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Womanhood

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اكاديمية ام عباد

Worship upon Baseera • Islamic Academia

LIVING WITH MINDFULNESS

Fortifying the ummah:

Living beyond my bubble

Living with the Hereafter as my focus

PRESENTED

BY

MUALLIMAH SHAKIRAH HUNTER

SECTION ONE

UNDERSTANDING MINDFULNESS

What is mindfulness?

Allah said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

Verily, Allah is every watchful over you.

Surat al-Nisa' 4:1

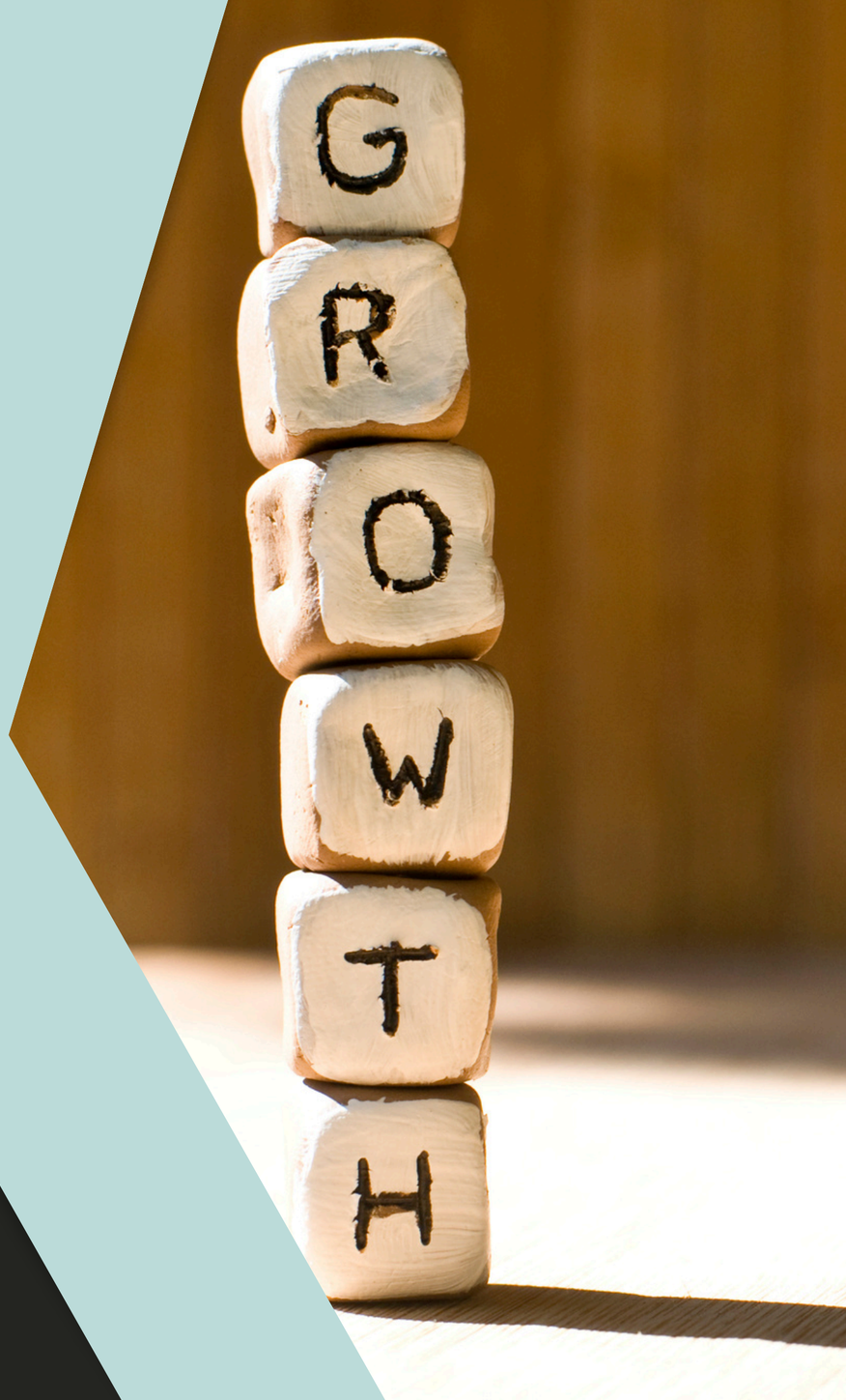
And Allah said:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

Know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him, and know that Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.

Surat al-Baqarah 2:235

Mindfulness (al-muraqabah) in Islam is a spiritual state in which a believer is conscious of the awareness of Allah Almighty over his inward states and outward actions. It is when the heart and mind are occupied with the remembrance of Allah and are before Him in the present moment, in contrast to when the heart and mind are in a state of wandering, negligence, or forgetfulness.



What is mindfulness?

