

BAPAK'S GUIDANCE FOR THE DIRECTION OF OUR ASSOCIATION

extracts from Bapak's talks with explanations

Compiled by Rashad Pollard and Stuart Cooke, June 2016

In considering Bapak's guidance for our association, it is important to first reflect on the purpose of Subud membership. As you know, Bapak told us many times to be clear to prospective members during the preparation period, as well as those already opened, that it is necessary to approach the latihan with patience, submission and surrender (a willingness to let go). This means to be free of hopes, expectations or wishes concerning the latihan. This is quite different from the purpose of a "spiritual" or religious practice or religion, which is usually to achieve certain benefits. We can make no such promises because doing so would contradict the meaning of the words "patience, submission and surrender". It is through this attitude that the primary aim of doing the latihan may be realized. This is that one may be truly blessed and become someone who can be observed as a person who is truly noble in nature and character.

So the basis of the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud is our constant devotion to Almighty God in accordance with His guidance and direction which manifest in the latihan, and the aim is that we may become human beings with characters of fine quality. Such are the explanations that should be given to those who wish to join Subud. Before joining, it is necessary to understand that Subud, or the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud, is not a magical practice that will enable a person to make large profits in a commercial enterprise or to obtain promotion in his work, or that will hasten recovery from an illness from which he suffers.

Of course, brothers and sisters, everyone wants to have a healthy body and sufficient means in life, but such things are not the objective in Subud. However, so long as we follow the way of the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud, we can always receive purification of the inner feeling and development of the djiwa, which can really change a fate in life that is bad to one that is good, and can lighten the physical sufferings of the body, which can eventually become healthy. But in entering Subud, the basis and aim is devotion, that is, constant devotion to the One Almighty God with patience, trustful acceptance and sincere submission. Whether a bad fate in life eventually becomes a good one and the suffering from a physical illness is cured depends upon the Will of Almighty God. He is the One Who can decide what is beyond our comprehension. This is what the helpers have to explain to people who are interested in joining Subud. This is necessary so that they will not have any misunderstanding about Subud later on.

*From "Duties and obligations of a helper", *Pewarta* Vol. VIII No.3, July 1971
Provisional Translation*

One cannot say any increase in membership is to be seen, for as ten people are added ten are lost, so, as here, no change is noticeable. In short, things are just the same as here: a hundred come, a hundred disappear, so the numbers remain as they were.... Bapak sees this, Bapak feels it. That's why in Subud for ten people who join, ten leave. It's because the ten who join just do latihan, latihan, latihan, and think Subud is confined to that, that it consists merely of doing the latihan. Well, what happens? A feeling, an idea arises that the latihan will bring success in life. That's completely mistaken.... In Subud no such promise is given, because Subud is not a religion. It's the members of Subud who have religions. But Subud has no religion, for there's no promise given in Subud such as is given in the various

religions. It's as Bapak said just now. In the Christian religion, with the coming of Christ, human beings could assure themselves that if they could follow in Christ's footsteps they would go to heaven. It's similar in Islam. Subud, on the contrary, doesn't have that promise, Subud doesn't have it. Bapak is not referring to religion, no; let us just consider ourselves, our own needs. So we are referring to ourselves, to all of us Subud members. On joining Subud we were told at the opening to surrender to God Almighty, to surrender completely. Surrender means that everything depends on God. We just surrender with patience, trustful acceptance and sincere submission. If after doing latihan for a hundred years we only get a banana fritter, that's up to God.

*From Pewarta Vol. XIII No. 5, April 1977
Code Number: 76 CDK 6
Provisional Translation*

Over time, the latihan becomes not so much about our individual selves but involves those with whom one does latihan; with all the Subud membership and the whole of humanity, free of any personal wishes or desires. In this way we may have perfect harmony in our lives and between each other.

