

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Habits, part one

How does our purpose in life relate to habits? Our daily life routines are designed for us to attempt to worship God alone, all-day long and all-night long. This is the purpose of our lives, and this is outlined in the Quran:

[51:56] I did not create the jinns and the humans except to worship Me alone.

This means that all our habits are for the sole purpose of worshiping God alone. Every habit we have can be looked at, and the question can be asked, "Does this habit partake in worshiping God alone, or not?" We all have simple life habits that we do every day, like wake up in the morning, brush our teeth, eat breakfast, walk the dog, exercise, or some other daily habits that we just simply do every morning. God willing, we can look at our habits, remove the ones we do not want, add ones that we would like, and make all of our habits conform to the purpose of our lives: worshiping God alone. Therefore, all of our habits, the good, the bad, and the ugly, relate to not worshiping God alone, or worshiping God alone.

God wants us to take time to evaluate our lives. We can do this using a method of self-reflection. Self-

reflection is defined as meditation or serious thought about one's character, actions, and motives. God tells us to do this in the Quran: *[30:8] Why do they not reflect on themselves? GOD did not create the heavens and the earth, and everything between them, except for a specific purpose, and for a specific life span. However, most people, with regard to meeting their Lord, are disbelievers.*

One method of self-reflection has five steps. (These steps are adapted from an Internet source and something I found useful. They are not a religious requirement.)

Step 1: Before beginning the actual self-reflection, **understand the purpose** for doing a self-reflection. We must first maintain the concept of our purpose in life, to worship God alone. Whether it is making a change, a decision, or simply meditation, the ultimate goal of self-reflection is to improve our worship of God alone.

Step 2: Make alone time. Spend this time alone somewhere without outside influence. Take as much or as little time as you need to be effective. This is a *self-reflection*; if we are discussing it with someone else it becomes a con-

sultation. Self-reflections and consultations are two separate actions encouraged by God and they deserve their own individuality. If we want to discuss the results of a self-reflection in a consultation that is just fine, but when doing a self-reflection, do it alone.

Step 3: Be honest with yourself. It will be counterproductive to do a self-reflection if we are not being honest with our self. We do not have to share this information with anyone. The process and results are for our self. I cannot change a bad habit if I am not willing to admit that I have a bad habit.

Step 4: Practice self-reflection. Steps 1, 2 & 3 set up the framework for a self-reflection, and step 4 contains suggested actions to the actual performance of a self-reflection.

- Do a **breathing exercise**. Many people find controlled inhalation and exhalation helps to relax and clear the mind. For every 10 or 20 breaths, pick one action or event that you want to deeply understand and reflect on about yourself. Thank God for even realizing that we need to self-reflect.

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- **Talk to ourselves.** Do not worry about others judging. It is about being honest and open with ourselves. God already knows. Are we ready to acknowledge the issues we need to address? Talking also helps because it engages another sense, hearing.
- **Pour out our emotions.** Cry, yell, jump up and down if we need to, don't hold anything back. The point is to examine ourselves so that we may improve. We seek God's help and turn to Him frequently (1:5, 22:15).
- **Read.** Sometimes even reading about worldly events lets us step back to appreciate how blessed our lives are. Many are suffering, in danger, or dying. We are still alive. We still have an opportunity to repent, reform, and work righteousness to grow closer to God. Most importantly read the Quran. The Quran is a source of wisdom (36:2) and healing (10:57). We may come across a verse that describes believers and we can use that verse to reflect on ourselves to see if we are meeting the criteria of a believer.
- **Write.** Use a pen or pencil and paper or type on a device to write down or map out our thoughts or keep a journal. Writing requires articulation, which can help us think clearly about what we need to improve in our souls, with God's help.
- **Reflect upon the past.** What did I do? How did it grow my soul? What can I do better? Try to remember a time in the past. It could be a week ago, a day ago, five minutes ago, or however far back we would like to reflect. Focus on events that happened around that time in the past. Did we remember God? Were our action or words righteous? What could we do better? Don't let guilt and negative feelings trap you into despair. Instead think about what we need to do better next time. Pray to God for help.

- **Return to the present.** Think about what I want to do better. We are rarely perfect overnight. But, we can set incremental goals for our souls to work towards. God willing, with everything we have learned from the past, we will hopefully have a wiser perspective of our present and future life.

Step 5: Put self-reflection into action. Whatever we were initially self-reflecting for—carry out the results of the self-reflection. Don't wait, start working on the soul today. Only God knows when our time is up, and the devil will try to stop or delay us in improving our Submission. Be thankful for God's blessings. Implore Him frequently.

God willing, I am going to share with you an example of my personal self-reflection.

Step 1: I wanted to do a self-reflection on my daily habits, to either remove, add, or use the ones I am doing to increase my submission to God alone.

Step 2: I decided to take a walk on my lunch time as far as I could go, so I had alone time without distractions.