Ibn al-Qayyim defined muraqabah as follows:

دَوَامُ عِلْمِ الْعَبْدِ وَتَيَقُّنِهِ بِاطِّلَاعِ الْحَقِّ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَلَى ظَاهِرِهِ وَبَاطِنِهِ

Continuous knowledge and conviction of the servant in the awareness of the Truth, glory be to Him, over his outward and inward states.

Source: Madārij al-Sālikīn 2/65

وَقِيلَ الْمُرَاقَبَةُ مُرَاعَاةُ الْقَلْبِ لِمُلَاحَظَةِ الْحَقِّ مَعَ كُلِّ خَطْرَةٍ وَخُطْوَةٍ

It is said that 'mindfulness' is to observe the heart, in awareness of the Truth, with every thought and step.

Source: Madārij al-Sālikīn 2/66

And again:

دَوَامُ مُلَاحَظَةِ الْمَقْصُودِ أَيْ دَوَامُ حُضُورِ الْقَلْبِ مَعَهُ

Continuous awareness of the objective, meaning, continuous presence of heart with Him.

Source: Madārij al-Sālikīn 2/66

Implied in the Arabic term muraqabah is a mutual-interaction between two parties. Allah is always aware of us, so when we are aware of Him, we are aware of each other. In other words, we are mindful when we are conscious of Allah's awareness of our innermost being. This means not only must we be mindful of Allah, but also mindful of our human ego (nafs) and its tendency to stray into mindlessness (ghaflah).

Mindfulness is equivalent to the virtue of spiritual excellence (al-ihsan), defined as worshiping Allah as if one can see Him. In its purest form, it is the highest spiritual state that a believer can achieve.

Umar ibn al-Khattab reported: Angel Gabriel came to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, and he asked, "What is excellence?" The Prophet (ṣ) said:

الْإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ

Excellence is to worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you do not see Him, He surely sees you.



What is mindfulness?

Al-Ghazali writes:

العاقل لا يغفل عن ذكر الآخرة في لحظة فإنها مصيره ومستقره فيكون له في كل ما يراه من ماء أو نار أو غيرهما عبرة وموعظة فإن المرء ينظر بحسب همته

The wise person is not unmindful of remembering the Hereafter at any time, as it is his final destination and resting place. In everything he sees of water, fire, or anything else, it is a lesson and admonition, for a man looks at things according to his concerns.

Source: Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn 1/139

That is, if our ultimate concern is truly to meet Allah in the Hereafter and we train ourselves to be mindful of this concern, we will see signs of it constantly throughout our day. One of the most obvious signs, especially for right-handed people, is the right hand itself. Allah informs us that the righteous believers will be given their book of deeds in the right hand on the Day of Judgement.

Allah said:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا

As for one given his book in his right hand, he will soon be judged with an easy accounting.

Surat al-Inshiqaq 84:7-8

For this reason, Al-Ghazali recommended for a worshiper, who begins ablution with his right hand as prescribed in the Sunnah, to remember Allah and recall the Hereafter by saying to himself:

اللهم أعطني كتابي بيميني وحاسبني حساباً يسيراً

O Allah, give me my book of deeds in my right hand, and judge me with an easy accounting.

Source: Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn 1/134

What is mindfulness?

Al-Ghazali writes:

ولا تظنن أن أفعاله صلى الله عليه وسلم في جميع حركاته كانت خارجة عن وزن وقانون وترتيب بل جميع الأمور الاختيارية التي ذكرناها يتردد فيها الفاعل بين قسمين أو أقسام كان لا يقدم على واحد معين بالاتفاق بل بمعنى يقتضي الإقدام والتقديم فإن الاسترسال مهملاً كما يتفق سجية البهائم وضبط الحركات بموازين المعاني سجية أولياء الله تعالى ... فنعوذ بالله أن يكون زمام حركاتنا وسكناتنا في يد الشيطان بواسطة الهوى

Do not think the actions of the Prophet (ṣ) in all of his movements were without significance, rules, or procedures. Rather, all the preferred matters we have mentioned are habitually done in two or more ways, not because of one specific consensus, but rather a reason necessitating such procedure and giving it precedence. For to proceed neglectfully is like the disposition of animals, but the governance of movements by significant meanings is the disposition of the allies of Allah Almighty... We seek refuge in Allah that control of our movement and stillness be in the hands of devils by means of our whims.

Source: Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn 1/142



THE ROLE OF ANCHORING OURSELVES AS WE GET “BUSY”

Al-Aghar al-Muzani reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

إِنَّهُ لَيُغَانُ عَلَى قَلْبِي وَإِنِّي لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ فِي الْيَوْمِ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ

Verily, at times there is fog over my heart, so I seek the forgiveness of Allah one hundred times in a day.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2702, Grade: Sahih

Al-Nawawi commented on this tradition, writing:

قِيلَ الْمُرَادُ الْفَتَرَاتُ وَالْغَفَلَاتُ عَنِ الذِّكْرِ الَّذِي كَانَ شَأْنُهُ الدَّوَامَ عَلَيْهِ فَإِذَا فَتَرَ عَنْهُ أَوْ غَفَلَ عَدَّ ذَلِكَ ذَنْبًا وَاسْتَغْفَرَ مِنْهُ

It is said that it means the Prophet (ṣ) had intervals of distraction from remembrance of Allah, as remembrance was his normal state of affairs. When he had a period of inattention or distraction, he would consider that a sin and seek forgiveness for it.

