

Self-Care &
*Looking After
Our Mental
Health*



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Introduction

With the multitude of responsibilities that shape our lives, self-care often seems like an unattainable luxury. Balancing the roles of being a wife, mother, homemaker, and possibly a professional, our days are largely filled with the needs of our families and communities. However, amidst this whirlwind, it's crucial to remember that caring for our mental well-being is not simply a luxury—it's essential.

Just as we prevent physical illnesses by caring for our bodies, we must also protect our mental health. This safeguard shields us from the whispers of Shaytaan and helps us remain resilient against life's challenges. By prioritising our mental health, we better equip ourselves to serve as wives, mothers, and proactive members of the ummah.

In this in-depth guide, we will explore the crucial role of self-care, discuss effective coping strategies, and offer practical tips on maintaining a healthy mind, body, and soul—all while staying true to our deen.

A Necessity

In Islam, taking care of oneself isn't considered selfish. Instead, it's viewed as fulfilling your obligations to Allah and to others. Self-care honours the body, mind, and soul that Allah has entrusted to you.

It's deeply understood that mental health issues can sometimes affect you even more intensely than physical illnesses. A key aspect to remember is that the worries and distress faced can actually serve to expiate sins and lighten the burden of wrongdoing. As Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) highlighted:

” مَا أُنْزِلَ اللَّهُ دَاءً إِلَّا أُنْزِلَ لَهُ شِفَاءٌ ”

"There is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment."
(Sahih al-Bukhari 5678)

Fulfilling Obligations to Allah

By maintaining our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, we are better equipped to fulfil our religious duties, such as performing salah (prayer), fasting, and engaging in other acts of worship.

When we neglect self-care, it can hinder our ability to worship Allah properly. For instance, being physically unwell or feeling mentally distressed can make it difficult to concentrate during salah or partake in devotional acts with genuine sincerity and attentiveness.

Fulfilling Obligations to Others

Caring for yourself equips you to meet your obligations and responsibilities towards others with greater efficiency. As Muslim women, we hold crucial roles in our families, communities, and society. By prioritising our well-being, we ensure that we have the physical, emotional, and spiritual strength needed to perform these roles effectively.

Overlooking self-care can result in burnout, feelings of resentment, and reduced ability to care for those around you. By prioritising your well-being, you enhance your ability to maintain healthy relationships, offer support to your loved ones, and make meaningful contributions to your community.

الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يُسْلِمُهُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ فِي حَاجَتِهِ وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ بِهَا كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

A Muslim is a Muslim's brother: he does not wrong him or abandon him. If anyone cares for his brother's need, Allah will care for his need ; if anyone removes a Muslim's anxiety, Allah will remove from him, on account of it, one of the anxieties of the Day of resurrection ; and if anyone conceals a Muslim's fault, Allah will conceal his fault on the Day of resurrection. (Sunan Abi Dawud 4893)

Balancing Rights and Responsibilities

Moderation:

When it comes to self-care, moderation plays a pivotal role. It teaches us to prioritise our well-being without ignoring our responsibilities or overindulging in self-centered activities. For instance, while taking time out to relax and refresh is essential, overdoing it with leisure or adopting a hedonistic lifestyle can result in neglecting our duties and experiencing spiritual stagnation.

يَبْنَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

"O children of Adam, take your adornment [i.e., wear your clothing] at every masjid,¹ and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess." (Al-A'raf 7:31)

This verse stands as a timeless reminder of the importance of moderation in all aspects of life, especially in self-care. Allah encourages us to partake in the blessings of life, such as food, with balance and gratitude.

Moderation in self-care also means finding a balance in nurturing our minds, bodies, and souls. This practice aligns perfectly with the principle of 'Ihsan'—doing things in the most

excellent and balanced manner. Following the Quranic guidance on moderation helps us protect our well-being while leading a life that pleases Allah.

Consistency:

Allah loves consistency, and maintaining a steady approach to self-care can significantly impact our overall well-being and spiritual growth.

Consistency in self-care means regularly prioritizing our well-being rather than reacting to crises. It involves establishing sustainable habits and routines that cater to our physical, emotional, and spiritual needs consistently.

By staying consistent in self-care, we not only nurture our well-being but also foster regularity in our worship and ibadah (acts of devotion). Just as we are encouraged to be unwavering in our prayers and acts of worship, consistency in self-care strengthens a disciplined approach to caring for our minds, bodies, and souls.

Consistency in self-care can manifest in various forms, such as maintaining a balanced diet, getting regular exercise, practicing mindfulness, and seeking social support when necessary. By prioritising self-care consistently, we build resilience, inner strength, and a deeper connection with Allah.

In essence, consistency in self-care mirrors the steadfastness and devotion that Allah cherishes in His servants. By committing to a consistent self-care routine, we honour our well-being and demonstrate our dedication to living a life of purpose and devotion for the sake of Allah.

Aligning Self-Care with Mental Well-Being

- **Physical Health Impacting Mental Health:** When you are exhausted, experiencing hormonal changes like PMS, or neglecting necessary medication, your mental health can take a hit. These physical factors can leave you more susceptible to negative influences, including the whispers of Shaytaan.
- **Emotional Instability:** Becoming overly sensitive to criticism or perceived slights, experiencing increased irritability or mood swings, and struggling to manage emotions are all indicators of declining mental health.
- **Cognitive Impairment:** Finding it hard to concentrate, being forgetful, and seeing a drop in productivity in your daily activities may suggest that cognitive impairment is affecting your mental health.
- **Social Withdrawal:** Losing interest in socializing, pulling away from social interactions, and feeling lonely or isolated are often signs that your mental health is declining.

Coping Strategies and Practical Tips

Spiritual Practices

Incorporating acts of worship into your daily routines, such as offering Salah (prayer) and reciting Quran, can provide a profound sense of **peace and tranquility**. These spiritual practices act as anchors amidst life's challenges, offering **solace and strength** to navigate through difficulties. By seeking refuge in these daily acts of worship, you will not only **strengthen your faith** but also **fortify** your mind **against negative influences** through the remembrance of Allah.

Offering Salah (Prayer):

Salah stands as a cornerstone of our faith, creating a **direct link** between us and Allah. By performing Salah on time, we not only meet our religious **obligations** but also **enrich our souls and cultivate spiritual growth**.

