Muslim Identity in Postmodern America

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Introduction

When those working to establish Islam in North America meet, among the most frequently mentioned priorities for the Muslim Community is the development of means by which the Islamic Identity of Youth can be preserved as they grow to maturity. Islamic Values in the United States: A Comparative Study explores issues relating to the range of values held by Muslims in the US. (Haddad and Lumis, 1987) Regardless of the reading one may wish to make of this text, it is undeniable that a statistically significant segment of Muslim Youth is becoming assimilated into American society to an extent that seriously impacts their practice of Islam and their identity as Muslims. This paper explores postmodern social conditions in America in the context of their impact on the process of identity construction. It presents changes to this process suggested by academics and psychotherapists that are seen as vital to the construction and maintenance of healthy identities in postmodern America. Finally, it examines aspects of Islamic practice that function to nurture Muslim identity.

Postmodernity

"Modern man is afflicted with a permanent identity crisis, a condition conducive to considerable nervousness."

- Peter Berger, Brigitte Berger, and Hansfried Kellner, The Homeless Mind.

The task of constructing an identity today is complicated by the nature of the age we live in. Many social commentators have characterized the current cultural milieu as "Postmodern." Philosophers, architects, sociologists, literary critics, psychologists, and others use the term these days with different shades of meaning. But the lack of precise agreement about what this term describes reflects an essential aspect of the postmodern - its ambiguity. Akbar S. Ahmed wrote about this phenomenon in his 1992 work, Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise. He writes:

To approach an understanding of the postmodernist age is to presuppose a questioning of, a loss of faith in, the project of modernity; a spirit of pluralism; a heightened skepticism of traditional orthodoxies; and finally a rejection of a view of the world as a universal totality, of the expectation of final solutions and complete answers. In order to discover postmodernism one must look for richness of meaning rather than clarity of meaning; avoid choices between black and white, 'either-or' and accept 'both-and'; evoke many levels of meaning and combinations of focus; and attempt self-discovery through self-knowledge. The postmodernist condition corresponds to the collage of images and ideas that represents it - ironic, iconoclastic and free-floating. It declares its scope as universal, it embraces high- and low-brow, the serious and the frivolous with equal zest. (p. 10)

There are many facets to the postmodernist condition. The epistemological critique made by postmodern theorists presents a radical challenge to the fundamental understanding of truth itself. This paper does not deal with the epistemological critique. Its focus is upon on social changes arising from technological advancement and their effects on identity.

Information Overload

At the core of Muslim identity is our status as worshippers of Allah. *"wa maa khalaqtu 'l-jinna wa'l insa illa leecabudoon."*-" I have only created jinn and men that they may serve (worship) me." (Surah Az-Zariyat 51:56) It is in the present that Allah is worshipped. You may call this simply concentration in the various obligatory and supererogatory acts of 'ibada if you wish. To the extent that we are focused in our worship we benefit. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and give him peace, said, "Truly a

servant performs the prayer without a sixth of it being recorded for him or a tenth, but only as much as he comprehends." Now one may argue that technology has nothing to do with this. Indeed one often hears our brothers maintaining that technology is a neutral force. While it is true that a given tool is just a tool, each tool has an effect on our perception of the world around us. Holding a hammer, one searches for nails, with a knife, one ponders what to slice. As Neil Postman explains in his book *Technopoly*, each new tool comes to us with its own particular "embedded ideology." Postman writes, "Once a technology is admitted [into society] it plays out its own hand; it does what it is designed to do. Our task is to understand what that design is." As Marshal McLuhan put it "The Medium is the Message."

Consider these changes in the amount of information competing for our attention (Shenk 1997, 30):

♦ In 1971 the average American was targeted by at least 560 daily advertising messages. Twenty years later, that number has risen sixfold, to 3,000 messages per day.

♦ In the office an average of 60 percent of each person's time is now spent processing documents.

♦ Paper consumption per capita in the United states tripled from 1940 to 1980 (from 200 to 600 pounds), and tripled again from 1980 to 1990 (to 18,00 pounds).

♦ In the 1980s, third-class mail (used to send publications) grew thirteen faster than population growth.

♦ Two-thirds of business managers surveyed report tension with colleagues, loss of job satisfaction, and strained personal relationships as a result of information overload.

♦ More than 1,000 telemarketing companies employ 4 million Americans, and generate $650 billion in annual sales.

