

# Mystic love

Delray professor devotes himself to Rumi and love's connection to God.

BY LINDA REEVER  
STAFF WRITER/PHOTOGRAPHER

Majid Naini appears to speak from the heart when he talks about the subject he is so passionate about — love.

"We all have to do our best to spread love and peace," said Naini, 48, of Delray Beach, who has given up a 25-year career as a college professor to teach in the world about the man to whom he is devoted.

Naini is working on a series of books about the man he calls his spiritual teacher and guide.

**Beha'uddin Rumi**, a poet, Islamic theologian and Sufism philosopher who expressed in poetry the importance of love and love's connection with God.

Naini is lecturing throughout the country, including tonight and Aug. 16 at the Science of Mind Center of Boca Raton. The two-hour talks are open to the public.

"He is a wonderful speaker," said **Barbara Lunde**, pastor of the Science of Mind Center. "He has studied Rumi for decades. The beauty of this man is that he is so into the teachings of Rumi and into teaching others about it."

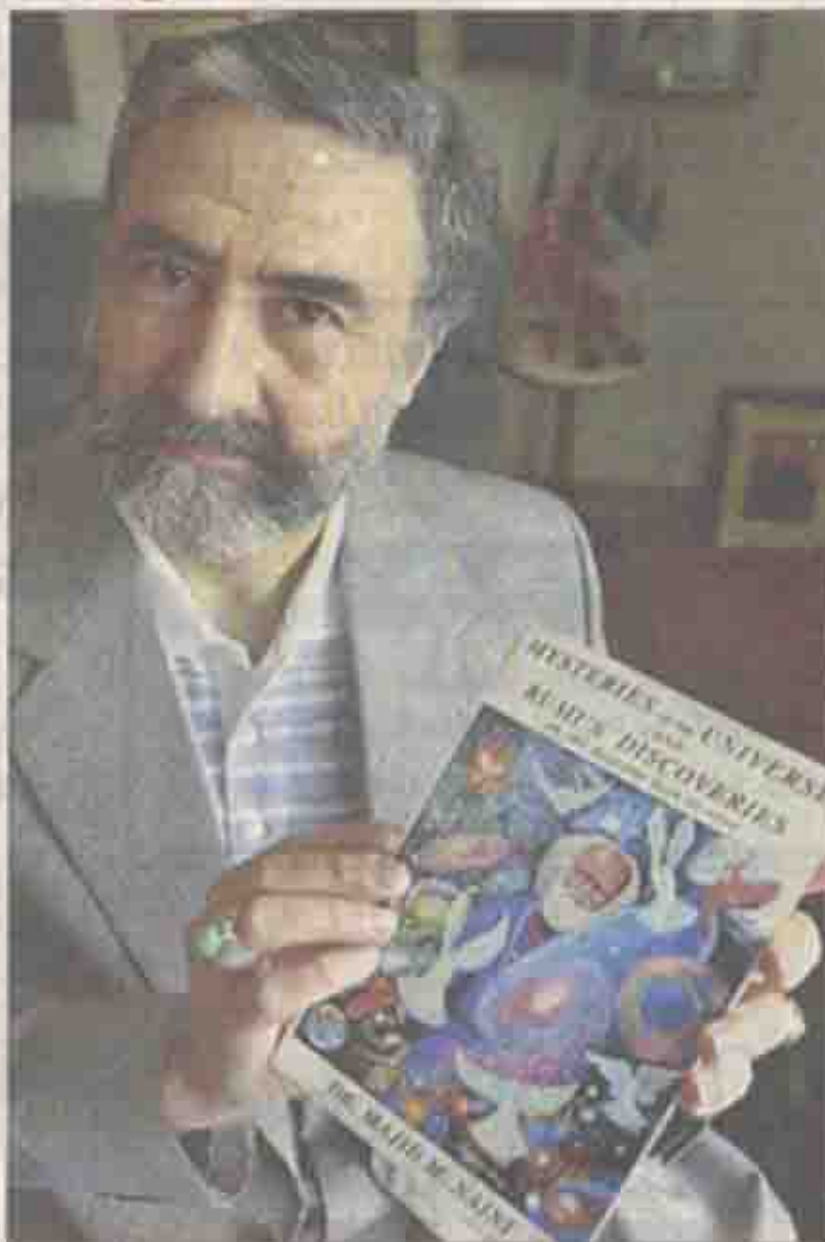
"Dr. Naini is a powerful speaker," said **Michael Peterson**, 46, of Boca Raton, who attended a recent lecture. "I found the talk on Rumi both intellectual and spiritual."

