degree of patience and tolerance. According to Shafak (2010), when a mystic receives harsh criticism for his religious beliefs and his unconventional worldviews are disapproved of "... he patiently endures, uttering not a single bad word about any of his critics" (Shafak, 2010, p.225). It's usual for visions to manifest in mystical experiences with the

same intensity as real sensations. The images and symbols may emerge from the unconscious when a mystic explores the previously uncharted territories by going into the innermost corners of consciousness. Though it is obvious that this is the psychological term that most accurately describes these messages, mystics do not typically refer to these communications as hallucinations. However, the auditory or visual hallucinations that mystics encounter can be easily distinguished from those of schizophrenia. When they occur in the former scenario, inspiration, discernment, and wisdom are involved; when they occur in the later scenario, anxiety, fear, and distress are present. In addition, mystics have peaceful, tranquil hallucinations that do not cause disturbance or confusion. Schizophrenia patients' hallucinations are typically linked to traumatic experiences that cause disruptions and mental turmoil. Furthermore, not every mystic experience hallucinations in the same way. However, it is one of the hallmark signs of schizophrenia. Mystics can keep total knowledge of their own development and conscious control over their actions. They discover the inner worlds, travel a meticulously planned route, and gain mastery over them. On the other hand, people with schizophrenia are unaware of or in control of their psychological state. That is usually what motivates them. Mystics get the most contentment and tranquility from their experiences. "Those who submit to the divine essence of life will live in unperturbed tranquility and peace," as Shams states, (Page 293 of Shafak, 2010). For mystics, the holy experience is based mostly on selflessness, humility, empathy, and love for humanity. It is freeing and motivating. On the other side, those who have schizophrenia are overwhelmed by what they have experienced and typically lose the ability to relate to other people. Mystic experiences are not characterized by violent acts, aggressive sexual outbursts, or self-destructive behavior, which are frequently seen in people with schizophrenia or psychosis. In contrast, mystics acquire the ability to transcend these weaknesses; they learn to subdue their innate tendencies and transform into compassionate, modest, and nonviolent individuals. After achieving spiritual elevation through their oneness with the Divine, mystics yearn. They rid themselves of any bad emotions in this way, making it possible for them to

grow in humility, compassion, and selflessness. Positive changes in oneself are the foundation of most mysticism endeavors. "The pursuit of love transforms us. You begin to transform both inside and outside the moment you begin your search for love" (p.87). It eliminates the possibility of any kind of illusion, which is a crucial indicator of schizophrenia. Mystics experience a psychological state in which distinctions based on race, religion, geography, or ideology lose all significance. Shams states, "I believe that the saints are beyond such trivial nominal distinctions. A saint belongs to all humanity" (p. 100). They exhibit their affection for all people without distinction. In the case of schizophrenia sufferers whose experiences do not guarantee self-realization, this might not be the case. The results of this thesis provide compelling evidence that mystics experience individuation as they progress spiritually. It confirms that the spirit and goals of the mystical traditions of Buddhism and Sufism are quite similar. It also supports the claim that mystical experiences are distinct from schizophrenia patients' mental states.

Recommendations

Our current study proceeds to reveal the essence of mysticism, Kazimierz Dąbrowski's theory of positive disintegration is used to find out how one becomes a mystic and what experiences develop an individual's personality. Our research is only centered on this theory and schizophrenia mainly, mysticism is a broad term and we have only compared and analyzed it in the light of this theory and schizophrenia. For future researchers, we suggest they find mysticism in different characters and compare them with modern mystics or within the book. Also, there are many different theories, and faiths around the world which show similarity to mysticism, and there is not enough work or information on mysticism, so one can also explore that area. Our thesis provides a distinctive viewpoint on the study of mysticism, particularly as it relates to the mystical traditions of Islam and Buddhism. It adds three educational perspectives to the body of knowledge. It does this in three ways: first, by providing a psychological explanation and meaning to "mystical encounters" second, by bringing Sufism and Buddhism together around the central idea that unites them despite their differences; and third, by

dispelling the myth that mysticism and mental illnesses, schizophrenia are a single entity. Our work/ thesis has only provided the basics of mysticism related to The Forty Rules Of Love and has set a path for the new researchers of the opportunity for further investigation into mystical experiences and opens up new lines of inquiry.

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