

Tazkiyah Halaqa
Self Honesty – Session 2
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May 4, 2005
Wellness Centre, London, Ontario

Overview

This second session in the Tazkiyah Halaqah series builds on the foundational “rules” introduced in the first lecture and introduces four essential dimensions of the tazkiyah journey: (1) the daily focuses, (2) the methods of transformation, (3) the enduring pillars of tazkiyah, and (4) the first core topic—self-honesty. Sheikh Adnan emphasizes the importance of structured spiritual development that is personal, reflective, consistent, and grounded in rigorous self-accountability.

1. The Four Daily Focuses

These are four spiritual reflections that participants are required to contemplate every day. With time, they become second nature:

1. *Iḥsān* (Spiritual Excellence): Every action has both an outward and inward dimension. The believer must consistently remember that Allah evaluates the *inner reality* of actions, not merely their physical performance.
2. *‘Ubūdiyyah* (Servitude): Reminding oneself daily: "I am a servant of Allah." Every choice and behavior should reflect this identity.
3. *Niyyah* (Intention): Purification of intention is the cornerstone of accepted worship. Without correct *niyyah*, even technically sound deeds may be spiritually void.
4. *Qabūl al-‘Amal* (Acceptance of Deeds): It is not enough to perform good actions; one must reflect on whether they are *accepted* by Allah. This encourages humility and vigilance.

2. Methods of Tazkiyah

Sheikh Adnan identifies four primary methods by which tazkiyah is pursued:

1. **External Forces:** These include beneficial environments, good companionship, religious gatherings, and structured learning. They aid the individual in ways internal reflection cannot accomplish alone.
2. **Internal Efforts:** Reflection, journaling, *dhikr*, and self-assessment. These are the core of spiritual development and require deliberate practice.
3. **Lifestyle Changes:** Emphasis is placed on sleep, nutrition, routine, and time management. An unhealthy lifestyle undermines the spiritual journey.
4. **Reinforcement Tools:** Acts of worship (e.g., prayer, *dhikr*, *du‘a*) and religious habits are tools to reinforce spiritual concepts and values over time.

3. The Five Pillars of Tazkiyah

These five core pillars are necessary for meaningful and lasting spiritual growth. They form the foundational framework of tazkiyah:

1. Self-Value: Understanding self-worth through humility (*tawāḍūʿ*) and mercy (*rahmah*).
2. Mortality: Conscious awareness of death and the brevity of life (*qīṣar al-amal*).
3. Self-Honesty and Accountability: Engaging in *murāqabah* (spiritual vigilance) and *muḥāsabah* (self-auditing).
4. Ḥayāʿ and Adab (Modesty and Etiquette): Cultivating moral sensitivity and spiritual refinement.
5. Zuhd and Simplicity: Embracing ethical frugality and detachment from worldly excess.

4. Introduction to Self Honesty

Sheikh Adnan begins the first pillar in-depth by exploring *self-honesty* (*ṣidq maʿa al-nafs*). He distinguishes between three domains of honesty:

- With People: Upholding truthfulness in social interactions.
- With Allah: Ensuring one’s worship and supplications are sincere.
- With Oneself: The most difficult form, requiring the removal of ego masks to face one's true spiritual and moral state.

He emphasizes that without self-honesty, tazkiyah cannot succeed. The individual must be willing to confront who they truly are—not who they appear to be or wish to be.

Assigned Exercise

Participants are instructed to undertake a difficult but crucial contemplative task:

Describe yourself to yourself with total honesty. Start by acknowledging how you *want* to be seen, then how you *want* to believe you are, and finally work toward identifying who you *truly* are beneath all layers of perception and social roles.

Sheikh Adnan notes that this is among the most painful and transformative exercises in tazkiyah, and it will take time to do well. It is not a one-time assignment but an ongoing process.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUlqHBuVUPQ>