

**Tazkiyah Halaqa
Self-Honesty – Session 3
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Transcription

I continue in this third session of the Tazkiyah series that will be running inshallah after Fajr on Sundays. And the topic that I started or began last week, that I'll be continuing inshallah for the next number of weeks is the concept of self-honesty. In Arabic, if you read about these topics, then in Arabic, the term for it is muraqaba or muhasaba. These are very well-known, established terms that are used quite often. And it's one of the five, the way I was taught, it's one of the five basic pillars of Tazkiyah, along with understanding self-value and mortality and the concept of zuhd. The concept of adab and haya, they kind of add up to five. And self-honesty is one of them. And under it, a lot of subdivisions exist, and we'll kind of slowly go through these topics as time progresses.

And what I'd ask you to do is to give yourself a try, to spend some time, and describe yourself to yourself. Description is the key word to this activity. It's describing yourself. If you were to describe yourself, how would you describe yourself? And I'm not talking about describing yourself to an employer when you're going to perform an interview of some sort. But describing yourself, if Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala asked you to describe yourself, who you are, without sugarcoating, and you only get points for accuracy. You only get points for accuracy. There's no points in buffing things up or sugarcoating or trying to. We're very good at that. We find ways to. If you wash dishes in the kitchen of a restaurant, you say you are an appliances assistant.

You'll find some term to describe this job that makes it sound way more important than it actually is. You'll use any terminology that'll make it seem that it has more value. So really, self-honesty is just being able to remove all of that and just describe yourself in a critical manner, in an appropriate manner for what it is. Tzatzikiya really is about clarity and it's about truth. It's about truth. When we talk about self-value, or when I bring that up maybe in the future, and we talk about humbleness, for example, humbleness is not a foreign state to you. It's a native state. It's just you behaving in the way that suits the reality of your creation, of who you are. Self-honesty is just your ability to be truthful about your status, about who you are, to yourself.

To yourself. And just like you find it difficult, just like you're embarrassed to talk about certain things to others, you're also embarrassed to talk about certain things to yourself. Yourself is another entity that you find some shame in describing certain things to. If you at any point in your life require to speak to a therapist or a physician, you'll find that it's not easy to open up about yourself to them. And you may Which is why one of the number one, what's the first rule in internal medicine? You know what the first rule is that you teach in internal medicine? Patients lie. That's the first thing we're reminded of. Patients don't tell the truth all the time. Like a lot of times, you ask the question, you know, have you done, because you're trying to investigate.

We're investigators trying to figure out why you're feeling this way or what happened. So I ask you a question, you give me an answer, I'm going to believe that answer and then build my investigation on it. And we're reminded that a lot of the times patients lie. They don't

tell you the truth about what they did or how. And you have to go back a couple of times and ask the same question. Why? Because they're embarrassed sometimes to say things, even though, you know, we're professional. And I don't really have time to judge you or care about doing that. I just need to know so I can treat you. So you're embarrassed to tell the physician certain things, but the interesting piece is that you're also embarrassed to tell yourself certain things.

There's an embarrassment that exists between you and you. Removing that allows you to at least tell yourself the truth. You have to have someone whom you tell the truth. Now that someone is Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, but before you can arrive at that point, before you can reach the moment where you're able to tell Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala the truth about yourself, which will obviously affect the way you perform your dua, it will affect the way that you will pray. A lot of aspects of your worship, by the way, are affected by this concept that I'm teaching you, that we're talking about here today. It's very affected by it. Most of your ibadat will be highly or are highly affected by what degree of self-honesty you actually have.

So fixing this, there's great interest for you in fixing this because it does a lot for you in your life. People are described in Surah Al-Mujadila as coming in a state, **يَعْتَهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُخَلِّفُونَ لَهُ** **كَمَا يَخْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ** This is a very scary ayah.

