

**Tazkiyah Halaqa**  
**Self Honesty – Session 7**  
**Sheikh Adnan Rajeh**  
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Wellness Centre, London, Ontario

## Introduction

In this seventh session of the Tazkiyah Halaqa, Sheikh Adnan Rajeh reflects on the evolution and unique challenges of teaching self-purification (*tazkiyah*) in diverse modern settings. He highlights the contextual differences between how he learned *tazkiyah* and how he now teaches it, as well as the impact of community, gender, and cultural environment. Sheikh Adnan reiterates that *tazkiyah* is not simply theoretical—if left unpracticed, its knowledge can become self-defeating. The session underscores the necessity of actively engaging in spiritual exercises and the personal risks of remaining passive.

## Session Overview

This session focuses on the connection between self-honesty and self-value. Sheikh Adnan reviews previous approaches to self-honesty while urging attendees to move from theory to deep, practical reflection. The aim is to empower individuals with a framework for continual self-discovery, spiritual accountability, and meaningful transformation—beyond merely seeking spiritual knowledge.

## Key Themes and Concepts

### 1. The Practice of Tazkiyah—Beyond Theory

- *Tazkiyah* requires personal experimentation and self-application, not passive learning.
- If spiritual exercises are neglected, the soul may misuse *ilm* (knowledge) for self-justification rather than self-purification.
- Knowledge unpracticed can be spiritually harmful; true benefit comes from challenging the self and persevering through failure and frustration.

### 2. Honesty with Allah, Others, and the Self

- Islam allows for exceptions in outward honesty with others (for reconciliation, kindness, etc.), but self-honesty admits no exceptions.
- Complete transparency with oneself is essential for authentic relationships with Allah.
- Habitual self-deceit leads, inevitably, to deceit with others—a pattern transferable from inward to outward behaviours.

### 3. Barriers Rooted in Self-Value

- If one's sense of self-worth depends on one's own opinion, radical honesty becomes difficult, as acknowledging faults threatens self-esteem.
- True self-value must be recognized as bestowed by Allah, not derived from subjective self-appraisal or fleeting roles and accomplishments.
- Sheikh Adnan urges listeners to distinguish between value in worldly roles (family, profession, relationships) and intrinsic, unwavering value as a servant (*'abd*) of Allah.

### 4. Spiritual Reflection: Who Am I Without My Roles?

- A profound exercise: imagine losing all your social and personal roles (parent, spouse, job, titles). Who remains at your core identity?

- The Qur'anic concept distinguishes between the *khalifah* (the one with worldly roles) and the *'abd* (the eternal servant of Allah).
- True spiritual peace arises from knowing, confronting, and accepting yourself apart from all transient attachments.

### **5. Seeking Honest Feedback**

- Courageously ask close companions for honest feedback on your character and impact—an exercise in humility.
- Accepting difficult feedback is a test of maturity in self-honesty; it is an invaluable "gift" that can help uncover personal blind spots.
- The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ valued and modelled exchanging direct, constructive critique without damaging bonds of love and respect.

### **6. The Danger of Self-Deceit and the Example of Fir'aun (Pharaoh)**

- Persistent lying to oneself can escalate to catastrophic delusions, as illustrated by Qur'anic narratives (e.g. Fir'aun).
- There is always a latent voice of truth in conscience—self-honesty involves amplifying that voice and learning not to suppress it.

### **7. Foundations for Muraqabah (Self-Observation) and Muhasabah (Self-Accountability)**

- The next stage in tazkiyah: identify a persistent inner flaw, honestly acknowledge it, and observe it without rationalisation.
- Begin focusing observation (*muraqabah*) on one recurring behavioural pattern as groundwork for true self-accountability (*muhasabah*).
- Use positive and negative reinforcement to encourage sincere self-reform (a method supported by Islamic tradition and classical psychology).

### **Practical Reflections and Exercises**

- Remove Your Roles: Dedicate time to reflection in which you imagine losing all social, professional, and familial roles—try to sit with your core self and define what remains.
- Seek Feedback: After reassuring them of your openness, ask sincere friends or relatives for truthful comments about your character and behaviour.
- Reflect on Reactions: Notice how you process praise or criticism—probe your discomfort or nonchalance. Use this as diagnostic data about your self-honesty.
- Muraqabah Exercise: Identify one specific flaw or recurring sin. Track when and how it surfaces over the coming days, setting aside rationalizations or excuses.
- Prepare for Muhasabah: Be prepared to assess your pattern honestly, to encourage accountability and future change.

### **Conclusion**

Session seven advances the journey from self-honesty to the higher disciplines of self-observation (*muraqabah*) and self-accountability (*muhasabah*). Sheikh Adnan calls on attendees to move beyond the comfort of theory, actively seek challenging feedback, and develop a resilient core identity grounded in servitude to Allah. The practical exercises offered provide a structured path to recognizing and transforming ingrained shortcomings, while sustained honesty with oneself opens the door to genuine spiritual growth and divine proximity.

**Video Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yqg2tPCxYQ0>