

**Tazkiyah Halaqa**  
**Self-Honesty – Session 4**  
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May 18, 2025  
Wellness Centre, London, Ontario

## Transcription

Allah Ta'ala this morning series of the Tazkiya series that we started a couple of weeks ago or a number of weeks ago now and the concept of self-honesty is still what we're going to be talking about, and I have to warn you that most of these most of the concepts that I will talk about over the duration of this series, that will go on for quite some time, will be long, meaning each concept will take maybe two to three months, maybe longer, depending on the concept and depending on, obviously, how much interaction there is and how many exercises there are attached to it. And self-honesty is one of the pillars of Teskia, so it's going to take a significant amount of time before we can move on.

And that should also point out to you or help you with the fact that it takes so long that it may be difficult. I don't expect you to perfect it from the first try or second or third or fourth. It takes time to learn how to do this properly and in a helpful manner, which is why we take time to talk about it. It was simple and easy, then you would spend a week or two and then we would move on. But because it's something that takes time, we spend maybe three or four months talking about it. And what I asked you to do last time, or the example I gave you, was to look at yourself through roles. You perform self-honesty through the roles that you carry, the hats that you wear in your life.

And this is something obviously that that has a different significance or has a unique significance to it. And I'm going to point that out a little bit today because it's important for me to explain it to you. The roles that you carry in life is what Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala refers to in the Quran when he says, *إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً*. When he talked about the creation of Adam alayhi salam, he said to the Malaika, indeed I'm going to put on earth a Khalifa, a predecessor, or a steward. And this term is a very important and unique Quranic term that Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala uses to describe the human being.

He describes the human being as a steward. It's one of the two coordinates that we are supposed to use in understanding ourselves. Number one, we're a steward. We're responsible for the well-being of ourselves and others. Those around us which we are caring for, we're caregivers. That's what khalifa means. And then the other one is that we're servants of Allah. We're ibad, the concept of abudiyya. So those are the two coordinates that basically define or identify where we are in this world. That's kind of who we are, right? So when I ask you to think of yourself without these hats, I'm trying to help you see your coordinates a bit more clearly. Because you're all over the map because you're doing a lot of different things.

Removing your roles is not so that you have no idea who's left or who you are. It's just so you can see very clearly who you are, like just exactly where you belong on the map. You are a khalifa. You are a steward. You're a caregiver. You're responsible. You are all responsible. Shepherds. The word steward is similar. The word shepherd is the figurative meaning of the word ra'i. Ra'i also means sponsor. Really, what puts all these words together is someone who's responsible for someone else, someone who's going to be looking out for the well-being or the betterment of something or someone else, whether it's

a person, it's people, whether it's the planet, whether it's animals, whether it's life, whatever it is. Whatever it is that you can be responsible for, because you can't be responsible for everything all at once.

That's insane. But you can be responsible for certain things. That's why the Prophet, alayhi salatu wasalam, would use this terminology. All going to be held accountable, going to be asked questions. He's responsible for that which you were responsible for. And then he gives examples of the man in his household and the wife within her house with her children. Everyone's going to be responsible for something. We don't all have the exact same responsibilities. So we already know that this is how we're supposed to be seen as human beings, whether it was as a Khalifa and an Abd, and it comes together. I'm responsible, and my responsibility is going to be practiced through service. Because I'm Abd, right? So when you put them together, this is the definition. This is how you understand yourself.

Allah gave me certain intellectual faculties. He gave me abilities that maybe other mammals or creations on the planet don't share with me. They're very unique to who I am. And because of that, I'm responsible. And the way I'm going to manifest this responsibility, I'm going to be a caregiver. The way I'm going to be a caregiver is through the fact that I'm a servant to Allah is through service. So the only way you can fully see that is if you remove these hats for a little bit. You step out of your, you just remove your roles. Because a lot of these roles you don't even choose. Some of them you do, but many of them you don't. They're handed to you. You're a son, you're a father, you're a spouse, you're a sibling, you're a friend.

