The Phrasing Must Change
by Jelaluddin Rumi

Learn about your inner self from those who know about such things, but don’t repeat verbatim what they say.
Zuleika let everything be the name of Joseph, from celery seed to aloes seed. She loved him so much, she concealed his name in many different phrases, the inner meanings known only to her. When she said, The wax is softening, near the fire, she meant, My love is wanting me.
Or if she said, Look, the moon is up, or The willow has new leaves, or The branches are trembling, or The coriander seeds have caught fire, or The roses are opening, or The king is in a good mood today, or Isn’t that lucky, or The furniture needs dusting, or The water carrier is here, or It’s almost daylight, or The clouds seem to be moving against the wind, or My head hurts, or My headache’s better, anything she praises, it’s Joseph’s touch she means, any complaint, it’s his being away.
When she’s hungry, it’s for him. Thirsty, his name is a sherbet. Cold, he’s a fur. This is what the Friend can do when one is in such love. Sensual people use the holy names often, but they don’t work for them.
The miracle Jesus did by being the name of God, Zuleika felt in the name of Joseph.

When one is united to the core of another, to speak of that is to breathe the name Hu, empty of self, and filled with love. As the saying goes, The pot drips what is in it. The Saffron spice of connecting, laughter. The onion-smell of separation, crying. Others have many things and people they love. This is not the way of Friend and friend.