Where he points out to us, subhanAllah, that some people will be resurrected and they'll come to God and they will swear to him. Just like they swear to you, Ya Rasulallah, just like they tell you, I swear we didn't do this, we swear we're like this, they'll come and swear to Allah that we are not this, we didn't do that. And they'll believe, **أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ** And they'll believe that they're truthful. Here's the point, here's the scary point. If they were just lying, it doesn't matter. Because people lie all the time. But the ayah says, **وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ** And they believe to their core that they are correct.

They don't think that they're lying. They think that they're truthful. Well, how did they achieve? Why? How is that even possible? Well, we do this all the time. This is the whole point of this concept. The whole reason that I'm talking about this pillar, self-honesty, is because we do this as human beings all the time. When you're stuck with a reality that you don't like about yourself, there's different ways to go about it. We either are honest about it, and then we have to change it. We're honest about it. There's three things. Either you're honest about it, and you change it. You're honest about it, and then you live with the fact that you're wrong, and it hurts, and that's painful. You lie to yourself about it. And that slowly eases the pain.

It's one of three things. There's no fourth. One of these things is going to happen. The reason a polygraph works, the reason that a polygraph actually works, is because your body rejects lying. Your body hates when you lie. It doesn't like it. It's a part of your body. your psychological structure as a human being. You don't like lies. So all a polygraph is, it just picks up that reaction your body has when you lie. Your body can't stand it. So your heart rate changes and other aspects of your physiological and biological being changes. When they teach people, they teach Marines how to beat the polygraph. You must have heard this at some point in your life. How do they do that? It's a very simple thing that they teach them.

What do they teach them to do? Anyone know? No. Just believe your lie. Don't lie. They tell them, don't lie. Believe what you're saying. Believe what you're saying. If you ask me a question, and I don't believe, I want to lie, I just have to learn how to take that lie and make it my reality. Convince myself. Because once it's truth, my body relaxes, no problem.

I have no problem telling the truth. My heart rate doesn't go up, my body is happy. But when I lie, my body gets tense. And this is the reality for everyone. So the way you fix it is just you learn to believe, you convince yourself this is the truth. And you learn to do it very quickly. You learn how to perform this activity.

Obviously, it's a horrific thing to do. Like if you're learning to do this, it's a very dangerous thing because you distort your own reality really quickly. And it's hard at that point to figure out what lies from truth from lies. But this is how they do it. They learn to lie to themselves. Which is why Yom Kiyamah, they come and they swear to God. Ya Rabb, Wallahi, we didn't do this. That Allah has to bring back, pull back the records and show them the video of it. With the insight to their nufus. There it is. What do you mean? And then they're standing there, they're shocked. They're shocked, but then they remember. You take them back a bit, they remember. Yeah, that's true. I remember. I remember what I do.

When I started to lie to myself, I didn't want that to be the reality. So I told myself a different narrative. I kept on telling myself that narrative until I believed it. Once I believed it, I was okay. I was okay because I wasn't feeling the pain anymore. Now there's a certain degree of instability because your body knows, you know that there's a lie under all of it, but it's too far, it's too complex now. There's too many layers on top. You're too far away from it, so it's not that much of a problem. The reason that you have to perform this activity that I'm explaining to you, self-honesty, is because it's going to take you some time to rip off these layers.

When you first do this activity, you'll be truthful to yourself about one, two, three, four things. And they'll hurt a little bit because you have to stare. But you're not done, even if you do it well, even if you feel like you did a good job the first time. It's impossible to do this well the first time, or the second, or the third, or the fourth, or the fifth. Why? Because there are certain parts of you that you have complex lies. You have not only lied to others about it, you've lied to yourself about it. And you've accepted that lie. And you're sitting on it now. Nice and comfortable. Not really though. Not really comfortable because there's always some degree of instability. You know there's something wrong about this.