We are called on to process prodigious amounts of information daily. This information glut has deleterious effects on our physical health. (Shenk, 1997). It has diminished our attention span (Postman 1985) One of the principal media through which we take this information in, television, has clearly documented negative physical, psychological, and behavioral effects on children (Johnson 2000). The iconography of modern advertising may even be read as religious drama, as does Martin Esslin, who sees the moral universe of the TV commercial

is essentially that of a polytheistic religion. It is a world dominated by a sheer pantheon of powerful forces, which literally reside in every article of use or consumption…. If the wind and the waters, the trees and brooks of ancient Greece were inhabited by a host of nymphs, dryads, satyrs, and other local and specific deities, so is the universe of the TV commercial. (Esslin 1976, 271)

The massive amounts of information we process daily take a toll on our attention span and ability to concentrate, and therefore on our deen. While all the facts mentioned above affect our ability to concentrate, the dramatic increases in the number of advertising messages to which we are subjected have another effect as well. For the advertising industry works to create needs in target markets, needs which specific products can fill.

As inhabitants of a socially constructed reality, our capacity to elaborate needs in cultural terms has reached a point where even our most commonplace wants are directed towards objects with a highly symbolic connotation. We no longer simply feel thirsty, hungry, or unclothed; our feelings of lack have already been oriented towards specific objects that are constructed symbolically by information, the market, advertising, and the social networks to which we belong. So we are thirsty for A, we can only wear B, for breakfast we want C; and hence we actually define our needs within the specific codes of the everyday cultural field in which we live and communicate. (Melucci 1996, 24)

Imam al-Ghazali analyzed the aspect of the self that seeks only to fulfill its base needs, calling it *nafs al amara*, the animal self. In the postmodern social milieu of America, advertisers make use of the desires of the animal self to sell their products. Sex is used to sell a dazzling array of products from automobiles to lingeré, commercials for beer inevitably picture beads of pure water on the sides of the can or glass, foods are presented as part of an entertainment experience. Another way of putting this is to say that advertisers seek to speak directly to the *nafs al amara*.

Social Saturation

The postmodern sense of self has emerged from the social effects of technological advances made during the twentieth century. Even before mentioning high-tech advances, there are seven technologies that dramatically altered the social landscape for those living in North America. These are the railroad, public postal services, the automobile, the telephone, radio broadcasting, motion pictures, and rotary presses used in the factory production if printed books. The railroad, public postal services and the automobile all served to allow us to stay in touch with distant colleagues, friends, and relatives more easily. This had the effect of increasing the total number of social relations we conducted. The telephone too facilitated an increase in the number of social relations, even as it altered the character of relationships conducted through this medium by limiting the information communicated while relating to the sound of the other's voice. Radio broadcasting, motion pictures, and printed books all serve as media through which the self of others is projected into the world to which mass audiences respond. The last three decades have seen additional technologies increasing the potential for relatedness: air transportation, television, and electronic communication. With the rise of the personal computer and the Internet, the situated intensifies even further.

It may not seem obvious at first that we have "relationships" with characters seen on television or in the movies. Yet consider that for many people, the most emotionally-charged moments of their lives come while watching television or seeing a movie. Nor is reciprocal interchange required for significant bonding: consider the relationships people have with religious figures like the Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad. If we are willing to admit that physical presence is not required for a relationship, then we must admit the possibility that media figures may play a significant role in people's lives. The question is not so much whether media-relationships are real, as whether normal relationships can match the power of artifice.

Not only has the number of relationships increased, these same technological advances have led to steady increases in the variety of relationships in which we are engaged and the potential frequency of conduct. We may well have contact with more people, with whom we have a greater variety of relationships, in a single morning - through cursory examination of the newspaper, listening to talk-radio participants during the morning commute, morning phone calls and e-mail at the office - than our predecessor living in the early twentieth century had in a month.

For Muslims living in America these changes are especially significant because Islamic identity is tightly bound with the face-to-face relationships of family and community. While Muslims can and do make use of the various mediated forms of communication, the massive increases in potential for relatedness are disproportionately skewed towards relationships with non-Muslims. Muslim youth growing up in the United States today are likely to have relationships with far more non-Muslims than their parents did as youth.