You're an employee. Maybe you're an employer. You're a supervisor. You're being supervised. You're a mentor and a mentee and a teacher and a student of knowledge. It goes on and on. There's a lot of things. So this is not something that you're not supposed to do. No, no. You're actually, self-honesty is when you're able to identify each one as its own domain. You see how well you're doing them, doing these roles, or how badly you are doing these roles, so that you actually carry the responsibility. You carry the concept of stewardship appropriately, or else you won't do it well. We'll suck at what we do if we don't make sure that we are looking at each of these domains appropriately and being honest with them.

But then, just to make sure that you don't lose track of things, remove these hats. Just remove them all. And then what's left is just the fact that you are a caregiver. That's who you are. The point of doing this exercise, kind of getting trying to see who you are without any of these roles, it's not so that you stop doing them really well. No, that's not. It's the opposite. I want you to do them really well. Just to be able to identify the consciousness that is left under all of it. Because you are still a consciousness. Even if you remove all of these roles, you're still a Fuad. There's still something about you. You're still there. Now, I'm going to explain to you how that would look.

It's really devastating to describe it this way, but I think for a second you can hear me talk about it. There's a way where you could lose all of these roles. There's a moment in life where enough could happen within a few minutes that could remove all these roles, or a series of events could occur where you don't have these roles anymore. May Allah protect all of you because you don't want this scenario in any form or manner to actually occur. But it could happen. Someone could lose his family fully and no longer be a spouse or a father or a sibling or a son. All that's gone. All in one. And then you get fired from your job. And then you can lose your friends. You think about it, when you think about it.

This happened. Can you think of an example? No, of course, a prophetic example. More? No, no, there's one, someone who lost more. Think of someone who lost. Ayub, Ayub alayhi salam. Ayub lost everything. Ayub lost everything. Ayub. Ayub as an example that's worthy of thinking about, and he's a very important example in the Quran of this. Ayub alayhi salam was a prophet who had certain things. Ayub was very popular amongst his people. A very unique example of prophecies. So Ayub alayhi salam, unlike the Prophet alayhi salatu wasalam Muhammad and other prophets, when he brought his prophecy, people didn't hate him for it. He was so popular and loved that they still liked him. Okay, you're a prophet, you bring this, we're not accepting everything you're telling us, but they still liked him.

He was wealthy, he had a lot of wealth, he was very well supported, he had a lot of children, and he was well known amongst people. So he didn't lose his popularity. Blacks, his popularity probably grew a little bit. Granted, not everyone followed him and believed in him, but they didn't make him their enemy. It was a very unique example of prophecies, because you don't have a lot of examples like that. So Ayyub was doing well. On a social level, he was well-respected. Financially, he had a lot of wealth. Family-wise, he had a wife that loved him and children that took care of him. They were close to him; he had a lot of them. He was someone who was able to perform Dawah. He had followers.

And then within a very short period of time, he lost all of it. He lost all of it. He became extremely ill, so he lost his health. So he was no longer able to be a mentor or an active prophet. He was still a prophet as in you would come to him, but his activeness in prophecy was no longer there. He lost all of his wealth. So he's no longer someone. He lost all of his popularity. All of his children died. All of his children died. All of them. And he was left like that for eight decades. That's how Ayyub alayhi salam lived his life. For eight decades is how he lived his life. Or at least that's what some of the Mufassirin point out. I don't think it's that long.

I think it was probably less than that. But regardless, he spent at least a decade of his life in this situation, where he was stripped from all of his roles out of his head. He had nothing left. But he's still there. He's still a person. He's still a consciousness. The question is, who is that consciousness? You have to describe it. You actually have to sit down and describe who that is. Because that is a clean slate. There's nothing on it. It's an empty page. That consciousness is whoever you want that to be. Because it has no role. It has no role to play. Think about it. It's untouched land. It's uncharted territory. It's just a consciousness. It's just a mind that can think and senses that can take input.

It has really no description. The roles, A & E, help describe this consciousness. But now without the roles, who is this? And you're still there. An example of this is a very good one. We see people, I'm sure there's many individuals living there who have went through this, who have lost everything all at once. And it's difficult. It's difficult to describe yourself once you've lost your roles. There are people who take their lives because they lost one role. They'll take their own lives because they lost one role, because they don't understand. Because the consciousness that underlies it all is not defined, they don't understand who they are. The roles are a consequence of a well-described consciousness, of a fu'a that is clear in terms of who it is.