The reason that you have to change is because if you don't, you'll come and you'll be convinced that you're right and you're not. They're the ones who are the liars. Just because you believe that it's truthful right now doesn't mean that you're off the hook. You're still going to be held accountable for that. This concept is not a one-time activity. This self-honesty is your approach to life. It's your approach, how you approach life in general. You approach life by being self-critical. I use the word self-critical in the follow-up sessions a few times, and I want to make sure that it's clear. Self-critical doesn't mean that you self-loathe. I want to distinguish these two things very clearly. Self-loathing is not what you're asked to do.

You're not required to hate upon yourself. No, no. I want you to look at this concept in contrast to your self-value. Your self-value doesn't change. I'm not talking about your value. I'm not talking about arrogance or humbleness. That is something that is stable, and we're not going to talk about that. I'm not mixing them. So this activity of self-honesty or self-criticism is not based on you hating yourself. It's about learning the truth of your reality, knowing where exactly you are. Because you can't really move forward from an unidentified point. If you don't know where you are, you can't really move forward. You have to figure out where the point is. That takes time. You have to sit down. So this is why you're doing this. You may not like the point that you're starting from.

You may not be impressed by where you are. You may look at that and it will make you feel sad because you wish you were in a different position altogether. You told yourself you were in a different position, but you're not. A lot of us, most of us do this. would like to believe that we're in a better state in general than we are. But when we're honest about it, we're not. So it hurts, but that's all right. That's the only way that you can actually move forward is by being able to identify that you're not actually where you believe you are. So this piece, it's not an activity. It's not a one-time activity. This is an approach, how you approach life. You have to take feedback, and then you have to learn how to filter it.

Filter the feedback that you're taking from the world around you and use it to improve. If you're not self-critical, you will be critical towards other things. You are critical by nature. As a human being, you're very critical. You're capable of judging everything around you. If you're not self-critical, if you don't take that criticism, that strength that you have, that critical thinking piece, and direct it inwards, then you will 100% direct it outwards. You're going to criticize the person who is speaking to you or those who are. That's why when I'm doing this, either you listen to it and you benefit, meaning you say, you're probably right, I should think, or you come and you argue with me. No, no, you're wrong. You're critical. It's all about just where you want to direct your criticism.

Are you going to be critical of what we're saying and defend yourself versus are you going to listen and then criticize yourself and direct it inwards, which is what self-honesty is about. This is how you approach life in general. Any feedback that you receive, someone says something nice about you, or someone says something bad about you, someone compliments a job that you did, or someone frowns upon the job you did. They look at what you've done and say, this is not a very good job. As a human being, what are you supposed to do with all of this input that you're receiving? Do you accept all of it and take it to heart? Or do you reject all of it and refuse it?

So neither approach is really what the approach to life is that you have to have a certain way to filter this information. You say, okay, out of everything, you take this feedback, you open it up, you spread it. All right, this piece, this piece I can use. This piece, yes, this is true. Yeah, I can improve on that one. The rest of it, I don't need. You can't do that if you don't know where you are. If you're not honest with yourself, you can't do any of that. What are the odds that your approach to something in life is 100% correct? What are the odds that your approach to something in your life is 100%? What are your odds? Zero. Any other number is a problem.

If you offer any other number, if you believe that you're, if you say 1%, The odd that you are doing things perfectly, in any domain in life, is zero. It's impossible for you to be doing anything perfectly. Meaning, there's always room for you to improve. Always. You may be doing something 90%, but there's still 10% for you to improve. You may be doing that. So since the odds are zero, and we've agreed that there's always going to be room to improve, how are you going to figure out? That room to improve is. How are you going to figure out, okay, how can I become a little bit better here? If you don't know where you are, if you haven't, once you do this activity and you keep on doing it, you will start to learn kind of what you're doing well and what you're not doing too well, and even the things that you're doing well, how you can be a little bit better, how you can improve a bit.