Step 3: To be effective, no matter how difficult it was going to be or how bad it was going to make me feel, God willing, I insisted on being completely honest with myself.

Step 4: Now that I set the groundwork for a self-reflection, God willing, it was time to practice. By God's leave I chose to focus on my past and try to remember the actions I did during a one-day period. My emotions were running high because I was feeling unappreciative and like a hypocrite or disbeliever. I wasn't using the breathing method, but I was breathing heavier than usual. I am almost sure I said some things aloud talking and arguing with myself. I realized there are a lot of things that I was doing that I wanted God to change about me. One thing that I will share with you is when I wake up in the morning, one of my habits, like most of us do, is to brush my teeth. I noticed that before or during this particular action I am not reverencing God. When I have a

tooth ache I am imploring God, making all kinds of pleas to stop the pain. When I wake up I try to say, "Bismillah" first thing. When I turn the water on to wash for morning prayer I am thankful and grateful to God for being able to turn a knob and get hot water. For some reason I was just brushing my teeth with no reverence to the Creator.

Step 5: Although brushing my teeth should be a good habit, doing it without reverencing God made me feel emotionally bad about it. After doing this self-reflection, I thank God for a toothbrush and toothpaste. I thank God for my teeth. So much to be grateful for in this one small daily action.

May God help us all to make all our daily habits for the worship of God alone! May God also help us preform self-reflections to increase our submission to Him alone!

[59:18] O you who believe, you shall reverence GOD, and let every soul examine what it has sent ahead for tomorrow. You shall reverence GOD; GOD is fully Cognizant of everything you do.

Robert

Reference: <https://www.wikihow.com/Self-Reflect>

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Letter

[This is a letter from someone grateful that a submitter took the time to pass on the message of worship God alone. We never know who will benefit from our words. It's all up to God. But we need to take every opportunity to deliver the message, and then leave it in His hands. Ed]

Thank you so much for what you've done for me. I am overwhelmed with joy that you helped me by introducing me to what I believe will be happiness and a faith in myself to believe in the One True God. I look forward to being able to converse with you on this new-found glory that is God. I truly believe this was meant to happen and owe you my dedication to serving the One True God.

May peace be with you, Thad.

Quran and Steps 3 & 4 of the 12 Steps

As Submitters we have been blessed with the Quranic knowledge that we are here on earth as a final chance to kill our egos and truly devote ourselves absolutely to God alone. In the February issue we introduced the idea of working with the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous as one way to examine ourselves and grow our souls. In that first article we shared that a Submitter might benefit from working with some or all of the 12 steps and looked at a number of Quranic verses that relate to the first and second steps. Now we look at some Quranic verses related to the next two steps.

Step 3 relates to the most important decision of our lives: **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.**

Why should we not turn ourselves totally over to Him? Especially that 74:56 tells us *....He is the source of righteousness; He is the source of forgiveness. And: Indeed, those who submit themselves absolutely to God alone, while leading a righteous life, will receive their recompense from their Lord; they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. (2:112)*

From the Quran we know that our life in this world is our final chance to grow our souls, to devote ourselves to God alone: *The One who created death and life for the purpose of distinguishing those among you who would do better. He is the Almighty, the Forgiving. (67:2)* Moreover actually turning over our will and our lives (i.e., submitting) to God is the only way to escape Satan's clutches. When he disobeyed God: *He said, "My Lord, since You have willed that I go astray, I will surely entice them on earth; I will send them all astray. Except those among Your worshipers who are devoted absolutely to You alone." (15:39-40)*

As Submitters it is easy to assume that of course we have already made the deci-

sion to turn our wills and lives over to God, and that we are devoted to Him alone. But often knowingly or unknowingly we hold on to old habits, thoughts, memories, etc., that we do not realize block us from truly devoting ourselves absolutely to God. Until we are able to do so we are still fair game for Satan as God makes clear four times in Sura 37 (Verse 74 for example): *Only God's servants who are absolutely devoted to Him alone (are saved).*

That is why the next step is important because it helps us really examine and come to realistically know ourselves. Only then can we tell if we are really devoted to God alone in all ways. So we pray for God's guidance and help, and begin to take the next step.

Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Making a moral or personal inventory is more than just listing all of the things that we think we have done wrong. It is a self-reflection that includes looking at the positives as well as the negatives of our past and present. And it means looking for the patterns in our behavior and thoughts. This can be an exercise we repeat throughout our lives. As we grow in our understanding of ourselves and of Submission we begin to see ourselves in a more realistic light and work on improving our weaknesses. God willing, we can become like those who: *If they fall in sin or wrong their souls, they remember God and ask forgiveness for their sins—and who forgives the sins except God—and they do not persist in sins, knowingly. (3:135)*

It is easy to fool ourselves into believing that we are doing just fine in our Submission to God alone. Certainly our egos would have us believe that, and as Satan's representative our companion's job is to blind us to our faults. The Quran is full of examples of hypocrites, many of whom do not realize that they are hypocrites. So we must come to really know ourselves to avoid this disastrous condition.