The roles are just manifestations, not the opposite. You are not the collection of your roles. You understand who you are, and because of that, you are able to carry different roles. It's the other way around. This is what I'm trying to explain. Self-honesty will help you understand this, because you will go back and you'll break it all down. They're able to go and kind of, under the microscope, look at yourself and see who you are and see how well

you're doing these roles. But you're doing these roles based on a primary description of who you are at your basic level, at your purest level of existence. If that is not described, if it's no one, then you're doing this the other way around. It's your roles, the collectiveness of your roles that are defining you.

So if those are taken away, you don't know who you are. We see this all the time. We see people who are extremely wealthy, extremely healthy, very famous, then they retire and they become extremely depressed and they overdose and they die. And you wonder, why would you do this? Because the only way they knew who they were was through the role that they played. Being a professional athlete or being a famous movie star or rock star, actor, or whatever. When you took that away from them, they didn't know who they were anymore. They had no idea who the heck they were, so they couldn't live. Because when you look at it from outside, you're like, 'This makes no sense.' If I was that person, I would be happiest.

I have all the money. I have all the fame. I've achieved so much in my life. Yeah, I see. No, not really. Not if it's not built properly. Not if the building bricks were not put the way they're supposed to. Yes, technically speaking, this person has the highest probability of being a satisfied, fulfilled individual. But most of the time, they're not because of a flaw in how the whole system was built to begin with. I'm inviting you to build the system correctly. So that, Inshallah, regardless of what happens in your life, if all of the roles are somehow taken away, like Ayub, you still know who you are. You're still Abd, you're still a Khalifa. You still know exactly what your coordinates are. You know what you're here to do.

You're a caregiver through service. You know who is you're serving. You know the fact that, well, now my wings have been snipped off and I don't care for as many people. I'm not allowed to. I'm not as wealthy. I'm not as healthy. So it's okay. My circle of influence has come small. All right, that's fine. Well, who's left in it? We'll care for them. Oh, there's no one left in it but me. I'll care for myself then. I'll care for me because that's who I was put here to be in charge of. To begin with, Allah uses an ayah in the Qur'an that talks about this.

Indeed, you're going to come to us as individuals. The way we created you the first time. This is what he says in the Quran. The way you were created the first time around. Nothing. Just bare. Just you. No additional descriptions. You don't come to Allah as Hajj. Abu Fulan, Dr. Fulan. No, no. You just come to Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala with the bareness of just who you are. You are your simplest form. So if you don't know who that is, if you've never described that consciousness or defined it, you haven't defined yourself, this is who I am. And because of that, I'm going to be a good father or a good spouse or a good friend or a good colleague. And I'm going to hold myself accountable to the description of who I am through my roles, through my roles.

And he takes away, SubhanAllah, out of one role for me, I'll put another role in. It may not be as flashy as the one before, but it's still a role. Someone who's ill and you can take care of it. Maybe he goes from being the CEO of a company taking care of a full company. Now he's just taking care of plants and making sure that they stay alive and watering them. Islam at least doesn't matter. If the day of judgment occurs and you have a small tree in your hand, then put it in the ground. You're responsible for the tree. That's your job. Just put it in. Abul Muttalib understood this. He wasn't even, Abul Muttalib understood this. He went to Abraha and said, give me my camels.

I'm the lord of the camels. My job are the camels. I'm responsible for the camels. Give me my camels. The Kaaba has a lord that's responsible for it. I wasn't given that responsibility. He'll take care of it. Give me the camels. He even understood this in its simplicity. You're responsible for whoever you're responsible for. But you have to understand that that is your definition. That's who you are. You are a caregiver through service. You're an abd and you're a khalifa. And that's the definition of your consciousness. This has to be the clarity that you end up with at the end, when you sit down and you look at yourself. So even if you're stripped from all of your ranks, and you're removed from your environment, and you're plucked out of it and put somewhere else,

where you don't carry any of the ranks that you carried somewhere else, and you lose your social status and your financial status, and you lose, and I'll talk about Ayub a little bit more next week, inshallah, like I'll go into his story, but I'm just sparking some interest in you to read it yourself, and maybe try to look, you'll learn, you'll find out all of the, all the stuff that I'll say next week about Ayub, you'll find out by yourself, just read the story, but I'm just giving you something to start with. You'll still, wherever you land, you're still someone, your consciousness does not cease to exist if I remove all of your roles. And if you know who you are, if you know what you are, if you have that, that's why self-value can only be determined if you have self-honesty.