And then you respond to the, it's like the analogy I give is you're driving a car. If you're driving a car and it's a straight path, that's the path. You have your hand on the steering wheel. If you hold it like this, what's going to happen? It's a straight path. What's going to happen? You don't let it move. It's a straight path and you hold it like this. You're going to

slam into a wall at some point. If you exaggerate your response to the terrain, if there's a little bit of a bump on this side here, and then you you're going to get off the path as well. So what are you doing the whole time? You're there with your hand on these small adjustments. These small adjustments. You're staying straight.

Why? Because you have to respond to the terrain. You have to respond to things. Your response is very, you've learned. You've learned. Why? Because you've achieved a certain degree of self-honesty on the road. Why? Because it's simple. It's simple. You've learned how the steering wheel works. You're looking in front of you. If you stop looking, this is not going to work. If you decide to close your eyes, very few people are that good to stay on a road. It's impossible. So you need to be seeing, you feel, and you respond to the terrain. This is the mechanism, this is the approach that you got. Same thing in life. You're going to get feedback. This feedback, some of it is going to be useful, and some of it is not going to be useful.

So the stuff that are not useful, you get rid of. The stuff that's useful, you keep, and you build on, and you learn from. And that is basically you just keeping the terrain, just holding the steering wheel, keeping yourself on the road. It only works if you're able to see yourself for who you are, what you are, and where you are. If you don't have that ability, then it's impossible. It's impossible. It's like driving blind. Okay, I think I'm on the road. I think the road is, you know, you can think, all right, by the time you open up, you're facing a wall and you're done. And this is the problem for most of us because we think we are in one position. No, no, you can't drive it.

You have to be able to exactly see. You have to see. What is the example here? The analogy is opening your eyes. For you to drive, you have to open your eyes. Self-honesty is just you opening your eyes. Here's where we are. Here's what we've achieved. Here's what we've failed to achieve. You see, the funny thing is that at no other point in life are you accepting, do you grant yourself positive feedback? You don't declare whether you're good at anything else in life. As a, for example, a resident in this hospital, a medical student, as a, you know, if you're doing articling as a lawyer, if you're going through teacher's college, if you're a university student, you're not the one who declares or decides if you're a good student or not, are you?

Like that's not, you don't get to say, I'm amazing. No, and you give yourself the, and you sign the degree and you sign it because someone else is going to decide or others are going to decide if you are competent or not. They're going to say if you're proficient at what you're doing or not. So why is it when it comes to your life in general, you get to decide that you're good? You can say, I'm a good person. Really? Please elaborate more. Elaborate on how you were able to make this judgment, how you were able to make this extremely critical call to describe yourself as this or that. We don't have the ability. to do this. That's what Yom Kiyamah is for. He'll describe us, subhanAllah.

He'll declare whether we did well or not. Self-honesty is just your approach to make sure that you are evaluating yourself all the time, to the best of your ability. Because your evaluation for life comes at the end, you have to learn to evaluate yourself until you get there. When you're going through a training program, they evaluate you. There are milestones to make to keep you on track. But if they don't have that, I studied in schools where there was just a final exam. That's it. It was 100% on the final exam. You have to value yourself as you go along yourself or else you'll come to the end and you fail because you thought you were doing well, but you weren't. You have to continue to value yourself.

So this is what self-honesty is. It's just your ability to keep on evaluating yourself and asking yourself questions. You'll never do this perfectly. There's no point in your life where you will do this perfectly. There's always going to be that, why you have to keep on doing it. The moment you stop doing this, the moment that you decide you're not going to be self-honest, you regress back almost all the steps that you lost, all the steps that you made. All the steps you made forward, you regress right back the moment you, because your nafs will just go back to that lying. It's more comfortable that way. It's easier. If we tell ourselves a lie, then we don't have to worry about this anymore.