As for differences of opinion you may have among you, if all of you are always obedient to what is received in the latihan, free from the thinking and desires, there will be no misunderstandings. None! So, if there are misunderstandings, and people do not get on, it means that they are still using their desires, heart and mind. There is no such thing as 'not getting on' among us, there really isn't, because what we receive in the latihan is one current from God to human beings. Not to A, B or C, but to humanity. So if you are in the latihan you are not there as Mr A. No. You are there as humanity, which is one. If you are in the latihan as a separate individual you will not be able to receive rightly. Your nature in the latihan should be that of humanity in general. It is important that you, that your inner feeling, is as wide as this world. Then you can receive various things that are for humanity, and not just for yourself. In that way you can know the secrets of any place and any person.

*Talk # 5 From "Bapak's Talks Volume 10"
Second Subud world congress, Briarcliff, NY USA, July 25, 1963
Code Number: 63 BCL 10
Authorized Translation*

If you want to express Susila Budhi Dharma, or Subud, with one word, it is unity, or being one, one God, one mankind in Subud. It is that oneness that is expressed by the word 'brotherhood'.

*From "I am you", Talk to International Helpers and Trustees
Cilandak, Indonesia, June 12, 1986
Code Number: 86 CDK 6
Provisional Translation*

A recurring theme of the 1st World Congress through the 7th World Congress and in Bapak's talks generally was how to express this attribute of "oneness", of unity of purpose and harmony, through accomplishing outer works together in the world.

On the one hand we have to look after our personal, outer needs in life, which Bapak encouraged very much. To accomplish this we work in the world to achieve what is in our own, individual best interest, that is: to take care of our individual needs and wants. But if we are to work for Subud, we cannot successfully do so if all we are interested in is our own, personal best interest because in that case, we would be competing against each other rather than collaborating, and working collectively together, in harmonious ways.

Once we have developed real skills and expertise, there can come a time for us to be able to collaborate together to contribute to Subud's mission in the world. One of the lessons learned from this kind of collective effort is that we can only succeed if each member works in a state of

harmony with other members (helper and committee dewans, for example), which means to be free of any kind of individual self-interest. This was expressed in the 2011 report to WSA that SESI produced on Bapak's guidance on Enterprise, where Bapak pointed to self-interest as the major factor in the demise of our major enterprises, meaning they faltered and failed when the collective meaning and purposes of these enterprises were taken over by key involved members. In learning this lesson we can avoid the failures of the past and create projects that truly support the best interests of our Association as a whole.

Our Association agreed that to accomplish this it was necessary that, through its Committees, we provide a framework so that those members who are able to, in every Center and Nation (and on an International basis), can work together in the world by combining their expertise and resources in collective efforts – in the form of Subud enterprises (as public Subud companies), cooperatives and collective projects. Bapak advised us it was necessary that we find out how to work collectively together in this way. This is what would enable us to show Subud at work in the world, and that the future of Subud depended upon it.

So don't try to go out and do things on your own so that each one of you is ignoring everybody else, and just thinking of your own needs. The purpose of a Subud enterprise is to cooperate. In the latihan we are taught that we have to know each other, become aware of each other, and understand each other. We have to know each other's problems and each other's needs. We have to love each other, help each other, trust each other and respect each other. So if we are taught that in the latihan, we have to apply it in our everyday life. It is from this source that we build enterprises. The condition for something to succeed is that the people who undertake it together are harmonious and honest. These are the two requirements for successful enterprises. It is clear then that the way we are to undertake enterprises in Subud is to combine. Combine people working together in the form of a cooperation or cooperative, or in some form working together - whether it is ten people, or twenty people, or thirty - the more the better.

*From Special Supplement, Talk to men and women
Sydney, Australia, May 11, 1982
Code number: 82 SYD 2
Provisional Translation*

The enterprises Bapak means are joint enterprises, undertaken jointly between you, not by just one or two people only but by a lot of people forming a company, an NV (Naamlooze Vennootschap or PT Perseroan Terbatas), a Limited Company, which can really be seen to have adequate capital. That means establishing an enterprise with a lot of members working together, collecting a large amount of capital. In this way the enterprises you carry on will really be able to strengthen Subud.