The only way you can be humble and confident, which is the two things we're looking for, is if you define yourself well, if you know exactly who you are and what you are. You know that you're human, and regardless, no one can take away your humanity. If you sin, you're not human anymore. If you do a million sins, you stop being human? No. Your humanity is: you're as much human as the pious of the pious. You're equally human to the most pious person ever, so your value doesn't change. And the other way around, no matter how much you achieve or how wealthy you become, you don't become more human. Your value stays exactly the same. You can't really actually fix self-value if you don't have a certain degree of honesty.

You have to be able to look at yourself honestly. There's no hope of redemption in life if you don't have honesty. If you don't have self-honesty, you can't redeem yourself. You can't actually fix things. The only hope is if you're capable of identifying what you did. In your life, let's move on to something different to think about. You know that you've lied to yourself. You've done it. Everyone has done it. Everyone has done it. And I'm going to give you an example of where you can probably think of it. We all do it whenever there's a dispute of some sort. If I fight with you, and we get upset with one another, then I start lying to myself about what happened.

Because I need to convince everyone of the narrative, of what actually occurred, so that the story is clearly in my favor. So even though there are details to the story that would make it not in my favor, I need to convince you that they didn't happen. And the only way I can do that in a convincing manner, the only way I can persuade you, is by making sure that I believe it. I have to lie to myself about it. So I tell myself the story. I tell myself the story in a way that works for me, that sounds better than it actually was. And I keep on telling myself that story until I believe it, so that I can make you believe it, so that I can actually argue that I was the one.

We do this all. You've done this. You've done this before many times. Don't lie to you. We all did this in our lives. Multiple times. Especially if you're good at arguing. Especially if you're strong. Then you've told yourself a story that didn't happen. Or at least, so what you say is, okay, it happened, but it wasn't exactly like that. There's maybe a few, okay, tell

me, I want to know the details that weren't exactly like that. But you're not going to say them because you know those details change the whole story. A small sequence difference. That this happened just a little bit before, A, it happened a little bit before, B, not after it. But I told it that way because it makes me look way better.

Because if it happened the other way around, it's not going to look as good. It's a little detail. The other guy that I'm arguing with isn't as good. That's what the Prophet ﷺ would say, right? لَعَلَّ بَعْضَكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَحْسَنَ بِحُجَّتِهِ مِنْ بَعْضٍ Some of you will be more articulate in telling their story than others. Even if I, and if I give you, if I rule in your favor because you told a better story, and there was no way to, then I'm giving you a piece of Jahannam.

Know that. Just because I ruled in your favor doesn't mean that you deserve it. You still have to carry, the story that you told has to be true. And if it wasn't true, you're going to be in trouble. The challenge of self-honesty for all of us. So self-honesty is not that difficult in general. You can do it. It's difficult on the topics where you have told yourself lies, and now you believe them. This is where it's difficult. It's at the topic, on the issues, where you have convinced yourself of falsehoods, because it makes things look better. And what I'm saying is the following: You have different options in life. You can be honest with yourself and with the world. You can be honest with yourself and lie to the world.

You can lie to yourself and lie to the world. Two is better than three, right? Number two is better than number three. Honest with yourself, lying to the world, way better than lying to yourself and the world. Because number two, at least there's hope of redemption. There's hope of you fixing it. Number three, you've lost that hope. How do you fix something that you don't believe is broken? How do you fix something that you don't see anything broken in it? You're looking at it, it's fine, it's fine. The story, I told the truth. This is my truth now. You hear that in modern, my truth. The most objective word in the world, we've subjectified it. Your truth. What do you mean, your truth? This is a thing. There's your truth and my truth.

There's the truth. It's not mine and yours. But because this is how we've done. We don't want to. We're not willing to accept the fact that this is an objective term. It's the only objective term I can think of. How are courts going to work if there's my truth and your truth and the judge's truth and the jury's truth? There's one truth. And we're all looking for it. Make up my own truth as I go along. This is a problem. I have to give these examples, not because I want to, but because it's important. The reason sometimes, so children who are abused, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala protect our children, they have to tell themselves different stories to survive. They have to lie to themselves in order for them to survive.