Source: Sharḥ al-Nawawī ‘alá Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2702

When we are in mindfulness meditation, we can use similar phrases from the Sunnah – a name of Allah, a supplication, and so on – to return our attention to Allah as soon as we notice our mind wandering. This is called anchoring our mindfulness, because over time our minds will associate these phrases with the feeling of being mindful. Every time we bring back our wandering mind via anchoring, it is like doing a mental push-up. It strengthens our mindfulness as if it were a muscle in the brain. It is as simple as that.

Ibn al-Qayyim describes a way we can practice this type of anchoring in our mindfulness meditation:

وَأَمَّا ذِكْرُ الرِّعَايَةِ فَمِثْلُ قَوْلِ الذَّاكِرِ اللَّهُ مَعِي وَاللَّهُ نَاظِرٌ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ شَاهِدِي وَنَحْوُ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا يُسْتَعْمَلُ لِتَقْوِيَةِ الْحُضُورِ مَعَ اللَّهِ وَفِيهِ رِعَايَةُ لِمَصْلَحَةِ الْقَلْبِ وَلِحِفْظِ الْأَدَبِ مَعَ اللَّهِ وَالتَّحَرُّزِ مِنَ الْغَفْلَةِ وَالِاعْتِصَامِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَالنَّفْسِ

As for the remembrance of watchfulness, it is like the worshiper saying: Allah is with me, Allah is looking at me, Allah is observing me, and other such words used to strengthen one’s presence with Allah. In it is care for the well-being of the heart, maintaining good manners with Allah, being wary of mindlessness, and seeking protection from Satan and the lower-self.

Source: Madārij al-Sālikīn 2/406

The purpose of meditation is not to suppress our thoughts, as this is impossible and counterproductive. Rather, the goal is to become aware of our thoughts as they arise, observe them, and allow them to drift away as we return our attention to Allah. Thoughts are like waves. They will inevitably appear, but they will go away if you leave them alone. Once you engage them or try to push them away, it only makes the waves more turbulent.



BUILDING ANCHORS IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE:

LET US REFLECT ON DAILY ANCHORS THAT CAN BE ADDED TO OUR LIVES IN THE DAY TO DAY OR IN PERIODS OF BUSINESS.

EVERYDAY HABITS

1. cooking with intention
2. consciousness of Alhamdulillah
3. daily azkaar
4. Allahumma - understanding the power of the word oh Allah
5. salaam - combating fights

MUNDANE ROUTINES

1. mundane habits - anchor it with the intention of benefit

HIGH LEVELS OF CREATIVITY

1. connect the project to Allah Ta'ala

CRAZY BUSY DAYS

1. sayyidul istighfaar
2. laa hawla walaa quwwata
3. ya Hayyu Ya Qayyum



SECTION TWO

STEPPING OUT OF THE FEAR AND EMBRACING YOUR ROLE AS AN UMMATI

THE BIGGER PICTURE
CONNECTING TO HIKMAH AND BEING A MIFTAH LIL KHAIR

Ash-Sharh 94:1

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ

Did We not expand for you, [O Muhammad], your breast?

The word sharh literally denotes 'to open, to cause the bosom to be widely opened'. [In the present context] it is to cause the bosom to be wide open to comprehend the Divine mysteries. The verse signifies that Allah illuminated his bosom with wisdom, Divine light and peace and made it spacious, vast and wide as is said in another verse:

'So, he whom Allah wills to give guidance, He opens his heart for Islam [6:125]'

THE BIGGER PICTURE
CONNECTING TO HIKMAH AND BEING A MIFTAH LIL KHAIR

Sayyiduna Sahl ibn Sa'd (radiyallahu 'anhuma) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Indeed, this khayr [i.e. all good] are treasures and these treasures have keys. Glad tidings for a slave who Allah has made a key for good and a lock for evil; and woe to a slave who Allah has made a key for evil and a lock for good."

(Ibn Majah)

Your life story

HOW YOU GOT HERE

THERE IS NO COINCIDENCE IN SERVING THE DEEN OF ALLAH TA'ALA

RECOGNISING YOUR UNIQUE VOICE

WHAT IS YOUR UNIQUE ASSISTANCE TO THE DEEN OF ALLAH TA'ALA THAT HAS BROUGHT YOU HERE?

Recognising my role in the ummah

1

WHAT ARE MY STRENGTHS ?

2

WHAT SPECIAL SKILL AND EXPERIENCE DO I HAVE ?

3

WHAT AM I WELL SUITED TO?

4

HOW CAN I PLAY A MORE POSITIVE ROLE ?