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

"It is truly I. I am Allah! There is no god worthy of worship except Me. So worship Me alone, and establish prayer for My remembrance." (Taha 20:14)

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

"Establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and bow down with those who bow down." (Al-Baqarah 2:43)

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) emphasised the importance of Salah in numerous Ahadiths, such as:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ صَلَاتُهُ فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ فَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ وَأَنْجَحَ وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَقَدْ خَابَ وَخَسِرَ فَإِنْ أَنْتَقَصَ مِنْ فَرِيضَتِهِ شَيْءٌ قَالَ الرَّبُّ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ انْظُرُوا هَلْ لِعَبْدِي مِنْ تَطَوُّعٍ فَيُكَمَّلَ بِهَا مَا انْتَقَصَ مِنَ الْفَرِيضَةِ ثُمَّ يَكُونُ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ عَلَى ذَلِكَ "

"Indeed the first deed by which a servant will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection is his Salah. If it is complete, he is successful and saved, but if it is defective, he has failed and lost. So if something is deficient in his obligatory (prayers) then the Lord, Mighty and Sublime says: 'Look! Are there any voluntary (prayers) for my worshipper?' So with them, what was deficient in his obligatory (prayers) will be completed. Then the rest of his deeds will be treated like that." (Jami` at-Tirmidhi 413)

Reciting Quran:

Reciting the Quran is a profound form of worship that carries immense spiritual importance in our deen. As a source of guidance, healing, and enlightenment, the Quran offers us solace and inspiration, especially in times of need.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

"Surely this Quran guides to what is most upright, and gives good news to the believers—who do good—that they will have a mighty reward." (Al-Isra 17:9)

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ

"And We have certainly made the Quran easy to remember. So is there anyone who will be mindful?" (Al-Qamar 54:17)

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) emphasised the importance of reciting the Quran and contemplating its meanings:

"خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ"

"The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it." (Sahih al-Bukhari 5027)

Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah):

Dhikr is a profound practice that involves **invoking the names and attributes of Allah** with deep reverence and devotion. By engaging in Dhikr, you can **strengthen** your connection with Allah, **purify** your heart, and experience a sense of inner **peace and tranquility**.

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

"Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Surely in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find comfort." (Ar-Ra'd 13:28)

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونَ

- "Remember Me; I will remember you. And thank Me, and never be ungrateful." (Al-Baqarah 2:152)

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) encouraged the frequent recitation of Dhikr:

"مثل الذي يذكر ربه والذي لا يذكره، مثل الحي والميت"

"The similitude of one who remembers his Rubb and one who does not remember Him, is like that of the living and the dead." (Riyad as-Salihin 1434)

Protection from Shayateen:

You are encouraged to recite Ayatul Kursi (Verse of the Throne - Al-Baqarah 2:255) and the three Quls (**Al-Ikhlās, Al-Falaq, and An-Nas**) **regularly**. Make it a habit to read them in the **mornings, evenings, and after each fard salah**. These acts of **dhikr** serve as a **preventive measure** against the **influences of Shayateen** and other **negative forces**.

Engaging in these practices acts as a spiritual safeguard, **fortifying** your mind and heart, ensuring **divine protection** throughout the **day and night**.

Ayatul Kursi:

Ayatul Kursi is often regarded as one of the most powerful verses in the Quran. It highlights divine attributes and affirms Allah's absolute sovereignty over all creation. Reciting it in the morning and evening acts as a shield against evil and offers divine protection for believers.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ وَكَلَّنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِحِفْظِ زَكَاةِ رَمَضَانَ فَأَتَانِي آتٍ فَجَعَلَ يَخْتُو مِنْ الطَّعَامِ فَأَخَذْتُهُ فَقُلْتُ لَأَرْفَعَنَّكَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَصَّ الْحَدِيثَ فَقَالَ إِذَا أَوَيْتَ إِلَى فِرَاشِكَ فَاقْرَأْ آيَةَ الْكُرْسِيِّ صَدَقَكَ وَهُوَ كَذُوبٌ ذَاكَ "لَنْ يَزَالَ مَعَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَافِظٌ وَلَا يَفْرُبُكَ شَيْطَانٌ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ". وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "شَيْطَانٌ"

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) ordered me to guard the Zakat revenue of Ramadan. Then somebody came to me and started stealing from the foodstuff. I caught him and said, "I will take you to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)!" Then Abu Huraira described the whole narration and said: That person said (to me), "(Please don't take me to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and I will tell you a few words by which Allah will benefit you.) When you go to your bed, recite Ayat-al-Kursi, (2.255) for then there will be a guard from Allah who will protect you all night long, and Satan will not be able to come near you till dawn." (When the Prophet (ﷺ) heard the story) he said (to me), "He (who came to you at night) told you the truth although he is a liar; and it was Satan." (Sahih al-Bukhari 5010)

وَعَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - { مَنْ قَرَأَ آيَةَ الْكُرْسِيِّ دُبُرَ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ مَكْتُوبَةٍ لَمْ يَمْنَعْهُ مِنْ دُخُولِ الْجَنَّةِ إِلَّا الْمَوْتُ } رَوَاهُ النَّسَائِيُّ , وَصَحَّحَهُ ابْنُ حِبَّانَ .

Narrated Abu Umamah (RA): Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Whoever recites Ayat al-Kursi at the end of every obligatory prayer, nothing but death will prevent him from entering Paradise." (Sunnah.com reference: Book 2, Hadith 220)

The Three Quls (Surah Al-Ikhlās, Al-Falaq, and An-Nas):

Reciting the three Quls in the morning and evening is a powerful way to seek Allah's protection from all forms of evil, harm, and negativity.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، إِذَا أَوَى إِلَى فِرَاشِهِ كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ جَمَعَ كَفَّيْهِ فَتَنَفَّتَ فِيهِمَا، وَقَرَأَ فِيهِمَا: قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ وَقُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ وَقُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ، ثُمَّ مَسَحَ بِهِمَا مَا اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ، يَبْدَأُ بِهِمَا رَأْسَهُ وَوَجْهَهُ وَمَا أَقْبَلَ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ، يَصْنَعُ ذَلِكَ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ.