Let's say we have a good job, a lovely

home, good health, and more than we need. In that case can't we just look at our lives and tell that we are good Submitters? Not necessarily; don't forget this scary reminder: *When they thus disregard the message given to them, we open for them the gates of everything. Then, just as they rejoice in what was given to them, we punish them suddenly; they become utterly stunned. (6:44)* The footnote for this verse is: *Before the guilty are thrown out the window, they are taken up to a high floor.*

We can never assume we have made it, for even the messengers worry about their own necks (21:28). God in His mercy helps us in so many ways, including telling us in several verses of the Quran how to be righteous. For example please look at 2:177, 3:133-135, 25:63-74, 39:33, 46:15, 76:7-10. Indeed He is the very source of righteousness (74:56 as quoted above).

We know that repenting and reforming wipes out our sins (9:11). God may even overlook some sins (42:30 & 34) or turn them into credits (25:70). However, we cannot assume that we will not be held responsible, so we must become aware of all that we need to repent and reform for. Thus this step, however difficult it seems, can be a great gift to us.

God knows us better than we know ourselves: *Whether you declare your convictions (or not) He knows the secret, and what is even more hidden. (20:7)* With continued self-reflection and work, God willing, we will learn the lessons He is teaching us as He shows us the secret parts of ourselves. He helps us to change bit-by-bit what needs work, like peeling the layers of an onion. God helps us remove that which keeps us from absolute devotion to Him until, God willing, He grows us from being Submitters into Believers: *Mu'mens (believers) are those who believe in God and His messenger, then attain the status of having no doubt whatsoever, and strive with their money and their lives in the cause of God. These are the truthful ones. (49:15)*

Submitters striving to heal & grow our souls with Quran

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Ramadan 2018

God willing the month of Ramadan (2:183-7) is coming soon. The new moon times for determining the beginning and ending of Ramadan are given below in UTC (Universal time) or GMT.

May 15, 2018: 11:48 AM (UTC/GMT)

June 13, 2018: 19:43 PM (UTC/GMT)

The actual time for each time zone is relative to UTC. In order to calculate the Ramadan start date, compare the time of the New Moon with the Sunset in your location. If the new moon is before sunset, we fast the next day, God willing. Similarly, to determine the last day of fasting, compare the time of the next New Moon with the sunset in your location. If the new moon is before sunset, the Ramadan month is complete on that day. Otherwise one fasts the next day. For more details on how dates are calculated, please refer to the [September 2009](#) issue of the Submitters Perspective

Based on this, God willing, Ramadan dates for USA and Canada, are: **May 16 – June 13, 2018.**

The Night of Destiny will start, God willing, at sunset on June 10, 2018 for USA and Canada.

For more details or to use a tool to assist you in calculating / verifying Ramadan details for your location, please visit: <http://masjiduntucson.org/Ramadan/>

VERSES ON GOD'S WONDROUS SIGNS: THE SKY

[67:3-5] He created seven universes in layers. You do not see any imperfection in the creation by the Most Gracious. Keep looking; do you see any flaw? Look again and again; your eyes will come back stumped and conquered. We adorned the lowest universe with lamps, and guarded its borders with projectiles against the devils; we prepared for them a retribution in Hell.

[51:7] Despite the perfectly created sky.

[50:6] Have they not looked at the sky above them, and how we constructed it and adorned it, without a flaw?

[2:22] The One who made the earth habitable for you, and the sky a structure. He sends down from the sky water, to produce all kinds of fruits for your sustenance. You shall not set up idols to rival GOD, now that you know.

[2:29] He is the One who created for you everything on earth, then turned to the sky and perfected seven universes therein, and He is fully aware of all things.

[15:16] We placed galaxies in the sky,

and adorned it for the beholders.

[21:32] And we rendered the sky a guarded ceiling. Yet, they are totally oblivious to all the portents therein.

[25:61] Most blessed is the One who placed constellations in the sky, and placed in it a lamp, and a shining moon.

[40:64] GOD is the One who rendered the earth habitable for you, and the sky a formidable structure, and He designed you, and designed you well. He is the One who provides you with good provisions. Such is GOD your Lord; Most Exalted is GOD, Lord of the universe.

[41:11] Then He turned to the sky, when it was still gas, and said to it, and to the earth, "Come into existence, willingly or unwillingly." They said, "We come willingly."

[51:47] We constructed the sky with our hands, and we will continue to expand it.

[55:7] He constructed the sky and established the law.

[55:37] When the sky disintegrates, and turns rose colored like paint.

[91:5] The sky and Him who built it.

[88:18] And the sky and how it is raised.