We don't have to live with the cognitive dissonance that comes with the fact that we know what's right, but we don't want to do it, or we're not doing it. There's only three things. Either you're honest, you see the pain, the problem, and you fix it. Or you're honest, you see the pain, and you don't fix it, and then you live with that instability that comes with that. Or you cover it up nicely. You keep on covering it up until it can't be seen anymore. And then you just believe. It's like the pavement. Same thing. You just put one layer on it to make it look good. But it's not good. There's a problem. We know there's a problem there. It's going to cause an issue.

I want, at the end of this, to differentiate for you between two things that are important, not just in this exercise, but in general. It's one of the kind of maxims of Tezquia, one of the underlying understandings that you should have. There's a difference between moments and states in life. We tend to seek the moments. We tend as human beings to seek out moments, moments of happiness, moments of joy. And we tend to feel that if we can stack enough of them, then we'll be happy. We just need to stack enough of moments of happiness. Travel to this country, travel to that one, and we'll have a dinner here, and we'll go to this hotel, and we'll play here, and then we'll come back, and that week we'll have these people over, and then we'll go to watch the movies on this night.

These are just moments. These are moments. Moments of happiness, they don't mean, moments of anything don't really mean much. And a lot of people live that way. They make the weekend their moment. So they're miserable for five days, but they live because the weekend has a few moments of happiness. We live towards that, which is why they get depressed Sunday night because now the week has to start again. So we're living for moments. And we think that if we jump from one moment of joy to the other that we're happy. We're not. The only thing that will make you happy in life is a state. Islam is not about moments. It's about a state, an underlying state. If your underlying state is of a level where you are joyful or you are stable or you're at peace, then those moments are definitely helpful.

They're just add-ons. They're bonuses. But you won't be seeking them out so vigorously in life. The reason that people seek them out is because the underlying state is very low. Very low, it's a state of upset, of misery, of depression. And the reason that this state exists like that is because there's a certain discrepancy between who we believe we are, we would like to be, the show we're putting on, and who we actually are deep inside. Which is why at those certain moments people just are very down, very down. Well, why are you so down? You were just laughing uncontrollably a few moments ago. You were just having a great time with your friends. Why this? Because you came back to your state again. Came back to the state.

The state's not good. And you don't care about the state. You're not fixing the state. You're just adding good moments. You're just putting more. It's like Mario. You're just jumping from one thing to another, but what's under is just fire. Once you fall, you burn. So you

have to bring that up again. You have to bring that up. And then the moments are nice. That's actually when you can enjoy the moments because you stop; you're not anxious before the moment or after it. You're not worried about the moment. You got worried if the moment will come or not, And you're not worried about the moment ending so you can actually enjoy the moment, the moment because When you fix this problem the moments become way more meaningful in their own sense because then you get rid of certain problems surrounding it.

You're not worried about when it's going to come. Is there a problem in it? Am I going to get to do this? Am I going to be deprived of it? You're not worried during the moment of it actually ending and being over. Because the state that you're going to rebound to is a good one, it's a state that you have some satisfaction. The only way to achieve this, which is what Islam talks about. Islam is interested in states. States in Arabic will always be described with vowels. Sorry, forgive me, with nouns. This is like a little thing you can find in the Quran. Moments are verbs because they're just, you know, you're going for it. And then states are nouns. Follow this in the Quran.

I'm going to leave this for you to follow in the Quran. You're going to find Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala describes states for Muslims. They describe states. This is a state that they're in. And this is an important piece. And I'll talk about this more as we go along. There's a lot, kind of, there's a few more angles to it. But when you understand that it's a state that you're looking for, the reason that self-honesty is important is because it allows you to understand exactly where your state is. And then it gives you your only chance at improving that state, at pushing it forward. Because if you can't be honest about where your state is, how do you improve it? You can't improve it.

And then you're like, well, I have all the reasons to be joyful and happy and successful. So you're like, well, I'll put that front on. So you put that front on. And then, but you're not. But you're not. Like in reality, you're not that. So how do you? So it's hard for you to figure out. I can't understand. I can't understand why I'm not enjoying. It's not that hard to understand why. Because that's not your state. Your state is not this. Your state is something much less than that. But you have not been honest with yourself about it. You don't know. You haven't figured out why that's the case. What's missing in your life? What do you do once you do this? And that honesty, see, self-honesty brings you a certain degree of peace.

