

Course Outline, Book 7 – Walking Together on the Path of Service

The main sequence of courses (Books 1-6) offered by the Ruhi Institute is designed to impart to the participants the knowledge, qualities and skills that would enable them to serve as tutors. The aim of Book 7 is to prepare tutors who can effectively introduce these books to others.

Unit 1 – The Spiritual Path

Purpose: To gain increased awareness of the spiritual dynamics of advancing along a path of service to the Cause and acquire an understanding of the forces at work.

Unit 2 - Becoming a Tutor of Books 1 – 6

Purpose: To explore some of the concepts and acquire some of the attitudes and skills that contribute to the capability of helping a group of friends go through Books 1 – 6.

Practice: To form a study circle and accompany it through at least one book.

Unit 3 - Promoting the Arts at the Grassroots

Purpose: To appreciate the role of artistic endeavors in the activity of a study circle.

To the Collaborators

The system for the delivery of courses in a national community that has chosen to use the Ruhi Institute materials is generally put in place through the efforts of a relatively few Bahá'ís already deepened in the Faith. Having familiarized themselves with the content of Book 1, these friends are able to offer it in various settings, under the guidance of their national or regional institute. As the system begins to take root, the institute endeavors to increase the number of believers who have completed who have completed the first two or three books in the sequence and, to this end, conducts formal training courses for those who are capable and eager to serve as tutors of study circles. Gradually the pool of tutors upon which the institute can draw increases and the system becomes firmly established. This, it may be said, constitutes a first stage in the unfoldment of the institute process in such a country.

Early on, it was recognized by the Ruhi Institute that, if courses were to reach large contingents of believers, the capacity to multiply the number of study circles would have to be inherent to the system itself. The main sequence of courses would need, at some point, to impart to the participants the knowledge, qualities and skills that would enable them to serve as tutors. The Institute was set on establishing within a population a dynamic process of teaching-learning. In this process, individual believers enter a path of service by studying the first few units with the help of a tutor. Through their continued participation in the courses, their knowledge of the Faith grows and their capacity to serve it increases. Eventually they reach a point where they learn to assist others to initiate and follow a similar path of spiritual development. Every participant in the courses of the Ruhi Institute, therefore, has the opportunity to be both a student and a tutor.

Years of action and reflection, during which materials were written and modified in the light of experience, led the Institute to the conclusion that the proper place for a course for the preparation of tutors was after Book 6. The aim of Book 7 would be to introduce certain concepts to the participants and offer them some insights into the attributes of an effective tutor. It was understood, however, that one course covering the units of this book would not be sufficient for such training. Thus, the opportunity would need to be provided to those performing this act of service to come together periodically to polish their skills and enhance their understanding. Regular gatherings for tutors, then, became an essential element in the system.

The purpose of the first unit of Book 7, "The Spiritual Path", is to raise awareness of the spiritual dynamics of advancing along a path of service to the Cause and increase understanding of the forces at work. The second unit, "Becoming a Tutor of Books 1-6", examines some of the concepts, attitudes, skills and abilities that contribute to the capability of helping a group of believers go through the first six courses. The third unit, "Promoting the Arts at the Grassroots", is designed to create appreciation for the role of artistic endeavors in the activity of a study circle.

The main sequence of courses offered by the Ruhi Institute has been conceived in terms of three cycles, each one concerned with the spiritual and moral empowerment of the believers from a particular perspective. Book 7 completes the first of these, centered on the practice of the freedom the individual has to undertake acts of service within the framework of the teachings of the Faith and the guidance provided by its institutions. Those who have finished the book are urged to form new study circles for which they will serve as tutors and, at the same time, move on to the study of Book 8, "The Covenant", which begins a cycle of courses dedicated to the individual and the community. This will be followed by the third cycle focusing on the individual and society.