Recognising how shaitaan derails me



WEAKENING THE TEAM

Every organisation is only as strong as it's team members. The easiest way that Shaitaan impacts is to break down the value of team members.



FOCUS ON OTHERS

Your strengths might not necessarily be easily recognised and often times overlooked - this can lead to a lack of belief in your own actions and impact and create focus on other team members.



DEVALUING

This tool of Shaitaan focuses on the negatives within the self and the Islamic UMMAH AT LARGE . Negative cycles of thought lead you to hate your work , to devalue the contributions made and to regard your work is insignificant.

Recognising how shaitaan derails me



LACK OF FINANCIAL GROWTH

The job vs the calling - but we still have to “pay the bills”



ITS JUST A JOB

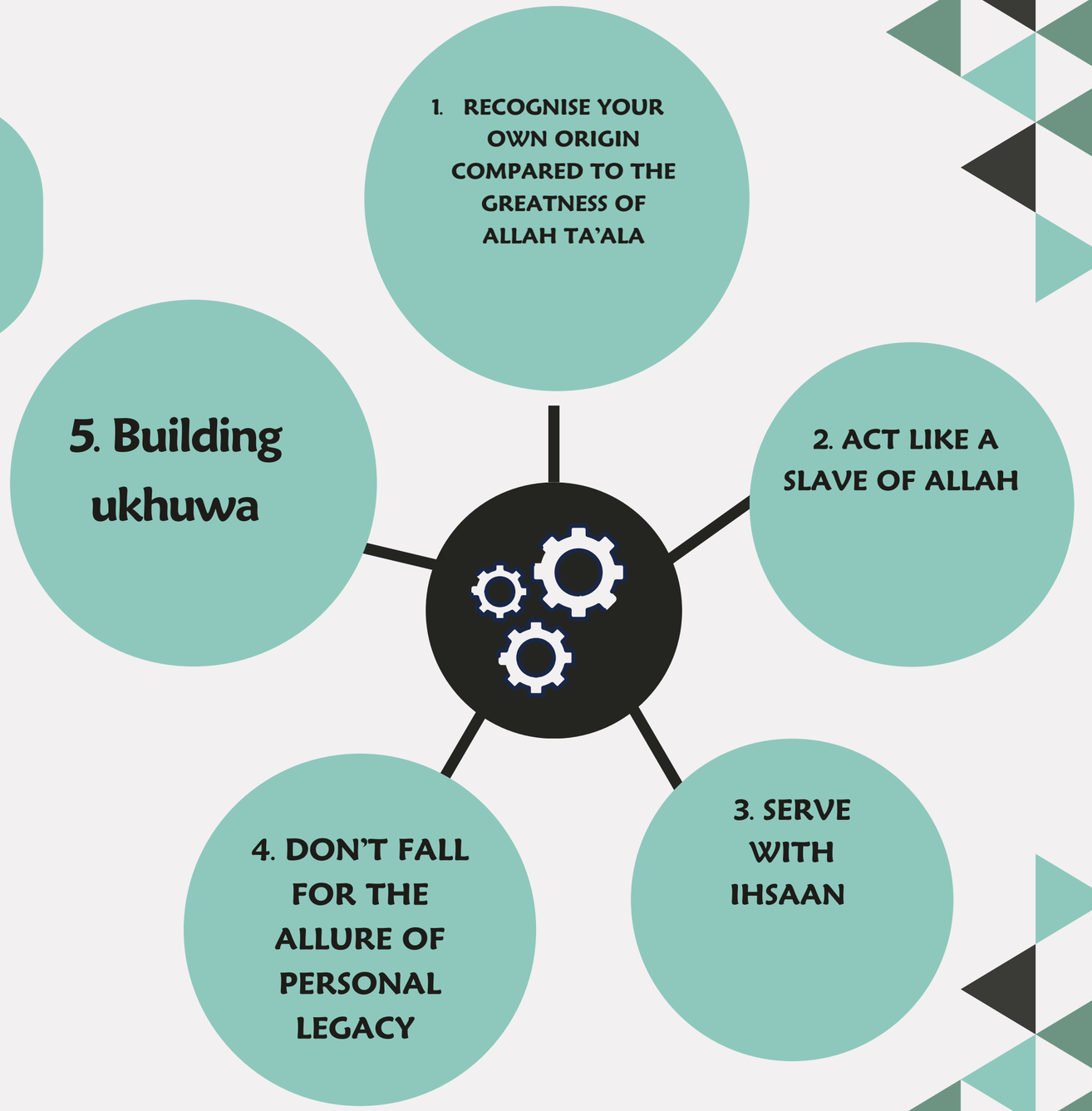
breaking motivation by downplaying the value in the Ummah



STAGNATION & STUNTING GROWTH

Stuck in the we “always have done things”