They have to tell themselves a story. They have to tell themselves that something else happened. And they confound lies one over the other in order for them to survive. Because if they don't tell themselves lies, they can't deal with the brutality of what actually occurred to them. The truth is so brutal that they can't handle it. So they have to tell themselves lies in order for them to survive. Which is why children who get abused end up extremely mentally ill. Because they started lying to themselves way too early. Way too early. And the lies were on issues that were fundamental to their self-identity. Self-honesty helps you identify yourself. It gives you clarity on self-identity, right? We just explained that a moment ago. Meaning you're able to see yourself in your simple form.

You're an Abd, you're a Khalifa, this is who you are. Everything is going to result from that, not the other way around. You don't define it backwards, you define it forwards. But because they started lying to themselves so young, it's hard to fix it for them now. I mean,

it's difficult. And these individuals will struggle for the majority of their lives. And Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala, Allah knows He forgives them for all this. Because it wasn't their choice to begin with. But it does not, and even if you did go through that, and you were able to somehow manage to become a sane adult, then dealing with that is healthy. Like, it's actually helpful for you. Removing those lies, and accepting that this is what actually occurred.

And dealing with it, it's painful, but it's actually very therapeutic, and it's very important for us to, you know. Why is this important? An example for it is the example of Sayyidina Ka'b. I'm going to just quickly point him out. Sayyidina Ka'b ibn Malik, he and the three guys who didn't go to the Battle of Tabuk, when Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala talks about the story, when he describes it at the end, when the story is over, he says, يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ Be mindful of Allah and be with the honest.

Sayyidina Ka'b, he tells a story in Sayyidina Bukhari. It's a long story, but it's probably one of the most interesting ones to hear because you get to hear Sayyidina Ka'b's inner struggle. He tells a story with his inner voice being recorded. He records his inner voice in the story, so it's absolutely fascinating. And he tells, he says very clearly, I had to make a decision at one point. Do I tell him the truth, or do I lie to him? I can easily lie to him, tell a story that makes a lot of sense. He'll be happy with it. He'll make istaghfar for me. I don't get in any trouble. And I attested to Allah, Most High and Exalted. And I'm good. I'm good and no one cares.

No one has anything, like no one's going to go rattling on, tell on me. It's fine. Everything will be fine. Or I just tell him the truth, which to him is useless. It's going to make him upset. I'm going to get in trouble. He couldn't see what's the point of telling him the truth in this example. There's no point. There's no gain for anybody. The battle's over. It was successful. I've never missed anything else before. It was just a silly mistake that I made. If I just give a good excuse, he'll be happy with it. He couldn't see at the beginning what the gain was in him telling the truth to the Prophet. So here's the thing that you're going to think about today.

In your pursuit of self-honesty, as you learn to use it as an approach to life rather than a single, like a one-time activity or a multiple times activity, it's an approach to life. You just keep on holding yourself accountable and questioning yourself, not in a way where you lose your confidence, but in a way that you grant yourself space to improve and become better at that which you're not doing too well. As you do this, you're going to run into two distinct terms. These terms are important to understand. There are reasons, and there are excuses. And they're not the same. They're not the same at all. An excuse is something that you use to justify why you are where you are, or why you are behaving the way you're behaving.

It's something to rationalize it. to cushion the fall, to soften, because it's just an excuse. A reason is regarding causality. What you're interested in are the reasons. Why am I doing this? Not so I can justify it to myself, but as in, what is the reason that I'm doing this? There's always a reason. If you can identify the reason, then you've actually uncovered something important. You've just unveiled an aspect of your life that now you can look at. And if you're going to figure out the reason for that, you can go back far enough, you figure out the whole, it's a sequence. The sequence that is landing you where you are. Excuses are different. Excuses end with the, meaning it all ends with the excuse. There's no backtracking.

It's just, this is why, and this is a, This justifies it, so I don't need to ask any more questions. I don't need to change this because there's an excuse to it. So you have to be able to identify, as you do this, the difference between an excuse and a reason. Your nafs will only give you excuses. It will only offer you excuses. It's very good. It's been practicing since it was three. It's been doing this since it was three years old. You have a three-year-old. There's always an excuse for why the mistake was done. There's always an excuse. He always has something ready of why this happened. And he feels no remorse whatsoever. Zero remorse. The world is fine. Why? Because the reason for this, the excuse for this is perfect.