Naini was 10 when he first learned about the religious scholar who lived nearly 800 years ago. He was growing up in Kahabun, Iran, when **Davood Naini**, his Persian uncle, recited some of Rumi's wing-like poetry in Farsi, the language of Iran.

"My beloved uncle's words are forever with me," Naini said. "Since then, I have kept the insight, wisdom and profound teachings of Rumi in my life. During the most discouraging times, the beautiful verses have reminded me of the Creator's great love and of his mercy. The lovely words have kept my faith strong and my vision clear."

Rumi was born in 1207 in the southwestern province of Persia, present-day Afghanistan. He was known as a great spiritual master, poet and a philosopher of Sufism, a mystical philosophy of Islam.

Rumi was well educated in the Muslim lands, where his family



**ALL ABOUT LOVE:** Majid Naini of Delray Beach has devoted his life to teaching others about Rumi, a 13th-century Sufism philosopher who taught about God and love. Naini will be giving lectures on Rumi tonight and in August at the Science of Mind Center in Boca Raton. Staff photo/Carline Jean

traveled extensively. They finally settled in Herat, Anatolia, where his father was a conservative theologian and professor in religious sciences.

When his father, **Beha'uddin Valad**, passed away, Rumi succeeded him and took over his religious position, pleasing many devotees. At

the age of 38, Rumi was introduced to mysticism, the doctrine that teaches it is possible to achieve communion with God through contemplation and love without the medium of human reason. He immediately became infatuated, gave up teaching the ways of conservative religious leaders and

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MAJID NAINI

STYLING: CARLINE JEAN; HAIR: JESSICA; MAKEUP: JESSICA; PROP STYLING: JESSICA

## IF YOU GO

**What:** Lectures about Beha'uddin Rumi, a poet, Islamic theologian and Sufism philosopher

**Where:** Science of Mind Center, 2500 12th Ave., Boca Raton

**When:** 7:30 tonight and Aug. 16

**Cost:** \$25 for both or \$15 each

**Information:** 561-368-8248. For future lectures and books, go to [www.naininet.com](http://www.naininet.com)

began on a mystical path.

He continued to explore mysticism and pursue his career as a mystic poet until his death at the age of 66.

"Men and women of all religions read his works," said Naini. "He is loved by people of all faiths."

During his discussions, Naini recites lines of Rumi poetry in Farsi to give his audience a sample of how it was originally recited by the poet and an understanding of the ancient culture and heritage of Rumi's time. He also reads poems in English.

"I went to one of his talks and he was fabulous," said **Beth Herman**, 60, of Boca Raton. "I think that Rumi's messages are the same messages as other religious who have taught through the years. He talks about peace, love and unity in the world. His poetry is just another means of relating his ideas."

Rumi's aesthetic expression is highly regarded in many areas of the world, but is somewhat new to America.

"He had incredible knowledge about the future," Naini said. "He talked about the creation of the universe, gravity and nuclear explosions. Rumi's words are so profound that one can study them for many years and still find that some of his verses remain elusive. It has taken me close to 20 years to understand certain lines of Rumi's poetry."

Naini received a bachelor's degree in electronics engineering, a master's degree in computer science and a doctorate in computer and information science from the University of Pennsylvania. He taught at schools including the University of Hawaii, Florida Atlantic University, American University in Cairo, Colorado Technical University and the University of Pennsylvania.

He has written many books, the latest entitled *Mysteries of the Universe and Rumi's Discoveries on the Mystic Path of Love*.

"God is the religion and nationalism of lovers of God," Naini said, reciting a line from a Rumi poem. "He believed in the soul of the Creator, the Almighty God of love."