MY STORY AS IT CONNECTS BOTH TO HISTORY AND THE CURRENT STATE OF THE UMMAH



SECTION THREE

GOALS AND GOAL SETTING WITH THE AAKHIRAH AS A FOCUS

Building mindframes : the carpenter mindframe

The Carpenter Mindset



we work with logic and understand the barakah way of life to be illogical



We live with milestones and timelines - leading to depression when things don't go according to plan





rely on our skills , efforts and goals



focus on time and output



we work with expectations and specific plans - often leading to dissapointment







work hard

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A FLAWED SYSTEM IN SETTING GOALS AND PLANS

TYPICALLY WE ARE ADVISED TO :

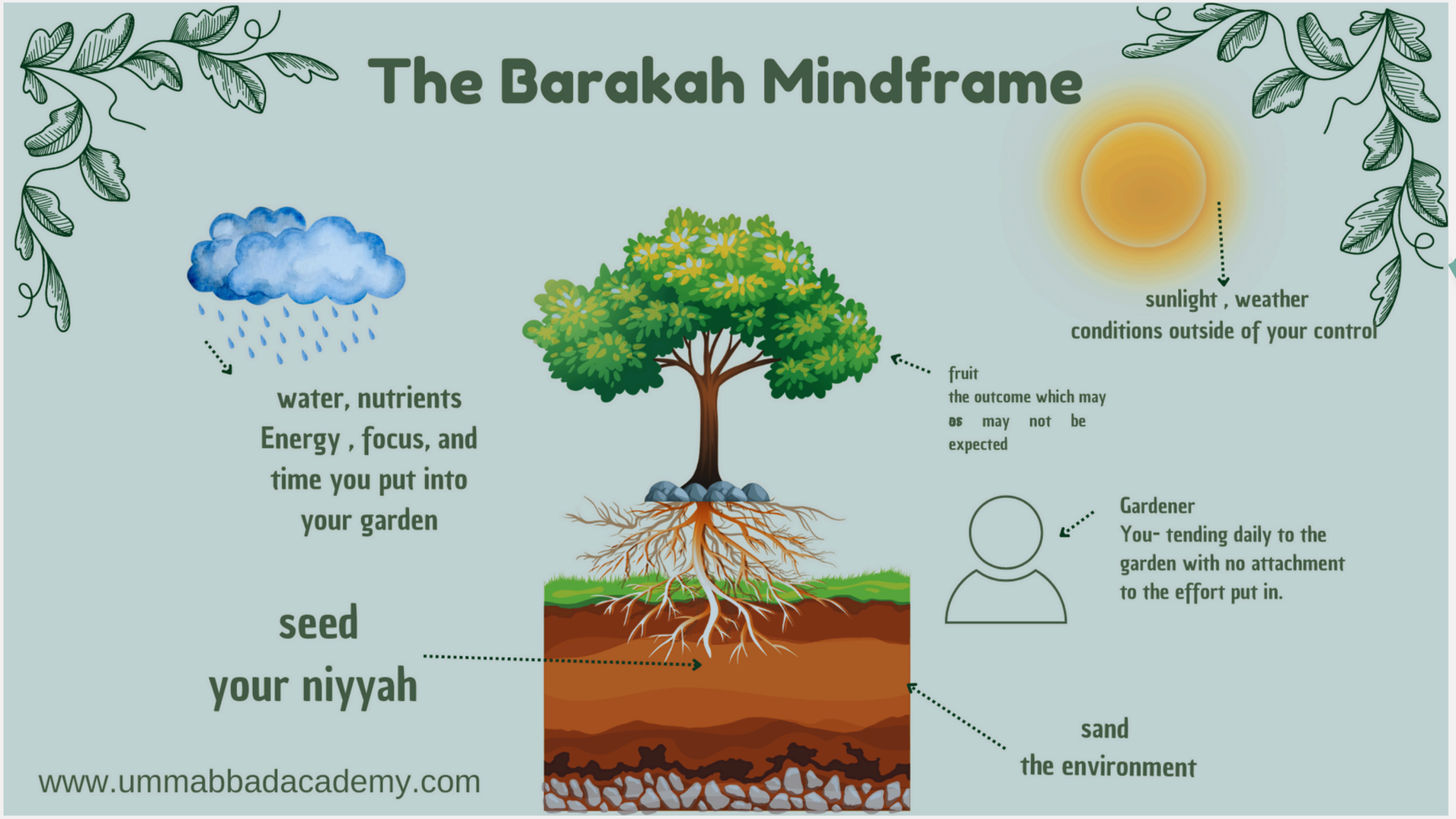
1. STEP ONE: DECIDE WHERE WE WANT TO BE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE IN A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF YEARS
2. STEP TWO: SET LONG TERM GOALS TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS
3. STEP THREE: SET SHORT TERM MILESTONES THAT HELP YOU MAKE PROGRESS
4. STEP FOUR: USE A DAILY PLANNER OR WEEKLY PLANNER TO STAY FOCUSED

IN THE CARPENTER SYSTEM OF GOAL SETTINGS THERE ARE TWO MAJOR FLAWS :

1. IT ASSUMES THAT YOU HAVE THE PERFECT VISION FOR THE FUTURE BASED ON YOUR CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND LIFE AMBITIONS

2. IT ASSUMES YOU HAVE PERFECT CONTROL OF EVERY CONCEIVABLE FACTOR TOWARDS ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS- HENCE MAKING YOU RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY FAILURES .