For Muslims and non-Muslims alike, the increase in relationships leads to the acquisition of multiple and disparate potentials for being. People have long filled multiple roles - son or daughter, husband or wife, brother or sister, uncle or aunt, father or mother, employee, friend, etc. - each of which demands somewhat different behavior. Today, however, we have more colleagues, more friends and acquaintances, more strangers, together with media-relationships. Through our observation of different relationships on television and in the movies, we are familiar with many more kinds of social

situations and relationships than ever before. Not only do are we familiar with many more kinds of social situations, we have been shown how to function in these situations. Each of these many relationships we engage in affects our sense of who we are, who we could be, and how to fill the many roles we are called on to play during the course of a day.

The very din of imaginal voices in adulthood-as they sound in thought and memory, in poetry, drama, novels, and movies, in speech, dreams, fantasy, and prayer . . . can be valued not just as subordinate to social reality, but as a reality as intrinsic to human existence as the literally social. (Watkins 1986)

The acquisition of these imaginal voices may be seen as a process of social saturation: the process of populating the self with multiple and disparate potentials for being. These internal voices, or vestiges of relationships both real and imagined, have been given different names: invisible guests by Mary Watkins, social imagery by Eric Klinger, and social ghosts by Mary Gergen.

Mary Gergen found in her studies that young people could discuss their social ghosts with ease. These were primarily close friends either currently or from an earlier time in their lives, but also family members. Figures the young people had never met - sports figures, actors, musicians, and religious figures - made up nearly a quarter of these social ghosts. (Gergen 1987) In a related work, psychologists Hazel Markus and Paula Nurius explore the multiple conceptions people have of what they might become, would like to become, or are afraid to become - their possible selves. (Markus and Nurius 1986) In each case these possible selves are private surrogates for others to whom one has been exposed either directly or through the media. Family relations specialists Paul Roseblatt and Sara Wright write about the shadow realities that exist in close relationships. In addition to the reality that a couple shares together, each will harbor alternative interpretations of their lives together. (Rosenblatt and Wright 1984) These alternative interpretations are kept private because they might appear unacceptable and threatening if revealed to the partner. These shadow realities are typically generated and supported by persons outside the relationship - including figures from the media. British psychologist Michael Billig and his colleagues found the typical condition of the individual to be one of internal conflict over the values, goals, and ideals to which people are committed in their everyday lives: for each belief there exists a strong counter-tendency. (Billig et. al 1988)

As more and more voices and potentials are added, each with its own point of view, committed identity because increasingly difficult. Social saturation adds incrementally to population of self, and as it does so each impulse toward well-formed identity is cast into increasing doubt…

Descriptions of the multiplicity of the self usually stress the variations of the self over time and the discontinuities among the identifications forced upon us by rapid change. Equally important, at least, is the multiplicity that derives from uncertainty and the paradox of choice. Our self simultaneously comprises a number of components, and the innermost aspect of uncertainty is structured precisely by the difficulty we experience in identifying with just one of them, and by the requirement that we must nevertheless do so in order to be able to act. Hence, not only is it difficult to maintain our identity over time and to state that we still are what and who we used to be; it is also, and possibly even more so, hard to decide at any particular moment which self among the many possible is the one that is ours. (Melucci 1996, 46)

This condition is called by Kenneth Gergen "Multiphrenia"- a condition in which the disparate voices of our socially saturated beings compete for attention and undermine any steps we take towards establishing our identity. (Gergen 1991, 73)

This undercutting of the attempt to act by an internal voice blaming one for one's decisions is reminiscent of the concept of nafs al lawwama. The concept itself is Quranic: (75: 2)-- the reproachful self. The nafs al lawwama, is the aspect of self that continually blames us for our choices, and yet is indecisive in its struggle to choose a course of action. Like the concept of nafs al amara, it is masterfully explicated in Imam al-Ghazali's Ihya. With Multiphrenia, the nafs al lawwama becomes

multiple, intensified, and pathological. The generalized sense of doubt about oneself has come to be seen as an inherent part of American culture:

There seems to be a persistent impulse among Americans to worry about whether they are what they should be, whether they have the sort of personal traits, abilities, skills, social manners, or inner strength they should have. The sense of ambiguity does not stem from individual lack of adjustment to social life, but is an inherent part of the culture and its system of meanings.   (Hewitt 1989, 38).

The Process of Identity Construction.

Caught in the struggle of dealing with the desires intensified by media, and with decision-making beset by the tumultuous voices of social ghosts, the process of identity construction becomes more difficult. As Alberto Melucci puts it, "Standing at the point where numerous circuits of information intersect, at the junction of complex relational networks, the individual is in danger of being overwhelmed by noise, of being lacerated by the pressure of too many exchanges and too many desires." (Melucci 1996, 51)

While scholars characterize identity in various ways, in general these characterizations may be read to include an element of self-recognition and an element comprised of the possibility of recognition by others. Each of us possesses several different identities of varying degrees of complexity - personal, social, and so on - the difference being the particular system of relationships that conveys to us the recognition. Identity then may conceptually be seen as including a dimension of unity, and one of difference. All who live in the postmodern culture are engaged in a constructing our identity on an ongoing basis. We struggle to preserve our unity, to define the boundaries of our identity. We struggle to achieve a sense of controlling which of our multiple selves responds in a given situation, to maintain our continuity. Both the sense of unity and that of choosing how we are to recognize ourselves and be recognized among the possibilities and constraints present in the field of relations that constitute us at any given moment - both are dependent upon our ability to capacity to respond.

The capacity to respond has a dual meaning:

♦ responding for (answering for the limitations, memories, gender and personal history that together constitute the process of recognizing the unity of our identity) and

♦ responding to (recognizing what we are and locating ourselves in our relations).

The capacity to respond, then, is a dynamic process with inward and outward components.

The outward component of constructing identity is known among the counseling professions as a process centered on answering the question "What can I do?" The goal is control. For a child, taking one's first steps, tying one's own shoes, reading a storybook-all these are experiences whereby the child gains a sense of his or her effectiveness and ability to cope. This process is known among psychologists as the process of mastery. For the Muslim, construction of this outward component of identity may be informed by a reading of the *aya*t: "*wa maa khalaqtu 'l-jinna wa'l insa illa leecabudoon.*"-" I have only created jinn and men that they may serve (worship) me." (Surah Az-Zariyat 51:56) For the Muslim who understands that worship is the very purpose for which mankind was created, mastery of the process of worship becomes important indeed. In such a case it follows that our response to outward circumstance is strongly influenced by the primacy of worship in our lives. The outward aspect of this understanding how to worship and conduct ourselves in accordance with Islamic *Shari'a* has always been the province of *fiqh*. To the extent that our knowledge of *fiqh* is robust (even if it remains basic) we gain certainty about the validity of our practice. But all this begs the question. Of course knowledge of *fiqh* helps us to practice our Islam. But many of our youth, (and the rest of us, for that matter) are not motivated to acquire such knowledge, and the onslaught of

media and other distractions compound the dilemma. Our experiential reality is that, for most of us, our understanding of fiqh does not assist us in responding to the challe

The aspect of identity construction that is responding for personal limitations is an inward process that seeks to maintain our sense of the boundaries of ourselves, our sense of unity. The counseling professions speak of this inward component of identity as a process centered on answering the question "Who am I?" The Muslim may read the *ayat* in Surat Al-Acraaf in which Allah tells us of gathering all the children of Adam together and asking *Alastu birabbikum*? "Am I not your Lord?" (7: 172) as bearing on this question. For it is in the acknowledgment that everyone gave: "*balaa*," "Yes," that the Muslim locates a fundamental limit of self as servant of Allah. It is in this affirmation of servant-hood that the Muslim may discover a unity of self that persists over time despite the accelerating rate of change and growing complexity that characterize Postmodernity. Once again, however, the question is not whether such an active affirmation of servant-hood would be helpful to the process of identity construction. The question is how practically to maintain a sense of one's status as a servant of Allah in the face of the assault of information overload and the internal voices of our socially saturated selves.

Identity and Postmodernity

As scholars come to understand the effects postmodernity has on the process of identity construction, they also advance suggestions about the skills and capacities the postmodern self requires. Excerpts from analysis of social anthropologist and clinical psychologist Alberto Melucci are used below to indicate an area of convergence between scholarly ideas about how identity is to be maintained in a postmodern social context and a reading of Islamic practice as it functions to assist Muslims in the process of identity construction.

 The outward component of identity construction has to do with mastery within the field of relations within which one finds oneself. Even the examples given: of a child's first step, or learning to tie his or her shoes, or reading a storybook, are empowering to the child because of the social relations that exist between the parents and the child.