*From Pewarta Vol. X No.3, June 1973
"Work and Worship"
Vancouver, Canada, April 22, 1972
Code Number: 72 YVR 2
Provisional Translation*

As far as Bapak has heard and understood what is done by Subud members abroad is not yet what Bapak means by enterprises, a kind of individual enterprise. So later, when it goes well and becomes big, you know well what will happen, when one has tasted sugar and felt it's sweetness, then certainly one feels sorry to have to share this sweetness.

*From Bapak's Videos Volume # 8
Comments on zonal coordinators reports, 7th World Congress, London, England
August 10, 1983
Code Number : 83 LON 8*

Thus we need to cultivate the outward expression of our capacities before the world. The spiritual side we must surrender to God. For God can indeed deal with this, not changing it

in a way that you feel, although in fact there is a change. Because the jiwa, the content of yourself, that is, can be changed in a wrong way if you are not careful. The harm thus done will cause you to lose your inner self.

This is why we need to undertake enterprises, brothers and sisters, so that we accustom ourselves to stand on our own feet both inwardly and outwardly. We need to establish enterprises so that everything begins harmoniously; with mutual respect, with mutual consideration, with mutual help. We shall establish these enterprises by joint endeavor, which means you are doing it together. Do not let it happen that A sets up an enterprise, B sets up an enterprise, C sets up an enterprise and D sets up an enterprise, all of the same kind, so that it seems from the first as if all of them are competing and vying with one another for advancement and profit. That will eventually lead to conflict and will certainly not be harmonious.

In order for everything to begin harmoniously and with mutual assistance, let the future enterprises be established in the form of co-operatives. That means with many members all in them together. And because such future enterprises will be rather large, you will therefore need not a little capital.

*From Special Supplement, Bapak's reply to enterprise reports
7th Subud world congress, London, England
August 9, 1983
Code Number: 83 LON 6*

We need to establish priorities so that our Committees, through their working groups, supported by the technical resources of MSF, SES, SDI, SYA, SIHA, and SICA, can create projects, firstly, to look after our own members – to provide better latihan facilities; to create collective enterprises through which we may fund the organization, schools for our children, care for our elderly in Subud, support members in financial need, and so on. Once we are strong, we can expand these services and facilities to serve those not in Subud around us. At that time the world will easily see and observe what we do as Subud members, and thus begin to understand that Subud is real.

Let us now look after our own. For you yourselves must be aware that among us there are many people who are in need, many who are destitute, and also many who are out of work; so, their life is not normal. Therefore, to start with, we need to prepare everything so that we can meet our own needs, in order to set an example. Once we are able to meet our own needs, then we can go outwards. Otherwise we will be in a hurry to help others and work in the outside world while among ourselves there is still illness and want. Then our help to others cannot be maintained and will be only half done.

Therefore, as a start, we should use our efforts to create a kind of springboard, which means first of all having a place for latihan. We give help here, there and everywhere but we do not even have our own place for latihan. We go out helping sick people while we cannot properly look after the sick children of our own members. We go off helping other people while there are many needy members in our own group.

That is why it is very important for us that, besides worshipping God, the committee should set up an enterprise. This enterprise is not intended to make a fortune, for a life of luxury and ease. No. Instead, the income of this enterprise should go to a Subud fund, which will help members who are in need or who are suffering. So, in this way we will create harmony among us, and we can be helped through our own efforts.

And when this has been achieved we can go further afield, by founding a hospital or a school for poor children, or for children with physical or mental disability. That is where we can help. And the teachers in such a school should, as far as possible, be our own members, who have received the latihan and so can work not only outwardly but also inwardly.

If we remember this we will realize that in our outer lives we need to do charitable work, to do work that visibly strengthens our bonds with one another. This is the reason why Bapak said it is very fitting, and truly in accordance with the will of Almighty God, that besides worshipping God we work for social good. But we need to begin with the society that is close to us; that is, with our own association, because our association is an example. If within our own group we are not yet in harmony, unable to be united – in other words if we cannot yet help or appreciate one another – how can we be so outside it? If among ourselves we are not yet good, then we cannot do good outside. Therefore, we must begin with ourselves. So Bapak hopes that you may, all of you, be truly united in action: one in aim, one in heart and feeling. Then everything will go well in your latihan.