'A'isha said: "When Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace) went to his mattress each night, he joined the palms of his hands, then breathed into them and recited into them: "Say: 'He is Allah, One [qul Huwa'llahu Ahad]!' (Al-Qur'an;112:1), and: "Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak [qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq]!' (Al-Qur'an;113:1), and: "Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of humankind [qul a'udhu bi-Rabbi'n-nas]!' (Al-Qur'an;114:1), Then he passed them over as much of his body as he could, beginning with his head and his face and the front of his body, doing that three times." (Ash-Shama'il Al-Muhammadiyah 256)

Integrating the regular recitation of Ayatul Kursi and the three Quls into your morning and evening rituals creates a spiritual fortress around your heart and mind. This practice not only offers divine protection but also strengthens your faith, guarding against negative influences and the whispers of Shayateen. By doing so, you foster a sense of peace and security, allowing you to navigate through your day and night with ease and resilience.

Ayatul Kursi

اَللّٰهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۚ لَا تَاْخُذُهٗ سِنَةٌ ۚ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَّهٗ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ ۗ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِى يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهٗٓ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِهٖ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ اَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُحِيطُوْنَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهٖ اِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهٗ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ ۖ وَلَا يَـُٔودُهٗ ۚ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِىُّ الْعَظِيْمُ

Allah! There is no god 'worthy of worship' except Him, the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining. Neither drowsiness nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who could possibly intercede with Him without His permission? He 'fully' knows what is ahead of them and what is behind them, but no one can grasp any of His knowledge—except what He wills 'to reveal'. His Seat encompasses the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of both does not tire Him. For He is the Most High, the Greatest.

Suratul Ahad

قُلْ هُوَ اَللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ (۱) اَللّٰهُ الصَّمَدُ (۲) لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُوَلَدْ (۳) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهٗ كُفُوًا اَحَدٌ (۴)

- (1) Say, 'O Prophet,' "He is Allah—One 'and Indivisible';
- (2) Allah—the Sustainer 'needed by all'.
- (3) He has never had offspring, nor was He born.
- (4) And there is none comparable to Him."

Suratul Nas

قُلْ اَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ (۱) مَلِكِ النَّاسِ (۲) اِلٰهِ النَّاسِ (۳) مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ (۴) الَّذِى يُّوسْوِسُ فِى صُدُوْرِ النَّاسِ (۵) مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ (۶)

- (1) Say, 'O Prophet,' "I seek refuge in the Lord of humankind,
- (2) the Master of humankind,
- (3) the God of humankind,
- (4) from the evil of the lurking whisperer—
- (5) who whispers into the hearts of humankind—
- (6) from among jinn and humankind."

DUA FOR PROTECTION

Suratul Falaq

قُلْ اَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ (۱) مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ (۲) وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ اِذَا وَقَبَ (۳) وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّٰثٰتِ فِى الْعُقَدِ (۴) وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ اِذَا حَسَدَ (۵)

- (1) Say, 'O Prophet,' "I seek refuge in the Lord of the daybreak
- (2) from the evil of whatever He has created,
- (3) and from the evil of the night when it grows dark,
- (4) and from the evil of those 'witches casting spells by' blowing onto knots,
- (5) and from the evil of an envier when they envy."

Other Dua's:

Dua for anxiety and sorrow:

مَنْ كَثُرَ هَمُّهُ فَلْيَقُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ وَابْنُ أَمَتِكَ " وَعَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ وَفِي قَبْضَتِكَ نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَاؤُكَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوْ أَلْهَمْتَ عَبْدًا أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي مَكْنُونِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رَبِيعَ قَلْبِي وَجِلَاءَ هَمِّي وَغَمِّي مَا قَالَهَا عَبْدٌ قَطُّ إِلَّا أَذْهَبَ اللَّهُ غَمَّهُ وَأَبْدَلَهُ فَرَجًا ". رَوَاهُ رَزِين

Ibn Mas'ud reported God's messenger as saying that if anyone is afflicted by much care he should say, "O God, I am Thy servant, the son of Thy servant, the son of Thy handmaid, and at Thy disposal; my forelock is in Thy hand; Thy judgment is effective regarding me; just concerning me is Thy decree; I ask Thee by every name Thou hast by which Thou hast called Thyself, or sent down in Thy Book, or taught any of Thy creatures, or kept to Thyself in the hidden place of the unseen, to make the Qur'an the Spring of my heart and the means of clearing away my care and grief." He declared that no one had ever said it without God removing his grief and giving him joy instead of it. (Mishkat al-Masabih 2452)

Dua to safeguard from anxiety and depression:

وَعَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحُزْنِ وَالْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَالْجُبْنِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَضَلَعِ الدِّينِ وَغَلَبَةِ الرِّجَالِ

Anas said that the Prophet used to say, "O God, I seek refuge in Thee from care, grief, incapacity, slackness, cowardliness, niggardliness, the burden of debt, and being overpowered by men." (Mishkat al-Masabih 2458)

Dua for anxiety:

وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ دَوَاءٌ مِنْ تِسْعَةِ وَتِسْعِينَ دَاءً أَيْسَرُهَا الْهَمُّ

Abu Huraira reported God's messenger as saying that "There is no might and no power except in God" is a remedy for ninety-nine diseases, the lightest of which is anxiety. (Mishkat al-Masabih 2320)

Dua when distressed:

اللَّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُو فَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

O Allah, I hope for Your mercy. Do not leave me to myself even for the blinking of an eye (i.e. a moment). Correct all of my affairs for me. There is none worthy of worship but You.

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيثُ ، أَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ ، وَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

O Ever-Living One, O Eternal One, by Your mercy I call on You to set right all my affairs. Do not place me in charge of my soul even for the blinking of an eye (i.e. a moment). (Hisn al-Muslim 88)

Dua against sever mental health disorders:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَقُولُ : اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبَرَصِ وَالْجُنُونِ وَالْجُدَامِ وَمِنْ سَيِّئِ الْأَسْقَامِ

Narrated Anas ibn Malik: The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say: "O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from leprosy, madness, elephantiasis, and evil diseases." (Sunan Abi Dawud 1554)

Healing through the Quran - self-ruqyah:

If you suspect you're affected by the evil eye or other spiritual ailments, self-Ruqyah (spiritual healing) can be a powerful way to seek relief. Reciting specific verses from the Quran and making heartfelt supplications can aid in healing and ease your symptoms.

قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ أَلَمْ أُخْبِرْ أَنَّكَ تَصُومُ النَّهَارَ وَتَقُومُ اللَّيْلَ ". قُلْتُ بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ. قَالَ " فَلَا تَفْعَلْ، صُمْ وَأَفْطِرْ، وَفُمْ وَنَمْ، فَإِنَّ لِحَسَدِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا، وَإِنَّ لِعَيْنِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا، وَإِنَّ لِرُؤُوسِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا ".

Narrated `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Al-`As: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "O `Abdullah! Have I not been formed that you fast all the day and stand in prayer all night?" I said, "Yes, O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)!" He said, "Do not do that! Observe the fast sometimes and also leave them (the fast) at other times; stand up for the prayer at night and also sleep at night. **Your body has a right over you**, your eyes have a right over you and your wife has a right over you." (Sahih al-Bukhari 5199)

وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا

“and provide for them from sources they could never imagine. And whoever puts their trust in Allah, then He ‘alone’ is sufficient for them. Certainly Allah achieves His Will. Allah has already set a destiny for everything.” (At-Talaq 65:3)

Procedure of Self-Ruqyah:

Seeking Refuge in Allah:

Begin by reciting the Ta'awwudh (seeking refuge):

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

"A'udhu billahi min ash-shaytan ir-rajim" (I seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the accursed).

Recitation of Quranic Verses:

Choose specific verses from the Quran that are known for their healing properties and recite them with genuine sincerity and conviction. Examples of these powerful verses include Surah Al-Fatiha, Ayatul Kursi (Al-Baqarah 2:255), Surah Al-Falaq (Chapter 113), Surah An-Nas (Chapter 114), and the concluding two verses of Surah Al-Baqarah (Al-Baqarah 2:285 and 2:286).

Blowing Over Water or Oil:

You can recite chosen verses from the Quran and gently blow over water or olive oil. This blessed water or oil can then be consumed or applied to affected areas as a form of healing remedy.

Du'as

Offer sincere du'a to Allah, requesting His mercy, guidance, and healing. Seek His help to ease any difficulties, remove any harm, and bring about well-being.

وَعَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا اشْتَكَى نَفَثَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بِالْمُعَوِّذَاتِ وَمَسَحَ عَنْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَلَمَّا اشْتَكَى وَجَعَهُ الَّذِي تُوْفِّي فِيهِ كُنْتُ أَنْفُثُ عَلَيْهِ بِالْمُعَوِّذَاتِ الَّتِي كَانَ يَنْفُثُ وَأَمْسَحُ بِيَدِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ لِمُسْلِمٍ قَالَتْ: كَانَ إِذَا مَرَضَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ نَفَثَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْمُعَوِّذَاتِ

She said that when the Prophet had a complaint he would blow on himself, ejecting saliva, reciting the Mu'awwidhat (Al-Falaq & An-Nas), and wipe himself with his hand. She said, "When he suffered from the pain of which he died, I would blow on him ejecting saliva and recite the Mu'awwidhat as he did, and would take the Prophet's hand to wipe him." (Mishkat al-Masabih 1532)

Benefits of Self-Ruqyah:

- Divine Safeguard: Self-Ruqyah helps you seek divine protection and take refuge in Allah.
- Healing and Comfort: Reciting Quranic verses and making dua during self-Ruqyah can assist in healing, ease discomfort, and support recovery.
- Renewed Serenity: By connecting with Allah through prayer and dua, self-Ruqyah fosters a sense of inner peace, tranquillity, and overall well-being.

Physical Exercise

Incorporating regular physical activity like walking into your daily routine is essential for both physical health and mental well-being. Exercise triggers the release of endorphins, which help alleviate stress, elevate your mood, and increase your energy levels. Here are some practical tips to seamlessly integrate physical activity into your routine:

Home Workouts:

Set aside a dedicated space in your home for workouts, be it a cozy corner of your living room or a spare room. There are plentiful online resources and apps offering guided workout routines for various fitness levels and preferences. From bodyweight exercises to dance routines, you'll find numerous options to stay active within the comfort and privacy of your home.

Women-Only Group Exercises:

Consider organizing women-only group exercise sessions in your community or neighbourhood. Invite your friends, family members, and neighbours to join in. You can even take turns hosting or meet at a local community centre. It's a fantastic way to stay motivated and foster camaraderie.

Family Walks:

Plan regular walks with your family. This not only ensures quality time together but also keeps everyone moving. Choose scenic routes through parks, nature trails, or your own neighbourhood to enjoy the fresh air and natural surroundings. Walking is a low-impact activity suitable for all fitness levels and ages, making it perfect for family participation.

Women-Only Activities:

Seek out women-only sports activities and facilities where privacy is guaranteed. Look for women's fitness centres, gyms, or sports clubs that offer specialized programs and classes tailored to women.

Family-Friendly Workouts:

Mix family bonding with fun workouts. Engage your children in exciting and active exercises either at home or in the garden, such as fitness challenges, obstacle courses, or outdoor games. Promoting movement and laughter among family members helps in creating a healthy and active lifestyle for everyone, instilling lifelong habits of physical fitness and well-being in your children.

Healthy Eating Habits

Embracing a balanced and nutritious diet is crucial for nurturing your physical health and enhancing overall well-being. By choosing wholesome foods and practicing mindful eating, you can fuel your body, elevate energy levels, and sustain mental clarity. Here are some tips for cultivating healthy eating habits:

Consume Halal Foods:

Consuming halal food is not just a matter of dietary preference; it's a fundamental aspect of our deen that impacts our physical, spiritual, and moral well-being. Allah instructs us in the

Quran to eat from the lawful provisions He has provided for us and warned us against following the footsteps of Satan ([Al-Baqarah 2:168](#)). This verse links the consumption of lawful (halal) food with the avoidance of Satan's path, implying that eating haram food can lead one astray and weaken their faith. The emphasis on lawful consumption is a recurring theme in the Quran, highlighting its significance in maintaining spiritual and moral integrity.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) emphasised the importance of consuming halal food, stating that what is lawful is clear and what is unlawful is clear, and between them are doubtful matters ([Sunan an-Nasa'i 5710](#)).