Building mindframes : the barakah mindframe



Building mindframes : REFRAMING THE THINKING PROCESS

FREE WILL	NATURAL LAWS	ALLAH'S WILL	OUTCOME
THE GIFT OF CHOICE GIVEN TO US FROM ALLAH - WE CAN CHOOSE TO DO GOOD OR WE CAN CHOOSE TO DO EVIL	WE LIVE IN A CAUSE-EFFECT WORLD - WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE LAWS CREATED BY ALLAH IN THE UNIVERSE . EG APPLE SEEDS BRINGS APPLE TREES VS ORANGE SEEDS BRING ORANGE TREES.	NOTHING OCCURS WITHOUT THE WILL OF ALLAH TA'ALA- NO MATTER HOW STONG OUR DETERMINATION OR HOW WE FOLLOW THE CORRECT ORDER OF THINGS.	SABR & SHUKR
FOR FREE WILL YOUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO SET GOOD INTENTIONS , MAKE DECISIONS, CRAFT A PLAN TO MAKE YOUR PLANS A REALITY AND DETERMINE THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO EXECUTE THE PLAN.	FOR NATURAL LAWS OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO LEARN WHAT NATURAL LAWS WILL EFFECT YOUR INTENTION INTO BECOMING A REALITY - EG LEARNING ABOUT SOILS IF YOU WANT TO PLANT A TREE	FOR ALLAHS WILL - WE HAVE TO HAVE GREATER HOPE AND ASPIRATION - WE SHOULD NEVER LIMIT OURSELVES TO WHAT WE THINK CAN BE DONE - BUT CONNECT TO THE LIMITLESS ABILITIY OF ALLAH TA'ALA. SECONDLY WE HAVE TO MAKE DUA TO ALLAH TA'ALA. THIRDLY WE HAVE TO LIVE WITH A CONCIOUSNESS OF ALLAH TA'ALA - WITH EVERY SINGLE VALUE OR PRACTICE IN OUR LIVES.	

PLANNING YOUR LIFE WITH THE AAKHIRAH IN MIND:

CHECK THE INTENTIONS OF THE PROJECT

WHETHER IT IS A PROJECT IN YOUR CAREER , MARRIAGE ,OR BUSINESS- ASK YOURSELF IS YOUR PROJECT SERVING YOUR EGO ? IS IT CENTERED ON PLEASING ALLAH TA'ALA

CHECK THE ENVIRONMENT AROUND THE PROJECT

IS THE ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE FOR GROWTH ? WILL THE ENVIRONMENT STIFLE THE PROJECT - WHO OR WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVE ELEMENTS AROUND THE PROJECT.

