

Tazkiyah Halaqa
Mortality – Session 31
Sheikh Adnan Rajeh
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Wellness Centre, London, Ontario

Overview

In this session, Sheikh Adnan Rajeh explores the relationship between emotional pain and spiritual growth, emphasizing that pain itself is not inherently negative. Rather, emotional pain can become either a source of purification and maturity or a source of bitterness and spiritual decline, depending on how it is processed. The lecture focuses on healing, emotional resilience, unresolved wounds, and the importance of approaching suffering through the lens of tazkiyah rather than ego or victimhood.

The Reality of Emotional Pain

Sheikh Adnan begins by explaining that emotional pain is an unavoidable part of human existence. Every person experiences disappointment, betrayal, grief, rejection, and hardship in different forms throughout life. Islam does not promise a life free from pain, nor does it encourage emotional denial.

The Shaykh emphasizes that:

- Emotional suffering is part of the human condition.
- Even the Prophets experienced deep emotional pain.
- Spirituality does not eliminate hardship, but changes how hardship is understood and carried.

The problem is often not the pain itself, but the way people respond to it. Pain can either soften the heart and deepen reliance upon Allah, or harden the heart through resentment, pride, and unresolved anger.

The Difference Between Processing and Escaping

A major theme of the lecture is the distinction between genuinely processing pain and merely escaping it. Sheikh Adnan explains that many people spend years distracting themselves from unresolved emotional wounds through:

- Constant busyness
- Entertainment
- Social media
- Work obsession
- Emotional dependency on others

While these distractions may temporarily numb discomfort, they do not produce healing. Unresolved wounds eventually resurface through anxiety, anger, insecurity, emotional instability, or unhealthy relationships.

Healing requires:

- Honest acknowledgement of pain
- Reflection without denial
- Patience with the healing process
- Turning toward Allah rather than away from Him

Pain and the Ego

The lecture repeatedly returns to the role of the ego in emotional suffering. Sheikh Adnan notes that much emotional pain becomes intensified because the ego interprets hardship as a personal attack upon one's worth, status, or expectations.

The nafs often responds to pain through:

- Blame
- Self-pity
- Bitterness
- Desire for validation
- Desire for revenge or recognition

Tazkiyah requires separating genuine emotional hurt from ego-driven reactions. This does not mean suppressing emotions but rather understanding them correctly and refusing to allow pain to corrupt the heart.

The Importance of Acceptance

Sheikh Adnan explains that one of the greatest obstacles to healing is resistance to reality. Many people remain emotionally trapped because they refuse to accept:

- What happened
- What was lost
- The limitations of others
- Their own limitations
- The unfolding decree of Allah

Acceptance does not mean approval of wrongdoing or passivity toward injustice. Rather, it means recognizing reality honestly so that healing and forward movement become possible. Without acceptance, the individual remains psychologically stuck in cycles of replaying, resisting, and emotionally reliving the same wound.

The Prophetic Model of Emotional Strength

The Shaykh highlights the emotional balance of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the model for processing hardship. The Prophet ﷺ experienced:

- Loss of loved ones
- Betrayal
- Rejection
- Public humiliation
- Physical hardship

Yet these experiences increased him in mercy, patience, and nearness to Allah rather than bitterness or hatred.

Sheikh Adnan explains that true emotional strength in Islam is not emotional suppression. Rather, it is the ability to:

- Feel deeply without becoming consumed
- Grieve without despair
- Forgive without weakness
- Continue serving Allah despite pain

The Prophet ﷺ demonstrated complete emotional honesty while remaining spiritually anchored.

Unhealed Pain and Relationships

Another important theme is the effect of unresolved wounds on relationships. Sheikh Adnan notes that many people unknowingly project old pain onto new relationships. Unprocessed hurt often produces:

- Excessive sensitivity
- Fear of abandonment
- Distrust
- Emotional dependency
- Defensive behaviour
- Difficulty forgiving others

Without self-awareness, individuals may repeatedly recreate unhealthy emotional patterns while believing the problem exists entirely outside themselves.

Healing therefore requires both introspection and accountability.

Solitude, Reflection, and Healing

The lecture emphasizes the importance of solitude and reflective stillness during healing. Constant noise and distraction prevent the individual from confronting internal realities honestly.

Sheikh Adnan encourages:

- Spending time alone intentionally
- Engaging in dhikr and dua
- Journaling and reflection
- Speaking honestly to Allah about one's struggles
- Reducing emotional overstimulation

Over time, this process allows the heart to regain clarity, softness, and stability.

Practical Reflections and Exercises

Participants are encouraged to reflect on:

- Which emotional wounds remain unresolved
- Whether they tend to process pain or escape from it
- How pain has affected their behaviour toward others
- Whether hardship has increased them in bitterness or humility
- What emotional habits prevent genuine healing

Sheikh Adnan advises approaching healing gradually and honestly, without rushing the process or pretending to be emotionally unaffected.

Final Reflections

The session concludes with a reminder that emotional pain can either become a prison or a pathway. When approached through sincerity, reflection, patience, and reliance upon Allah, hardship becomes a means of purification and spiritual elevation.

True healing occurs not when a person forgets pain entirely, but when the heart becomes softer, wiser, and more connected to Allah through the experience rather than more resentful or emotionally hardened.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4UZ6-0mcrk>