From a fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) perspective, scholars have extensively discussed the impact of consuming haram food on a person's spiritual state. Renowned scholars like Imam Abu Hanifa, and other prominent jurists have stated that engaging in haram actions, including the consumption of haram food, can lead to the weakening of one's iman. Such actions are acts of direct disobedience to Allah's commands, and habitual disobedience can distance you from Allah's mercy and blessings. This perspective is grounded in the belief that iman is dynamic; it can increase or decrease based on your actions and adherence to Islamic principles.

Keep in mind, consuming halal goes beyond just avoiding pork or alcohol. It requires that the meat be slaughtered in the name of Allah and steering clear of any food items containing non-halal ingredients. This thoughtful approach to eating harmonises with our deen and nurtures a comprehensive sense of well-being.

Therefore, following the principles of halal consumption goes beyond personal preference; it's a way to protect our faith, health, and soul.

Emphasise Whole Foods:

Fill your plate with a variety of whole foods, including fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, lean proteins, and whole grains.

Plan Balanced Meals:

Plan balanced meals that include a combination of carbohydrates, protein, and healthy fats to ensure sustained energy levels and satiety throughout the day.

Limit Processed Foods:

Minimise consumption of processed and packaged foods that are high in added sugars, unhealthy fats, and artificial ingredients. Keep to halal (wholesome) foods that nourish the body and promote well-being.

Watch Portion Sizes:

Practice portion control and mindful eating to avoid overeating and promote better digestion. Follow the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) who advised moderation in eating. He said, "A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must (fill it), then one third of food, one third for drink and one third for air." ([Sunan Ibn Majah 3349](#))

Stay Hydrated:

Ensure you're drinking plenty of water each day to stay hydrated and maintain overall health. It's wise to limit sugary drinks like soda, fruit juice, and sweetened beverages, as high sugar intake can lead to several health problems.

Prepare Meals at Home:

Take control of your diet by preparing meals at home using fresh, wholesome ingredients. Cooking at home allows you to have full control of the ingredients and cooking methods, enabling you to make healthier choices and to avoid hidden sources of unhealthy additives.

Practice Moderation:

Practice moderation and balance in your eating habits, allowing yourself to enjoy occasional treats or indulgences without guilt. Follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) who demonstrated moderation in all aspects of life, including eating habits.

Quality Sleep

Quality sleep is essential for promoting physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual vitality.

“And one of His signs is your sleep by night and by day ‘for rest’ as well as your seeking His bounty ‘in both’. Surely in this are signs for people who listen.” [[Al-Rum 30:23](#)].

“And We have made your sleep as a thing for rest. And We have made the night as a covering (through its darkness). And We have made the day for livelihood” [[Al-Naba’ 78:9-11](#)].

Developing healthy sleep patterns and maintaining a sleep-friendly environment can significantly improve your overall well-being, allowing you to tackle daily tasks with energy and focus. Here are some practical tips to ensure you get a restful and refreshing night's sleep:

Establish a Bedtime Routine:

Create a consistent bedtime routine to signal to your body that it's time to wind down and prepare for sleep. Engage in relaxing activities such as reading, gentle stretching, or practicing mindfulness to help calm your mind and body before bedtime.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to me, "**Whenever you go to bed**

1. perform ablution like that for the prayer,
2. lie on your right side and say, "Allahumma aslamtu wajhi ilaika, wa fauwadtu `Amri ilaika, wa alja'tu Zahri ilaika raghbatan wa rahbatan ilaika. La Malja'a wa la manja minka illa ilaika. Allahumma amantu bikitabika-l-ladhi anzalta wa bina-biyika-l ladhi arsalta" (O Allah! I surrender to You and entrust all my affairs to You and depend upon You for Your Blessings both with hope and fear of You. There is no fleeing from You, and there is no place of protection and safety except with You O Allah! I believe in Your Book (the Qur'an) which You have revealed and in Your Prophet (Muhammad) whom You have sent).
3. Then if you die on that very night, you will die with faith (i.e. of the religion of Islam). Let the aforesaid words be your last utterance (before sleep)."
4. I repeated it before the Prophet (ﷺ) and when I reached "Allahumma amantu bikitabika-l-ladhi anzalta (O Allah I believe in Your Book which You have revealed)." I said, "Wa-rasulika (and your Apostle)." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "No, (but say): 'Wanabiyika-l-ladhi arsalta (Your Prophet whom You have sent), instead." ([Sahih al-Bukhari 247](#))

لِّلّٰهُمَّ اَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيْ اِلَيْكَ، وَفَوَّضْتُ اَمْرِيْ اِلَيْكَ، وَالْجَاْتُ ظَهْرِيْ اِلَيْكَ، رَغْبَةً وَرَهْبَةً اِلَيْكَ، لَا مَلْجَا وَلَا مَنْجَا مِنْكَ اِلَّا اِلَيْكَ،
لِّلّٰهُمَّ اَمَنْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ الَّذِيْ اَنْزَلْتَ، وَبِنَبِيِّكَ الَّذِيْ اَرْسَلْتَ

This hadith gives us a bedtime ritual and an all-encompassing du'a.

Limit Screen Time Before Bed:

Limit your screen time before bed. The blue light from your phone, tablet, or computer can mess with your sleep cycle and keep you awake. Instead, try some soothing activities to unwind and get ready for a good night's sleep.

Create a Comfortable Sleep Environment:

Create a restful sleeping space by adjusting elements like temperature, lighting, and noise. Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet. You might use blackout curtains, play the Quran, or use earplugs if needed. Invest in a comfortable mattress and pillows to support and align your body properly.

Follow the Sunnah for Bedtime:

There are more recommended bedtime du'as you can recite for divine protection and blessings:

- "Whenever the Prophet (ﷺ) intended to go to bed, he would recite:

بِاسْمِكَ اللَّهُمَّ أَمُوتُ وَأَحْيَا

Bismika Allahumma amutu wa ahya (With Your name, O Allah, I die and I live).

And when he woke up from his sleep, he would say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا، وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

Al-hamdu lil-lahil-ladhi ahyana ba'da ma amatana; wa ilaihi an-nushur (All the Praises are for Allah Who has made us alive after He made us die (sleep) and unto Him is the Resurrection).