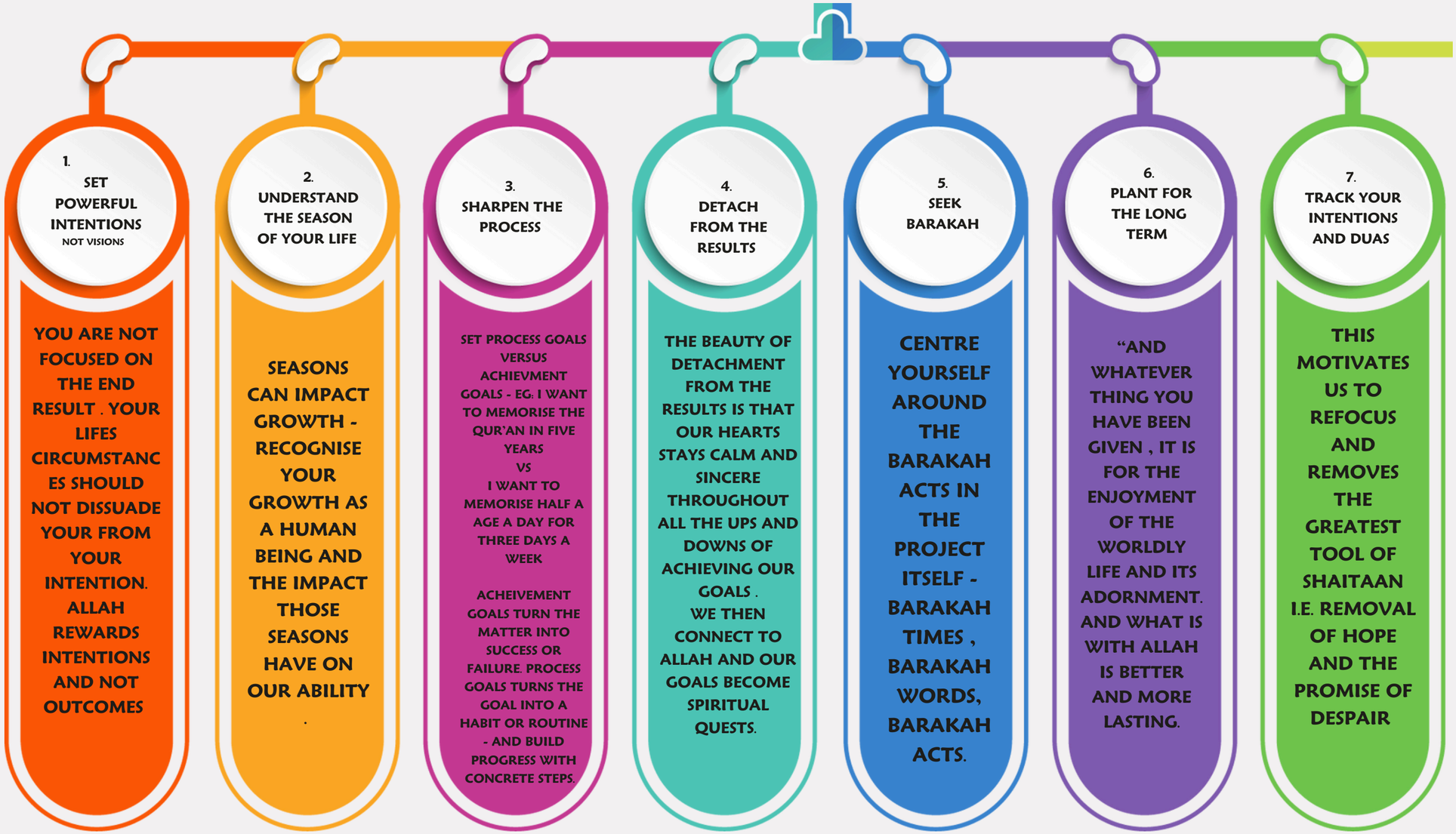
CHECK THE NUTRIENTS

HOW ARE YOU ENSURING GROWTH OF YOUR PROJECT? WITH EGO AND PRIDE WITH WORRY AND A SCARCITY MINDSET? OR WITH IHSAN AND A CONNECTION TO EXCELLENCE , WITH SALAM AND SALAWAT?