*From "Bapak's Talks Volume 9", The Complete Recorded Talks Of Bapak Muhammad Subuh
Talk to men and women, Talk # 17
Second Subud World Congress
Briarcliff, NY USA, July 9, 1963
Code Number : 63 BCL 2
Authorized Translation*

So brothers and sisters, I think it's clear what Bapak is trying to say, that once you are able to practice this, in other words, to work in the world, to use your heart and mind according to the guidance of God's power, then it will be possible for people outside Subud, for society in general to begin to understand what Subud is. Because they will see the reality, they will see the evidence of what Subud is in your actions, in the way we run our businesses, in the way we look after other people. They will see that we run our businesses in a different way from what is normal; they will see that in our schools, children who were a bit disturbed have become quiet. So it is easy for people to understand what Subud is.

*From "A Special Collection Of Bapak's Talks" Vol.1: Melbourne-Toronto 1976
Bapak's fourth talk, San Francisco, CA U.S.A., April 28, 1976
Code Number : 76 SFO 4
Provisional Translation*

[that the] Brotherhood of Subud is not only an association of people who worship God, but that it will be able to fulfill its obligations to the public, to the human race in this world; that is by setting up bodies to undertake social work, such as establishing schools for delinquent children, handicapped children and backward children. It will build homes for old people who have no family and are therefore left a drift in life like flotsam in the midst of a great ocean; it will build large premises for the latihan, so that each is firmly established and there is no need to rent or hire premises. And we can appoint those of our members who are helpers to be employed and to work as teachers. These will be Subud helpers who are qualified as teachers, so that they can use and benefit from their latihan kejiwaan, and test about the children attending the school so as to see in what direction they need to go, in order not to fail; and they will be able to direct the children they are teaching in the school into the right channels. We can also appoint those of our helpers who are qualified doctors to work in the hospitals so that the people they treat will then remember to worship the One Almighty God. In this way we shall really be able to fulfill our obligations to the public, to the human race in this world. And apart from this we shall find the road is opened for us in each of our countries, because we shall really be supporting these countries' efforts in the sphere of social work.

*"The spiritual and the material"
New York, NY, U.S.A.
May 9, 1972.
Code Number : 72 NYC 1
Provisional Translation*

If we are to engage in expressing unity and harmony within Subud through joint collaboration and joint effort then we need to create policy and an infrastructure within our Association to effectively harness and manage these Projects, Enterprises and Social Work. The role of our Subud Committees and subsidiaries — SES, SDI, SYA, SIHA and SICA, etc. — is not to directly manage projects, because many Subud Committees do not necessarily have the time, skills and talents to do that. It is the committee's job to appoint working groups of experts to set up and manage projects. The most important function identified for the subsidiaries was to support that effort through constructing databases of experts as resources within their respective fields to help committees form these advisory, working and oversight groups. It must be pointed out, however, that not a few Subud Committees have successfully harnessed the resources of their Centers — usually through the dedication and hard work of a small group of willing experts who were available — to establish significant projects. This may be a good model to follow. The task would be to bring together the technical experts within the membership, and to motivate them to undertake or assist in such projects. In addition Bapak reminded us that we need to provide effective oversight of Subud projects to make sure they are rightly guided and serve the needs of the stakeholders — including the aims and purposes established for them by our Subud Association. In this way it is quite clear that our Association is undertaking these tasks not to help individual members to establish a business or social project that they personally own, manage or wish to start. But it is to develop enterprises and projects which are collectively owned by many members, managed by professionals with the right qualifications, expertise and experience under the supervision of an accountable Subud body (a committee or its appointees).