[Sahih al-Bukhari 6324](#)

- Recite Ayat al-Kursi, Surah Al-Falaq, An-Nas, and Al-Ikhlās. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "When you go to bed, recite Ayat-ul- Kursi (2:255) for there will be a guardian appointed over you from Allah, and Satan will not be able to approach you till morning." ([Riyad as-Salihin 1020](#))
- Recite the last two verses of Surah Al-Baqarah (2:285-286). As narrated by Abu Mas'ud Al-Ansari, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Whoever recites the last two Ayat of Surat Al-Baqarah during the night, they shall suffice him." ([Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2881](#)).

Afternoon Naps:

Short afternoon naps, known as **qailulah**, to be taken between the hours of Dhuhr and Asr can offer physical rest and mental refreshment, especially if you are consistent with nightly Tahajjud prayers. These afternoon naps can help reduce sleep debt and prepare you for the tasks ahead.

As-Sa'ib ibn Yazid said, "'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, used to pass by us in the middle of the day - or near to it - and say, 'Get up and take a midday nap. Any time spent here after this is for shaytan.'" ([Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 1239](#))

Maintain a Consistent Sleep Schedule:

Aim for a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time each day, even on weekends and holidays. The Fajr prayer times and daylight changes differ in various countries, so adjust your sleep schedule every 4 to 6 months to regulate your body's internal clock and foster healthy sleep-wake cycles.

Given the varying times of Fajr and sunrise, especially in western countries, it's crucial to remain flexible with your sleep routine. Practicing qailulah can be particularly beneficial. This nap can help you manage the fluctuations in Fajr times and ensure you're well-rested and ready for your daily tasks.

Practice Relaxation Techniques:

Try relaxation techniques like deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, or guided imagery to soothe your mind and body before sleep. Engage in mindfulness practices that promote gratitude, staying present, and releasing worries that might disrupt your rest.

Getting enough sleep is crucial for cognitive functioning, mood balance, and overall health. Sleep is a cherished gift from Allah; by prioritising it, you honour your physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Stress Management Techniques

Developing strong stress management techniques is crucial. Deep breathing exercises, mindfulness, and progressive muscle relaxation can greatly ease stress. These practices encourage a state of calm and build your resilience against life's challenges.

Juggling multiple roles and responsibilities can often be daunting. Effective stress management is key to maintaining your physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual strength. By embracing these practical strategies and mindfulness practices, you can better handle stressors, finding moments of inner peace and calm. Here are some beneficial tips:

Deep Breathing Exercises:

Practice deep breathing techniques when you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed. Take slow, deep breaths, filling your lungs with air and exhaling slowly to release tension and calm your nervous system. This simple yet effective technique can be a powerful tool in your self-care arsenal. Consider setting aside a few minutes each day to focus on your breathing. Find a quiet, comfortable space, close your eyes, and direct your attention to each breath.

Here's how you can do it:

- **Find a comfortable position:** Sit or lie down in a comfy space where you won't be disturbed.
- **Close your eyes:** Shutting out visual distractions can help you focus more on your breath.
- **Inhale deeply:** Breathe in through your nose for a count of four, filling your lungs completely.
- **Hold for a moment:** Pause and hold your breath for a count of four, letting the air nourish your body.
- **Exhale slowly:** Release your breath through your mouth for a count of six or eight, depending on what feels comfortable.
- **Repeat:** Continue this cycle for five to ten minutes, or until you feel more relaxed and centered.

Incorporating deep breathing exercises into your daily routine can significantly reduce anxiety and help you maintain a sense of calm throughout the day. Remember, the more you practice, the more effective this technique becomes.

Mindfulness:

Dedicate some time each day to practice [mindfulness](#). Find a quiet and comfortable space where you can sit or lie down comfortably, close your eyes, and focus on your breath or a specific point of focus.

Allow thoughts and emotions to arise, gently guiding your mind to the wonders of Allah's creations. Bring your attention to all that you've and that you're appreciative of and engage in constant gratitude. You can practice mindfulness at moments of solitude or quietude, such as early mornings or late evenings, to recharge and center yourself amidst the demands of your daily life.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR):

PMR can help reduce tension and promote physical relaxation throughout your body. It's especially helpful if you're dealing with PMS or pregnancy. The hormonal shifts during these periods can increase stress levels, cause physical discomfort, and lead to mood swings. By practicing PMR, you can manage these symptoms more effectively, as it aids in muscle relaxation and stress relief. Incorporating PMR into your self-care routine can enable you to better navigate the physical and emotional changes associated with PMS and pregnancy, ultimately boosting your overall well-being.

To practice PMR safely, follow these steps:

1. **Find a Quiet Space:** Locate a quiet, comfortable place where you won't be disturbed. This could be your bedroom, a cozy nook in your living room, or any space where you feel safe and relaxed.
2. **Get Comfortable:** Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Make sure your body is well-supported, and you feel at ease. Closing your eyes may help you concentrate better.
3. **Deep Breaths:** Start by taking a few deep breaths in and out, allowing your body to release tension and your mind to settle.
4. **Start with Your Feet:** Begin by tensing the muscles in your feet for five seconds, then slowly release the tension while focusing on the difference between tightness and relaxation.
5. **Move Upwards:** Gradually work your way up through different muscle groups—calves, thighs, abdomen, arms, and shoulders. Tense each group for five seconds before releasing.
6. **Focus on Relaxation:** Once you've tensed and relaxed all muscle groups, spend a few moments focusing on the overall sense of calmness throughout your body.
7. **End Gently:** When you're ready to finish, gently wiggle your fingers and toes, take a few more deep breaths, and slowly open your eyes to resume your day.

Safety Tips:

- **Consult Your Doctor:** If you are pregnant or have any health concerns, consult your healthcare provider before starting PMR to ensure it's safe for you.

- **Start Slow:** If you're new to PMR, begin with shorter sessions and gradually increase the duration as you become more comfortable.
- **Listen to Your Body:** Pay attention to your body's responses. If you feel any discomfort or pain, stop the exercise, and consult a healthcare professional.

Time Management

It is essential that we develop time management skills, for productivity, reducing stress, and achieving a balance between our obligations. By having practical strategies and utilising organisational tools, we can make the most of each day with less stress and overwhelm. Here are some tips:

Prioritise Tasks:

Find your most important tasks and prioritize, both short-term and long-term. Consider the urgency and importance of each task, focusing on those that are obligations.

If you have a lot on your plate in any given day, start with making a list, then break them down into tasks that need immediate attention and those that can be addressed later. By distinguishing between what must be done now and what can wait, you'll gain clarity and reduce stress.

Set Realistic Goals:

Create realistic and achievable goals for yourself, breaking them down into manageable steps and milestones. Consider your current commitments, resources, and capabilities when setting these goals within a reachable timeframe. Set SMART goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, allowing you to track progress and stay motivated.

Utilise Organisational Tools:

Use organisational tools like planners, calendars, and to-do lists to structure your time and keep track of tasks and appointments. Choose a system that you prefer, whether it's a physical planner, a digital calendar app, or a combination of both. Use color-coding, categorisation, and reminders to stay organised and on track with your schedule.

There are a lot of Muslim physical planners available, that factor in things like salah, Quran recitations, dhikr, fasting etc. You also have more flexibility by using the digital planners through your phones calendar where you can mark important Islamic events, personal deen goals like your 40-day mark for hair removal days etc.

Allocate Time Wisely:

Try dedicating time for specific tasks and activities, making sure that you give enough attention to each aspect of your life. Aside from the mandatory acts of worship and looking after your family, schedule time for self-care, sunnah acts of worship, work and leisure,

striking a balance between productivity and relaxation. Remember to include buffer time between tasks in case of unexpected delays or emergencies.

Practice Time Blocking:

You divide your day into distinct blocks of time dedicated to specific tasks or categories, such as Quran time, household chores, family time, work and personal development. By batching similar tasks together, you can reduce distractions and increase efficiency.

Delegate and Collaborate:

Delegate tasks when possible and work with family members or colleagues to share responsibilities and lighten your workload.

Recognise that you don't have to do everything yourself and be willing to ask for help or delegate tasks to others who are capable and willing to assist.

Practice Self-Discipline:

Set boundaries, avoid procrastination, and stay focused on your priorities, even when faced with distractions or temptations. Recognise your limits and learn to say no when necessary, preserving your energy for tasks that truly matter. Remember, your time and well-being are invaluable assets that deserve protection.

Social Support Networks

A strong social support network is essential for promoting well-being and enhancing overall quality of life. By connecting with family, friends, and other Muslim women of the ummah, we can find comfort, encouragement, and a sense of belonging amidst life's challenges. Here are some tips for building and nurturing social support networks:

Family Bonds:

Nurture close relationships with family members, including parents, siblings, spouses, and children. Create a sense of open communication, mutual respect, and emotional support within your family unit, recognising the importance of familial ties in providing love, stability, and guidance. Spend quality time together, engage in meaningful conversations, and express appreciation for one another's presence and contributions.

Friendship Circles:

Develop friendships with like-minded women who share your values, interests, and aspirations. Seek out friends who uplift and inspire you, bringing you closer to Allah and offering companionship, empathy, and encouragement along life's journey. Invest time and

effort in nurturing these friendships with regular communication, social activities, and acts of kindness that strengthen your bonds of friendship.

Community Engagement:

Get involved with your local mosque by taking part in religious, social, and charitable activities. Attend mosque held events and educational programmes to increase in knowledge and connect with fellow women to build meaningful relationships based on sisterhood of the deen. Volunteer your time and talents to support any mosque initiatives and projects that benefit those in need, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity within the ummah.

Support Groups

Seek out support groups or online forums where you can connect with individuals facing similar challenges or life experiences. Join groups related to topics such as parenting, mental health, professional development, or spiritual growth, where you can share your experiences, seek advice, and offer support to others in a safe and supportive environment. Engage in meaningful conversations, and share resources, leveraging the power of technology with online groups to build virtual communities and foster connections.

Professional Networks

Build professional networks and connections with other women within your field of work or area of interest, seeking opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and career advancement. Make connections with individuals that have similar values for inspiration and support, especially when juggling familial responsibilities and work.

Hobbies

Explore hobbies that bring you joy, peace of mind and fulfilment. Whether it's writing, gardening, calligraphy, or cooking, engage in activities that allow you to unwind. Here are some wholesome ideas to consider:

Calligraphy and Islamic Art:

Explore the art of calligraphy and Islamic artistry as a means of connecting with your deen and cultural heritage. Practice writing verses from the Quran or Islamic phrases in beautiful calligraphic styles, honing your skills and creating decorative pieces that inspire and uplift. Experiment with traditional Islamic art forms such as geometric patterns, arabesques, and illumination, infusing your creations with symbolism and beauty.

Gardening and Nature Appreciation:

Cultivate a love for gardening and nature appreciation by tending to plants, flowers, and green spaces. Create a peaceful oasis in your home or garden where you can connect with the natural world, observe the beauty of Allah's creation, and experience the tranquillity of

outdoor surroundings. Engage in gardening activities such as planting, watering, and pruning, nurturing living things and fostering a sense of stewardship for the environment.

Cooking and Culinary Arts:

Explore the culinary arts as a creative outlet for experimenting with flavours, ingredients, and recipes. Spend time in the kitchen preparing wholesome and delicious meals inspired by cultural traditions. Experiment with diverse cuisines, incorporating halal and nutritious ingredients to nourish your body and delight your senses. Share your culinary creations with family and friends, fostering bonds of love and hospitality through food.

Crafting and DIY Projects:

Discover the joy of crafting and DIY projects as a means of expressing your creativity and honing your skills. Engage in activities such as sewing, knitting, crocheting, or crafting handmade gifts and decor items. Explore Islamic-inspired crafts such as prayer bead making, Eid decorations, or Ramadan lanterns, infusing your creations with spiritual significance and cultural pride.

Reading and Book Club Participation:

Cultivate a love for reading and intellectual enrichment by exploring a diverse range of books and literature. Join a book club or reading group focused on topics of interest such as Islamic history, literature, or personal development.

Engage in lively discussions, share book recommendations, and connect with fellow book lovers who share your passion for learning and exploration.

Setting Boundaries

Establishing healthy boundaries is essential for us as Muslim women, to safeguard our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being while upholding the principles of Shariah. By setting clear boundaries in relationships, interactions, and commitments, we can protect ourselves from harm, maintain our dignity, and uphold our values with confidence and conviction. Here are some essential guidelines for setting boundaries:

Maintain Modesty and Decorum:

Embrace and uphold the values of modesty and respect in your interactions with men who are not closely related to you (non-mahram). It's important to avoid unnecessary socialising or mixing in settings where your modesty might be compromised. Look up to the exemplary women of Islam, who always interacted with dignity and respect, guided by the principles of haya (modesty) and taqwa (God-consciousness).