To help a child, they say, no, no, that's not the reason. What's the reason? They can't. And I've tried. He doesn't have the mental capacity yet to be able to give a reason. He can only give you an excuse. Because excuses, they're easier to accept. Self-honesty hurts. This lie is way better. This lie feels better. It makes you less angry. It makes me look less bad. I don't have to change anything. It's all good. I'll just give you an excuse. That's why when you're raising children, you have to teach them as they grow up. Don't give me excuses. I want the reason. So, what we do in parenting sometimes is we say we don't want an excuse, but then we don't ask for what we should be asking for.

What you need to ask for is the reason. Why did you do this? What's the reason? And they'll say, what will they say? Anyone know? What does a teenager say when you ask them? I don't know, right? I don't know. And then I say, 'I don't know.' Wallahi ab afaidi. Don't ever say that again. If you ever attended my halaqat, never, never as an adult will you say, 'I don't know.' If you don't know, you will stay quiet and you'll think about it because it's an absolutely unacceptable answer. I don't know. Who is supposed to know why you did what you did? What is this? What answer is this? I don't know. Who do I go to? Please, direct me to the person I go and ask about why you behaved this way or didn't behave that way.

I don't know. Who is supposed to know? This is the silliest thing ever. I don't know. You did it. No one else forced you to buy it, but you don't know? What are you saying? What are you saying? This is like this. You can't say that. No, no, no. You're going to know. I make him stand there. Until you tell me, you have to tell me why. Or you're going to stand here until the Fajr. You have to tell me. I need to know the reason. Then they'll tell you. They will. They will tell you why. Just hold them. Just hold it. They will tell you why. I'll give you an excuse. I don't accept the excuse. Tell me why you did this. And then they'll say. I was frustrated.

I was this. I was upset with something. All right, good. Well, why were you upset? All you have to do is ask four whys in a row, and you'll arrive at the truth. You'll arrive at the honest truth. And only then can you start fixing things, is when you ask yourself that question. So make sure it's very clear to you, the difference between reasons and between excuses, because they're not the same thing. In this story, in what it is that we're trying to achieve, You have to be able to differentiate between them. Your first impulse, when you ask yourself, when you perform a little bit of self-honesty, and you start looking at your roles, and today, for example, I'm going to do it, I'm going to ask you to do something, like we did it through the rules, I want you to go back and do that again, but this time, be able to define or describe your own consciousness.

You have to define it. It doesn't come defined. It's just a conscious, it's a clean slate. You have to define it. So define it as Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala did, and make sure that that's clear to you. That you continue to reinforce that idea. But there's another way to do self-honesty. Instead of using the hats, you can do it through circumstances or through ethics

and values. Meaning, you look at the major values that the world believes in, or that you claim to believe in, for example, honesty, and trustworthiness, and compassion, and kindness, and perseverance, and patience, all of these beautiful values, and ask yourself how you're doing regarding those values. And the only way you can do that is by remembering circumstances, or incidents, or occurrences where that was being tested, meaning that was under scrutiny.

There's no point in, like, honesty is easy to perform if the question you're being asked is an easy question or the answer is something that's impressive about yourself. Of course, you're going to be honest because you want to be. It's when you're being asked something that's not nice about you and you have to tell the truth. That's where your honesty is being tested. Same thing, Yanni, when it comes to your compassion. When you're in a good mood, you like the person in front of you. It's not impressive if you're compassionate towards them. It's when you're upset or you're tired or the person in front of you you despise. Being compassionate now actually matters. So hold yourself, see yourself through not just your roles, forget about the hats, see yourself through your ability to adhere to different ethics, to actually perform the value appropriately, and ask yourself that question.

Am I able to do this, am I doing it well? Am I truly compassionate? Am I truly trustworthy? Am I truly patient? How close am I to being in a position where it's good? Or am I far away from that? And that's another way to do. That's what I want you to do in terms of self-honesty this week. Just look at yourself through your roles one more time and define your consciousness. Define who you are at your basic level if you were to lose everything. May Allah not allow that to happen to any of you, inshallah. Your roles only increase, inshallah. They never decrease. Understanding who's under all that is important. But now look at yourself through, not roles, but rather through examples or circumstances or incidences that occur to all of us within our lives.