First of all, before you do any enterprises, before you start thinking about enterprises, the committee should set up a group of experts or a body of consultants — which Bapak has often described. This body should consist of those among you who have expertise in some field. It should combine expertise in whatever fields you have it in — business, trade, technical matters, production, industry, marketing. How many people will be on this consulting body or this group — which is usually called SES or Subud Enterprise Services — depends on what you need and how many people you have available. The purpose of this group of experts is to give guidance, help, and supervision to those who are going to do the enterprise. For example, if a group wants to start an enterprise in the field of agriculture, then they should be advised, helped, and put on the right track by an expert in the field of agriculture. If they do an enterprise in another field, then again they should be guided and put on the right track by an expert in that field.

*From Special Supplement, Talk to men and women
Sydney, Australia, May 11, 1982
Code number: 82 SYD 2
Provisional Translation*

This is therefore the reason why Bapak always says that besides establishing our bank, we must have a group of our own called S.T.S., Subud Technical Specialists [S.E.S.]. This is in order that we may have, within our own circle, experts to examine things and test them, test not only in the kejiwaan sense of the word, but test them in the outward meaning, so that those of us amongst the Subud members who are running enterprises can run them well, because they are being controlled and checked, examined and guided; checked, guided and directed by our own experts.

*“The Subud bank”
Auckland, New Zealand
April 6, 1972
Provisional Translation
Code Number : 72 AKL 1*

That also explains why Bapak decided that names of experts and specialists in this international Subud body should be collected together and registered - experts in

technology, doctors, agricultural specialists, and all others with various kinds of skills. They are not yet working in earnest, it seems; they are still asleep. Yet they are greatly needed by the membership, which is still unable to muster power to meet its worldly needs. Bapak therefore hopes that [SES] STS (Subud Technical Services) will be further encouraged to be as active as possible, so that it can grow.

*“The material and the spiritual”
First talk at the fourth world congress
Cilandak, Indonesia
August 5, 1971*

*From Cilandak 71: The Fourth Subud World Congress 15 Talks by Bapak
Code Number : 77 TJD 2
Provisional Translation*

Brothers and sisters, it seems necessary for Bapak to tell you about the plans and ideas we have for establishing an S.E.S. (Subud Enterprises Service) body. It is this that will serve all the national enterprises.... This body will provide everything for the enterprises. That means it will provide capital and everything that is required, so that when it gives assistance to an enterprise in some national center it will supply all the requirements and personnel needed. ...Thus besides providing money for the capital it will also select and appoint the personnel. These will be found and trained and directed by the S.E.S. body that is going to be established: S.E.S. International. This undertaking should acquire legal status and authorization from whatever country it may be in, so that it will be a body able to spread its wings all over the world. For this reason, brothers and sisters, it will be established in major cities, where it will really have influence and a wide scope when it comes to setting up an enterprise.

*“The role of the congress chairman”
Fifth World Congress, Wolfsburg, Germany
June 21, 1975
Code Number : 75 WOB 15
Provisional Translation*

The Role of Helpers is central. They are the pioneers who guide and assist the membership and Committees on Center, Regional, National and International levels..

Part of your responsibility as helpers is also to give explanations and to guide members regarding enterprises: how to start and how to do them. The helpers should be the pioneers: the growth points of Subud should be the helpers. As an example, Bapak, one man, was able to organize and build this latihan hall. Now, if you helpers were really able to do your job then there would be maybe fifty latihan halls like this around the world already. All it needs is to be able to show the members how to do it, how to achieve what Subud needs.... Many of you are not yet at the point where you are able to receive that and that is where the helpers come in. It is your responsibility as a helper to help a person who needs advice, a person who isn't yet able to correctly interpret, feel what the nature of their true talent is, how they should earn their living, how they should organize their life and so on. It is up to the helpers to be close to the members and to assist them with these problems: to help them to find their way, their right work and to help them implement it. That is the job that helpers have to do.