One of the most formalized means of structuring human relations is by means of laws. It is not surprising that several popular television shows currently airing have to do with law: *Judging Amy, The Practice, Law and Order*, even *Ally MacBeal*. These shows explore aspects of human relationships as seen through the eyes of the legal system, but they also explore aspects of the principal characters' relationships outside the framework of the legal system. In this way, these shows illustrate for their public characters responding to others in a variety of social contexts, and explore to some extent the tensions and difficulties that arise because of the multiplicity of selves they bring to these interactions.

An interesting question for Muslims living in America is "Why doesn't *fiqh* generate the level of interest among the Muslims that common law does among the American public at large?" As we ponder why *fiqh* has come to be seen by a significant portion of our youth as largely irrelevant to their daily lives, it is helpful to realize that the more any system of relations is structured and crystallized, the more individuals are defined by what the others in the group expect from them. The experience of many of our youth is that Islam imposes upon them many restrictions on their behavior not shared by their peers. The imposition comes primarily from parents, community members, and Imams. It is widely acknowledged that the Muslims living in America suffer from a lack of knowledge of their deen. Those who came as immigrants tended to be those in search of economic opportunity, not *fuqaha*. Those born here who subsequently embraced Islam have had to contend with very limited access to reliable knowledge about the deen, not to mention working through incorrect information misrepresented as being Islam. The upshot is that many of the parents of our youth and community members at large are in no position to pass on reliable knowledge of the deen, let alone articulate in a dynamic and relevant fashion. The situation with our Imams has been similarly characterized by a lack of knowledge.

Foreign-born Imams tend to have little understanding of the cultural realities in which our youth grow up. Native-born Imams have not tended to have a deep knowledge of the deen. While both these situations are changing, today's youth have often endured within the Muslim community social relations with parents and other

The view of *fiqh* (and more generally Islam) as merely a set of rules is a narrative arising out of the experiences of our youth. It is not simply the case that Sacred Law read (in part) as a system of social relations stands as a fortress-like structure the observation of which insures preservation of Islamic identity. It is by the articulation of an experience-based narrative that is more dynamic and relevant that the importance of Sacred Law may come to be appreciated as a vital tool in choosing how to respond to the sea of messages in which we immersed.

The threatened unity of the person can only be preserved by learning to open up and to close down, to move into and withdraw from the flow of messages, to resist the lure of the possible, to withstand the unhindered demands of the affections. It subsequently becomes vital for each of us to find a rhythm to govern our entry to, and exit from, the relations that enable us to send and receive information, a rhythm with which we can resist losing the sense attached to the communication or the neutralization of its content. . . . Opening and closing become necessary capabilities if we are to preserve our unity in the flux of messages and in the interminable sequence of changes. In the alternation between noise and silence, we can create an inner space which persists …We must be able to open and close our channels of external communication to keep our relations alive, yet without becoming submerged by the flood of messages in the process. (Melucci 1996, 51- 52)

Here Melucci, a cultural sociologist and clinical psychologist calls for a rhythm of engagement with and withdrawal from the world, a rhythm that allows us to maintain an inner space that persists. For the Muslim, the *salat* does precisely this. The times of the salat provide for the Muslim regular opportunities for withdrawal from the world, regular opportunities to turn from responding to one's social relations to responding to one's Lord. This is a narrative in which *Salat* moves beyond ritual requirement and becomes experiential practice with relevance to daily life. The detailed guidance that *fiqh* provides becomes a technical narrative for the optimization of this practice. This narrative of the *fiqh* does not replace others, but stands alongside them.

An experiential narrative of *fiqh* may be expressed for areas of Sacred Law beyond ritual worship. It is through capacity to assume a situational identity that a person responds to different fields of social relations. To follow Melucci's argument:

In order to be able to cope with the transformations of identity, individuals need a formal capacity which is increasingly self-reflective and self-feeding over time. … The continuity of identity should therefore increasingly rely not on specific contents but on what I would call personal capacity: a form and processual capacity which enables the individual to assume a situational identity without a loss of a deeper sense of continuity of her/his personal existence. (Melucci 1996, 52)

Framed within Islamic tradition, compare the comments of Imam Nawawi in a similar vein:

…the sincere person moves with what is right, wherever it may lead, such that when prayer is deemed better by the Sacred Law, then he prays, and when it is best to be sitting with the learned, or the righteous, or guests, or his children, or taking care of something a Muslim needs, or mending a broken heart, or whatever else it may be, then he does it, leaving aside what he usually does. (*al Majmuc* 1.17)