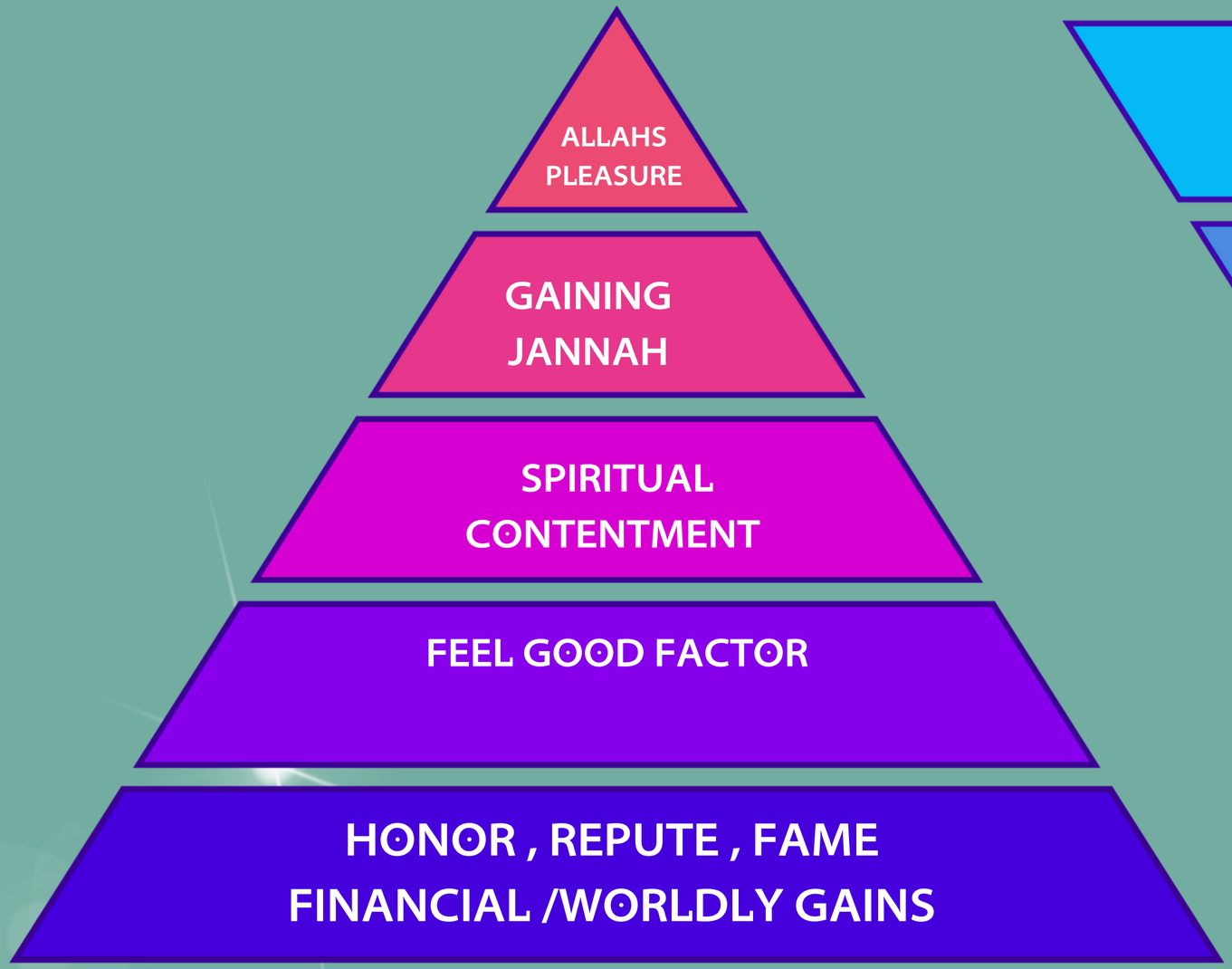
CHECK YOUR PROCESSES

HOW ARE YOU SEPNDING YOUR ENERGY , FOCUS AND TIME ON THE PROJECT? ARE YOU FULFILLING THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITES WITHIN TH PROJECT ?

GOAL SETTING WITH THE BARAKAH APPROACH:

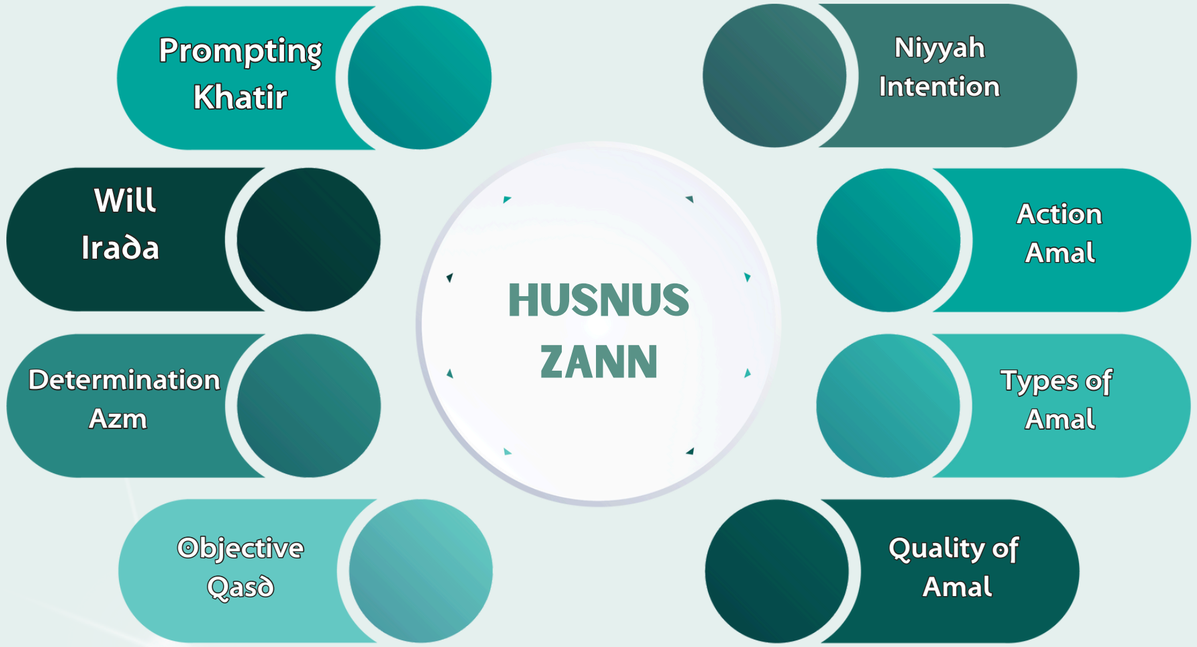


GET UNCOMFORTABLE WITH YOUR CURRENT JOURNEY TO BARAKAH





HOW HUSNUS ZANN BRINGS GOOD IN TO OUR LIVES



REPEL THE THOUGHT , FOR IF YOU DON'T , IT BECOMES AN IDEA .
SO REPEL THE IDEA , FOR IF YOU DONT IT WILL BECOME A DESIRE . SO FIGHT AGAINST THAT FOR IF YOU DON'T IT WILL BECOME A DETERMINATION AND A PASSION. AND IF YOU DONT REPEL THAT IT WILL BECOME AN ACTION. AND IF YOU DONT REPLACE IT WITH THE OPPOSITE , IT WILL BECOME A CONSTANT HABIT. SO AT THAT POINT IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO CHANGE IT.
IBN QAYYIM (RA)

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Womanhood

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Worship