*From "Loving Your Fellow Man", a collection of Bapak's talks
The nation of mankind, Talk at zone one councilors conference
Cilandak, Indonesia, June 24, 1984
Code Number : 84 CDK 5
Provisional Translation*

The role of the Councilor Organisasi is to travel around his zone, find out to what extent the members in his Zone are willing and able to form enterprises, to know how they are doing

in their enterprises, to know what their problems are and to help them sort them out. That is the work of the Councilor Organisasi.

So, brothers and sisters, this is the job of the Councilor Organisasi. He has to know to what extent the people in his area, in his country or whatever, are able to know and to feel the talent of their own nature and to what extent they are able to put it into practice. Actually the work of the Councilor Organisasi is quite difficult and quite heavy, because he has to be aware of the capacity and the ability of the people who are in his area or in his country.

It is the councilors [kejiwaan and organisasi] who should now explain and bring understanding to the membership in their own center [national], to those that are as it were their subordinates, that the members should really be able to understand the meaning of enterprises in Subud. As far as Bapak has heard and understood what is done by Subud members abroad is not yet what Bapak means by enterprises, a kind of individual enterprise. So later, when it goes well and becomes big, you know well what will happen, when one has sugar and felt it's sweetness, then certainly one feels sorry to have to share this sweetness.

The scope of the committee councilors is, for example, the Anugraha project; building Subud houses, all kinds of enterprises, worldly matters. You can get rich; why not? You all have the same parts; the same as anyone else – provided that your parts are complete and not defective. You get rich using your heart and mind. This is what happens to the mind and heart of someone whose soul gets developed by the power of God, with the result that the soul goes higher and higher until eventually that soul can, as it were, take command of your life. Then great understanding from your soul will touch your mind. Therefore you will easily find out where to go and how to go about earning a living, making money.

*From Bapak's Videos Volume # 8
Comments on zonal coordinators reports, 7th World Congress, London, England
August 10, 1983
Code Number : 83 LON 8*

We should be able to reduce the risks of undertaking significant projects if we collaborate and bring together the right teams of experts to manage and oversee them. It is evident, however, that we largely failed in our past efforts to implement Bapak's advice and guidance concerning how it is so necessary for our Association to establish Subud enterprises and projects. Thus it is only natural that there is a reluctance to start again. But what are failures for? They are to learn from our mistakes; from the imperfect ways we went about trying to implement (and oversee) projects in the past. One way to start again may be to practice working together through projects in Subud Centers with expertise from outside the center as necessary. Few centers have property development experts as members, for example. This can be a business enterprise or project, any reasonable undertaking that the members of a Center feel they can own and support. At the same time other projects need to be considered by each Subud Country and internationally (through the WSA-Exec and WSC).

Clearly, brothers and sisters, God has provided everything man needs, but man does not understand this. Bapak doesn't hope, brothers and sisters, that what has happened with Anugraha will never happen again. No. Something similar may happen a second, or even a third time. But Bapak hopes you accept things like this as a sign of God's love for us human beings. It's like someone who is sick. Sickness is said to be a blessing, a reward. That's strange, you may say, how can sickness be a reward? Well, if a human being were not given illness, he wouldn't remember God. But when a man is sick, he remembers God. Only, don't wait until you are sick before you remember God!

*From "I am you", Talk to International Helpers and Trustees
Cilandak, Indonesia, June 12, 1986*

There is work, there are tasks which when you face them look impossible that you should be able to do them, there are experiences which should be impossible for you to experience, and yet, if you simply face them and go ahead with them, you do succeed, you are able to do them in the way that is necessary and in the way that you intend. Brothers and sisters, even though the work you are doing appears just like ordinary work, approach it with a feeling of confidence and a continuous feeling of giving thanks to the power of Almighty God. Do not hesitate and do not go at things in a way whereby you go forwards and backwards and vacillate in your resolve. Just carry on and face the responsibilities that you have taken on. And if you do that, then in a way which is unconscious and unexpected you will always find a way through, you will always find your way to achieve and to do what you have to do.

*From Special Supplement, Bapak's reply to enterprise reports
7th Subud world congress, London, England
August 9, 1983
Code Number: 83 LON 6*