Guard Your Gaze and Speech:

Exercise caution and restraint in your speech and behaviour, especially when interacting with non-mahram men. Lower your gaze and speak with dignity and propriety, avoiding flirtatious or inappropriate conversations that might lead to temptation or improper conduct. Remember the guidance of Allah in the Quran: "And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their chastity..." ([An-Nur 24:31](#)).

Set Personal Boundaries:

Clearly define your personal boundaries and limits in various aspects of your life, including relationships, social activities, and commitments. Learn to say no to requests or obligations that conflict with your values, priorities, or well-being, asserting your rights and autonomy with grace and assertiveness. Seek guidance from Islamic teachings and principles to discern what is permissible and beneficial for you and align your actions accordingly.

Protect Your Time and Energy:

Prioritise activities and commitments that align with your values, goals, and responsibilities, and allocate your time and energy accordingly. Set boundaries around your schedule and availability, balancing your personal and professional obligations with self-care and spiritual nourishment. Remember the importance of preserving your physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual vitality as a means of fulfilling your duties and obligations as a Muslima.

Seek Support and Guidance:

Turn to trusted family members, friends, or mentors for support and guidance in setting and maintaining healthy boundaries in your life. Seek advice from knowledgeable scholars or religious leaders who can provide guidance on Islamic principles and teachings related to interpersonal relationships and boundaries. Remember that seeking assistance and support from others is not a sign of weakness but a reflection of wisdom and humility.

Stay Firm in Your Convictions:

Remain steadfast in upholding your boundaries and principles, even in the face of pressure or opposition from others. Trust in Allah's guidance and protection, knowing that He is the ultimate source of strength and resilience. Draw inspiration from the examples of strong and righteous women in Islamic history who exemplified courage, integrity, and unwavering faith in upholding their values and boundaries like Asiya and Khadija (may Allah be pleased with them).

Seeking Professional Help

Don't hesitate to seek professional help if you're struggling with persistent feelings of anxiety, depression, or other mental health concerns. Reach out to qualified therapists, counsellors, or mental health professionals who can provide support, guidance, and

evidence-based interventions tailored to your needs. Here are some key considerations when seeking professional help as Muslims:

Overcome Stigma and Misconceptions:

Address the stigma and misconceptions surrounding mental health within the ummah. Understand that seeking professional help for mental health concerns is not incompatible with our belief or values. We are encouraged to seeking appropriate treatment and support for health-related issues, including mental health.

Find Culturally Competent Providers:

Seek out mental health professionals who are both culturally aware and sensitive to the unique needs and perspectives of Muslim women. It's important to find therapists who respect your beliefs and practices, providing culturally competent care tailored to you. Consider getting referrals from trusted community leaders, religious scholars, or healthcare providers who understand and value your cultural and religious background.

Confidentiality and Trust:

When seeking professional help, prioritise confidentiality and trust. Before disclosing personal information or concerns, clarify the therapist's policies regarding confidentiality and mandatory reporting. Ensure that you feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues without fear of judgment or breach of confidentiality. It's important to build a trusting relationship with your mental health provider, where you feel safe and supported in addressing your concerns. In many countries, therapists are bound by strict confidentiality rules, but it's important to have a clear understanding of the limits to confidentiality, especially when it comes to certain family issues.

Explore Alternative Resources:

Alongside conventional therapy or counselling, it's beneficial to explore alternative resources within the Muslim community. Seek out support groups, helplines, or online forums designed specifically for Muslim women's mental health. These platforms can provide culturally sensitive support and guidance in a safe, confidential, and understanding environment.

Consider Religious Counselling:

Consider seeking religious counselling or pastoral care from qualified professionals who understand Islamic teachings and principles. These counsellors can provide spiritual guidance and support while addressing your mental health, offering faith-based insights. They can also help you incorporate religious practices into your healing process.

Involve Trusted Individuals:

Include trusted family, friends, or members of your community in your journey to seek professional help. Open up to those who can provide support and encouragement and assist you in navigating the process of finding suitable mental health resources.

Advocate for Your Needs:

When engaging with mental health professionals, advocate for your specific needs and preferences. Clearly communicate your cultural background, religious beliefs, and any particular concerns or considerations you have. A good therapist will respect your values and work alongside you to create a treatment plan that aligns with your goals. Trust your instincts and seek support from professionals who demonstrate empathy, understanding, and respect for your unique experiences as a Muslima.

Self-Reflection and Gratitude

Take time for self-reflection and introspection to identify your needs, values, and priorities. Practice gratitude by acknowledging and appreciating the blessings in your life, no matter how small. Cultivating a mindset of gratitude can promote resilience, optimism, and emotional well-being.

Self-Reflection:

Take moments of quiet contemplation to reflect on your thoughts, emotions, and experiences. Set aside dedicated time for introspection, perhaps during salah or before bedtime. Ask yourself meaningful questions about your values, goals, and priorities—consider how your actions align with your innermost beliefs. Self-reflection cultivates self-awareness, insight, and personal growth, empowering you to make conscious choices and navigate life's challenges with resilience and authenticity.

Introspection and Identifying Needs:

Use self-reflection as a tool for introspection to identify your needs and areas for growth. Reflect on your emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being—consider what brings you joy, fulfilment, and purpose. Explore your strengths and areas of opportunity for daily personal development. By understanding your innermost needs and values, you can make informed decisions and take proactive steps towards a meaningful and fulfilling life.

Counting Blessings:

Take moments throughout your day to pause and count your blessings, whether it's the warmth of the sun on your face, the laughter of your children, or the comfort of a loving family. Recognise the beauty and blessings that surround you in every moment and savour the richness of life's experiences. By acknowledging and appreciating the blessings in your

life, you can cultivate a sense of contentment, peace, and serenity in your heart, even amidst life's challenges and uncertainties.

Incorporating self-reflection and gratitude into your daily routine can significantly enhance your mental health, holistic well-being, and help you maintain a balanced lifestyle as a Muslima. Understand that self-care isn't an act of selfishness; it's a sacred responsibility and a beautiful way to honour the blessings and gifts granted by Allah. Make self-reflection and gratitude integral parts of your faith practice and dedication to Allah's guidance and mercy. By doing so, you'll find yourself spiritually closer to Him and enriched in your journey towards growth and fulfilment.