And do it that way and see if that will help you a little bit to understand who you are. And then define as you go through that what reasons and what excuses you offer. Learn to sort through the excuses. I did it this way because, well, because I'm always getting the short, I'm always being mistreated by Fulan, or my luck is always bad, and they always have the advantage. This is not a reason. This is an excuse. You're making it sound that it's okay. Excuses make it, when you're trying to make what you did wrong, or what you didn't do right, sound that it's not a big deal. It's not a problem. A reason is where you define clearly. It was a moment of weakness. I was weak.

I sold out on this one value that I had. Well, why did I do that? Well, maybe because that value is not as strong as I thought it was. Maybe it's not as much as a value. And then one of the sisters brought it up in our session. I thought it was a good idea. I need people to say things. I don't know why. I need people to say it so that I feel like we can move on. She pointed out, she said, when I questioned myself, I found out that I just didn't care. That's why. Perfect. The problem of apathy. This is a reason. And this is actually a very important discovery, realization for yourself. You'll realize that the reason you did this is because this topic specifically, I just don't care about it.

I just don't care. It doesn't matter to me. It's not important, so I'll behave in whatever way. Like I wasn't compassionate towards this client. Or I wasn't kind. You're questioning yourself. You're kind of being honest. I wasn't. Well, why weren't you kind to this person? Because I don't care about them. Because I couldn't care less about this. Well, why don't you care? Don't give up now. This is the beginning of the, you just caught the string. Pull, pull on this a little bit. Pull, tug, the end of this is where you'll figure things out. Why don't

you care? Why is this not important? Well, because I've never really believed, to begin with, that this is a value that carries any merit.

I don't feel that being kind to others makes a difference. Why? Why don't you feel that? Well, the more you fold, you'll find that there's misconceptions, there are bad experiences. Even though, remember we talked about values, or maybe, I can't say remember because I just did the exercise, but we talked about values, right? And I gave the example of the black box. It's like there's what you say you believe and what you really believe. Sometimes you have to kind of flip the lid, break the lid off and see what you actually believe. When you do self-honesty, when you perform this, all you're doing is figuring out what you really believe. What the reality, what you really actually believe.

Not what the Quran says that you can quote to your kids or your friends and what you would like to believe that you believe, the stuff that you feel. Beautiful. I would love to be someone who believes these things. Good for you. Alhamdulillah, inshallah. I don't care. You can continue the shirat. It doesn't make a difference to me. Like I said, the middle one is better than the third. For you to be honest with yourself and lying to other people is better to me than lying to yourself and others. Obviously, number one is the best, but number two is fine by me. Just stick to that. At least don't lie to yourself because it's the only way you're going to be able to fix things. But you'll figure out what you believe, what you really believe.

And then you'll start, okay, I need to fix this. How do I fix this? How do I change this core belief? And the example that I give the Shabab is, for example, when it comes to shying away with your eyesight from Haram. And this, when you're honest with yourself, when someone's honest with themselves, and this is not a hard honesty for Shabab, it's just pretty, why do I do it? Don't give excuses. Well, it's summer in Canada. It's an excuse. Why? Why don't you? And then you pull the thread along. I just don't think it's a big deal. That's why. I just don't think it's a big deal. All right, good, good. Now take a deep breath and just sit there and look at all that. That's honest.

I don't think it's a big deal. Is it a big deal? Well, now you're on a different journey. Now you're on a journey for truth. Now you understand sin, man, and feel, you see. Salman, what about him? He was an honest dude. Salman, in fact, was an honest guy. There was not an atom of self-deception in him. That's the only thing about Salman, is that he just totally told, he couldn't lie to himself. If it didn't make sense, it didn't make sense. He had no, he didn't. He didn't keep on telling himself a story and working until it made sense. He forced it to make sense. He forced the brick in the spot, forced the puzzle into a place it doesn't fit.