It brings you a certain degree of inner peace. Because that lie stops. So the polygraph piece fixes. Like you're not jittery anymore. Because at least you're honest. It's not good. The house is a mess. It's a wreck. Parts of it are on fire, parts of it are on fire, but at least my eyes are open and I can see it. You can pull the fire extinguisher off the wall and start putting this fire out, kick these homeless people out, get the raccoon out. You can start doing some stuff inside. It's a mess, but it's your mess, and you know what's inside now. And there's no point in lying to yourself if you're isolating yourself in a small piece of the house, a small little area. Everything's fine. Everything's fine. Everything's fine.

The house is burning down. But nope, my little area over here is fine. I'm good. The fan's on. I'm not too hot. No, no. It doesn't work that way. Honesty is just the ability to see it for what it is. And that's how you're going to increase your state. Because really, what's the point? If Islam is just moments, then you're missing out. Right? Islam is a state of peace. Muslimun. Right? It's a state of submission. You feel you're at peace with what's around. It doesn't mean that you're not working. No, no. Being at peace does not mean that you are not constantly holding yourself accountable. No, no. You're constantly telling yourself the

truth. You're constantly criticizing yourself, holding yourself accountable, being aware of your mistakes.

You're constantly doing it, but you're at peace as you do it. Because there's no discrepancy anymore between your reality and between how you see it. You see it for exactly what it is. And then this activity just becomes an approach to life. You keep on doing it. The more you do it, the better you become, and you start improving. So, you achieve that state of inner peace, even though you may not be doing well. There are people who achieve this who aren't Muslim. People who are not. You don't need to be Muslim to achieve this, by the way. You could be non-Muslim. All you have to do is just be honest with yourself. Just break. Just cut even. Say it as it is. So, people do that. They don't believe in God altogether.

But they're honest about it. Like, I don't know. I have no idea. Probably is. I probably didn't do much about it. And I'm probably going to hell at the end. And they somehow make peace with that. But they make peace with it. Whether it's for better or for worse, they make peace with it. And that gives them a certain degree of a state of inner peace. Where they at least know they're not lying to themselves anymore. When you keep on lying to yourself, you run into problems. One of the things that's going to come from self-honesty, you're going to have to start asking yourself the hard questions. Like, am I actually mu'min billah subhanahu wa ta'ala? Like, really? Do I truly believe this? Or am I just telling everyone that I do and I wish I did?

The difference between you actually believing in God and you enjoying the idea of believing in God, and you telling people that you believe in God. They're not the same thing, Yahi. They're very different. And you're not going to believe in God if you don't at least tell yourself, where are you now? Are you there? Or are you living a life filled with doubts? And every two, three times a week, you lose your iman, and then you regain it at some point later. You have to say this to you. You have to just sit there and say, here's where I am. I'm only moving maybe 45% of the time. And the rest of it, I'm not. Okay, now we're somewhere. We're getting somewhere here. Let's start. Let's see why this is the case.

You can't address doubts or address problems if you're not going to admit that you got them. You have to admit that you have them so that you can go and start asking questions and reading and learning and improving yourself. This is very important. Some people, their self-honesty leads them to saying, I'm not good at this, and I don't want to be good at this, and I don't care if I'm good at this. A part of this is I'm going to challenge that. No, no, you don't have that luxury. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, I will hold you accountable. So you have to fix it. You have to become better. But I'm saying if you're not religious, just doing that is helpful. And I know people, forgive me, white people do that really well.

They do it really well. They're just honest with themselves. And they just don't feel the need to lie. And yeah, I'm garbage in this realm of life. Yeah, I'm totally arrogant and I'm happy with it. If you're arrogant, but you're trying to act like you're humble, That's also painful. It's painful because there's lack of honesty in it. It's like, I would like to be humble, but I'm not. That's why we talk about self, because you have to learn, you have to make it a state. It has to become a state. Self-honesty, you start asking yourself, am I actually, or else that instability will eat you away, eat away at you. Instability will keep, it eats away at you. It's a jittering of the engine that ruins it with time, makes it, it doesn't work anymore.

So you have to ask yourself these questions. The way I'm going to present it for you today, and this is what I want you to do, and we'll end with this, inshallah, is the idea of, because it can be overwhelming. If you perform this activity appropriately, your first reaction to it is

going to be, 'this is too much.' I don't know how to, I can't process all of this. When you start opening your eyes a little bit to the truth, it's such a mess. You either close your eyes again because you don't want to see what's there, or you look around and it's just absolutely overwhelming. I don't even know where to begin. Which room do I begin? Where do I start? I don't know what to say.

I don't even know how to begin describing myself. So a way to do this, a way that's helpful, in my opinion, is to go through roles, is to think about your roles. The way we just, you are not your roles. But it's a way to box in or compartmentalize your existence in a way that you can actually process it. So think about your roles. I am, for example, I'll just project this on myself. So I'm a father. That's not who I am. That's not who I am, but that's one of my roles in life. You have to differentiate between who you are and your role. They're not the same thing. But a good way to begin this journey of self-honesty is to be honest with myself about how I'm doing in one of my roles.

But really what self-honesty is, is for me to learn how to differentiate myself between me and my roles. One of my roles, I'm a dad. That's not who I am. I am different. Another role is I'm a son. But again, that's not who I am. For example, when I say, I don't know how to put this. I don't want to say something that's going to be, okay, another role is I'm a friend. But at some point, maybe I don't have any friends. So I'm not a friend anymore. That makes sense? Like these are rules. Something can happen and you're not that anymore. But I'm always going to be me. Like I'm always going to be me. The moment I'm not me, I'm dead. Like I'm not here. As long as you're around, you're you.

So there's a difference between you and the roles that you play. The roles that you play in life. The concept of *istikhlaf* that we have in the Quran is really you being responsible, being a steward regarding the roles that you carry. Like carrying your roles appropriately. If you're a father, you're a good father. If you're a son, you're a good son. If you're a friend, you're a good friend. If you're a sibling, you're a good sibling. If you're an employee, you're a good employee. If you're an employer, you're a good employer. If you're a leader, you're a good leader. If you're an artist, you're a good artist. If you're a professional, you're a good professional. Whatever it is that you do, think about the different roles that you can carry.

You can carry a lot of different roles. The more advanced you are in life, the more skill sets you have, the more roles you carry. The less, the less. But none of these roles are you. They're just hats that you put on and you take off throughout your day. Things that you do. But then there's you. You have to learn the difference between you and your roles. So this is why this is a helpful exercise, first of all it allows you to distinguish differentiate between your you in your absolute form, just your the simplest stuff for the purest of forms and all the other roles that's one thing. The second thing is that to begin performing self-honesty, begin it by being honest about how well you're doing within these roles.

The more roles you can think about, the more you can do this. So one of your roles, you're *عبد الله سبحانه وتعالى*. That's kind of who you are in description. Because that never goes away. As a son, at some point, or a daughter, you may not be that at the moment. They may be gone. So you're not that anymore. Not really. You can do maybe something nice to your parents, but it's much less of a worry at that point. But you're always going to be *عبد*. Because *الله سبحانه وتعالى* is always there. So this description specifically, that's why one of the four focuses, is that you're always asking yourself how good of a servant you are, because this never goes away. You're a teacher. You're a student of knowledge. You're a mentor.