Here we can see how knowledge of the Sacred Law may be used to provide guidance in choosing the most appropriate situational identity in a given field of social relations. In order for the Sacred Law to function in this manner, however, the individual must have knowledge of it. As knowledge of the Sacred Law is increased, the extent of its application to daily life is similarly increased. It is not merely

in the discrimination of obligatory from recommended actions, or offensive from unlawful actions, that Sacred Law is seen to have applicability, but in choosing the preferred course of action. By this process the narrative of Sacred Law is transformed from a rigid set of rules largely irrelevant to daily life to a dynamic guidance in responding to the exigencies of postmodernity without losing the continuity of identity. It is by this means that the core of the Muslim's identity as a worshipper of Allah extends beyond acts of ritual obedience to color more and more of our responses to the world around us.

The other component of identity construction is inward, the ongoing affirmation of "*balaa*." According Melucci: "In order to be able to live with the discontinuity and heterogeneity of times and spaces, we are called to develop a capacity to unify experience other than that provided by instrumental reason." (Melucci, 53) The nature and source of this capacity seems to remain somewhat opaque to Melucci. Within an experiential narrative of Islamic tradition, the capacity to inwardly acknowledge our Lord in every action, to make the affirmation of "*balaa*" an ongoing process, requires *al-Ikhlas*, sincerity. The most effective way to unify our experience, to maintain the continuity of our inward sense of identity in the face of the information overload and multiphrenia, is to engage in the practice of sincerely affirming Allah's unity in every act of obedience. To do this is to purify our intentions of concern for other than Allah.

Operationally, the definitive discourse on this topic has remained for 1000 years Imam al Ghazali's *Ihya 'Ulum ad-Deen*. This work may be seen as delineating a *fiqh* of the *batin*, a handbook of practice for the achievement of true sincerity. It is by the process of purifying our intentions in every act of obedience, and extending the realm of our acts of obedience by a knowledge of the deen which allows us to transform the *mubah*, that is, the permissible - into the *mandub*, the recommended, that we unify our day-to-day experience of identity construction and make it the ongoing acknowledgement of "*balaa*." It is by this process that we become one of the *mufridun*…the singularizers. Of these singularizers our Prophet, may Allah bless him and give him peace, remarked in a hadith reported in Tirmidhi:

"*Sabiqu'l mufridun*." "The singularizers have outstripped everyone else." Who are the ("*mufridun*") singularizers' ya Rasullah? "Those who are shamelessly enamored with the remembrance of Allah. The *dhikr* puts from them their burdens so when they arrive on the *yawm al qiyyama* they are lightened."

Conclusion

Social conditions in postmodern America render the construction of coherent identity more problematic for everyone, not just the Muslims. One of the consequences of information overload is an intensification of desires as advertisers work hard to create needs within us. The process of social saturation extends our capacity to adopt different situational identities even while it makes choosing the most appropriate response to a given situation more difficult. Analysts of postmodernity suggest that new coping skills are needed to deal with these pressures. One set of skills seen as vital to the process of identity construction consists of means by which we respond to an ever-expanding field of experience without losing the continuity of identity. Another set of skills required to cope with postmodernity is the capacity to unify experience by means other than those provided by instrumental reason.

In the outward process of identity construction, the Muslim may find the guidance to respond to the expanding field of social relations through a narrative of fiqh that emphasizes its experiential functionality. The inward aspect of identity construction requires a capacity to unify experience the Muslim may find in the practice of the fiqh al batin in general, and more specifically in the practice of sincerity.

It is by engagement in these two processes that we may resist the onslaught of media-created needs calling to the nafs al amara. It is by engagement in these two processes that we may negotiate successfully among our social ghosts and avoid a multiphrenic condition and the pathological, postmodern nafs al lawwama. It is by engagement in these two processes that we may succeed in achieving the nafs al mutma-inna.

"Ya ayuha 'l-nafsu 'l-mutma-inna, irjici ilaa rabbika raadiyatam - mardiya. Faad khulee fee cibaadee, waad khulee jannatee." O soul, in rest and satisfaction! Come back thou to thy Lord, well pleased and well-pleasing unto Him! "Enter thou, then, among my Devotees! Yea, enter thou My Heaven. (Surah al-Fajr 89: 27 - 30) (trans. Yusuf Ali)

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