You're a mentee. All of these things, they're all roles that you play. You have to ask yourself, how well am I doing this? Am I good? Do I actually see myself that way? So a way to approach self-honesty is by defining your roles, looking at what roles do you carry right now in your life, and then start asking yourself, How well am I doing it? Where am I? As you do that, you make some progress on your roles, but you also start to differentiate between all those roles and me and yourself. Because if you don't do that, then you'll come to God with one of those roles. And that's a misfortune. I don't speak to God as a physician. I don't speak to God as a dad. I don't. You understand?

I don't come to Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, as a sheikh. It's a misfortune if I did. You have to understand how problematic that is. If I come and speak to God, this is sheikh. This is an absolute misfortune. Dr. Fulan is asking to meet. No, no, no. These are roles. These are roles he gave you. He gave you to hold you accountable for how well you did them. How will you perform them? You have to speak to him as yourself. But if you don't even know who you are, then how do you speak to him? You can't. You can't. You can't speak to God. You can't even have a conversation. You can't even make, you don't even know what you're doing because you don't even know who you are.

You have to speak to him as you. Not at anything else. No hats on. Just you. But you don't know who you are, then you have a problem. You have a real problem. That's why this is so critical. It's so important for you to learn how to do this. Where you can just see yourself for who you are. For better or for worse. For better or for worse, you're okay with it. And I can sit there and say, Ya Rabb, this is your abd who is muqassir. This is your abd who is Asi, sitting with you. I am in front of you and I am sinful. All I have is shortcomings. And I am ashamed of my behavior. That's fine. But that's how you have to be honest about it.

That has to be actually how you feel about things. Because you looked at it, and you are. This is horrible. Nothing I do is good. I don't know even how to speak to you. I don't understand how you even would accept me. But at least that's honest. If you come to him like that, subhanAllah, it's a game changer for you in life. It's an absolute game changer. Now, it came up three or four times, and I'm going to point it out one more time. Again, this is not self-loathing. The goal here is not to beat yourself. They call it in Arabic, Jald al-that. Syrians are absolute monsters at this. We're amazing. We're very good at Jald al-that. It's not because we're self-critical. No, no, everything is bad at all times.

It's always us. It's almost a culture that exists within our yahanis. If you get to know it, this is a very strong culture. That's not what I'm trying here to say to you. No, no. We're not trying to self-loathe. We're not trying to feel less about ourselves. If you understand that your value is constant, then you're able to look at yourself and say, you're not doing well. This is absolute garbage performance. And still, you know, that your value is constant. It's not touched by anything. Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala granted you that value. It's divine in nature. So there's nothing to change about that. It's not going to go up or go down. So you're not feeling suicidal or hating yourself or becoming depressed. You're just being honest. This is not good.

This is not good. But that honesty is the key for you to move forward. It's how you actually learn. So take some time and do the same exercise. Just use roles. Think of all of your roles that you play in your life. What do you do? And you'll find that I gave you some, but you'll come up with more. You'll come up with more roles, things that you know about yourself, a role that you play in your life. Write that down and then think about yourself and hold yourself accountable. When you do these things, First of all, you're improving on your self-honesty because you're holding yourself accountable within these roles. But you're also

learning to differentiate between you and all those roles. Because you have to put those roles aside.

You have to put them aside. And then you have to come to Allah, subhanAllah, and you have to sit there with yourself as just you. It's your name. Fulan ibn Fulan. Because, I'll end with that. That's how you're called Yawm al-Qiyamah. That's how you come Yom Kiyamah. Make sure Yom Kiyamah is not the first time you discover or are introduced to yourself. Make sure that Yom Kiyamah is not the first time that you're actually introduced to yourself. Because that's painful. That's really painful. The first time that you find out who you are is on the Day of Judgment when Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala strips you from all of these roles, removes all of these hats, and leaves almost nothing that's worth lying about or lying to, then you're in trouble.

So make sure that this happens now, so that you're nice and comfortable with that state, that very pure a simple state. So I'll end with that inshallah ta'ala. I hope that was a benefit to you.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nYteUJek0g>