And because of that, he was on a journey of pursuit of truth. He pursued truth all his life. Because he was looking for that which made sense to him. It puts you on the journey of truth. Truth exploration, which is what I want, what you're going to benefit from at the end from all of this, is that you start looking for the truth. You're not looking, again, you're not lying to yourself in the other way. I'm not asking you, never will I ask you to lie to yourself. So I'm not asking you to convince yourself that it's important. I'm just asking. Is it? I am literally asking you this question honestly. You say you don't care about it. You don't care about it, or you don't think it's a big deal.

My question to you, is it? Not so that you can say, no, no, no, no. Is it? Is it? Really? Go find out. Go find out. I don't know. I'm not going to, in these sessions, my job is not to answer that question for you. I'll answer that question for you in a different halaqah, reciting Surah

An-Nur or something. I'll tell you what the Quran is. But here, that's not my job. My job is not to tell you what it is. My job is to get you to ask the question, 'is it a big deal?' If it isn't, then you were right. And there's nothing to feel bad about. And you continue performing this activity. You continue and do it with no guilt. And if she walks, just walk with her.

You keep the traffic until you fill your eyes with it. And then go, because there's nothing to feel bad about. This is the right way to do things. You've figured it out. And if it isn't, if it isn't, then, then. So you have to ask yourself the question, 'is it or is it not?' And then figure it out, which brings me to the last piece for this morning. This is the last concept I'm going to share with you. The only way you can perform self-honesty appropriately is that you have to have something to compare it to. Because this is not an activity that you do in groups. So you have to be able to compare. How do I know if I'm doing well or not?

This is the question that I was hoping to get asked. I didn't get asked this question yet. The question I want you to ask is, well, okay, I'm being honest with myself on whether I'm wearing this hat well. I'm being a good mother or a good sibling or a good son or a good. But how do you know if you're being good at any of these things? What are you comparing it to? In order for you to be able to do this right, you have to have something to compare it to. So who are you comparing it to? So the only way that you can actually perform yourself honestly is you need a standard. And the standard are the anbiya al-salihin. It's the Prophet (ﷺ) and all those who were Muslim.

That's why we'll bring the examples of these people. See how they were, and then you can hold yourself to that standard and see if, are you close to that standard? Are you coming near that standard? Do you have nothing to do with that standard altogether? And you need mentors who are going to, that's why tazkiyah requires a sheikh. It requires someone who's going to help you along. Because otherwise you're going to get completely lost. You're going to run into, you'll start doing some mental acrobatics, and then you'll get, either you exaggerate or you'll underestimate, and then it'll be all wrong, right? So you need someone there to say, no, no, this is the standard. That's why one of the good habits of students of knowledge, and we don't do it here.

I don't know why we don't do it here. I should actually do this. All throughout my life, there was always a majlis, at least once a week, where you would be listening to Sifat al-Sahfa, for example, Ibn al-Jawzi, or Tazkirat Alam al-Nubala, or Hilyat al-Awliya, or Usd al-Ghab, or something. A book where the Imam al-Zahiri, for example, they just talk about the Salihin, just talk about the pious of our nation. Why? Because you need the standard. You need to understand the standard. Because when you're doing self-honesty, you have to know what am I comparing it to? In any trial, you have to have the standard arm. Okay, I'm looking at myself right now. I'm honest. This is what I'm doing. I don't know if it's good or bad.

In many senses, you do, because you'll compare yourself as a father, for example. You'll compare yourself to your dad. But that's not the healthiest thing, because what if you had a, you know? Or the opposite. If you had like a super father, or an absolutely horrible one, then you're in trouble. You're in trouble because now you're holding yourself to a standard that's impossible. Or a standard that is suboptimal. It's not a good standard at all. Same thing goes for every other example. This is why mistakes are generational. They're shared. Men who abuse their wives. What is the number one cause? It's very simple. It's simple because it's an issue of comparison. You're trying to be honest, who you should be. Well, the only person you have to compare to is yourself.

So this is fine, then this is fine. So, understand the problem? You have to have a proper role model in order for yourself to hold yourself to a standard that makes any sense. So self-honesty really doesn't work without this. Without there being a proper standard to compare to, without there being a proper role model, someone to tell you this is right or this is wrong, or someone that you can look at and say, well, this is what they did, so I should be able to do that as well. It goes in everything in life. If you're trying to be self-honest about how good of a teacher, for example, you are, the only way you can do that is if you had good teachers that you can compare yourself to and see what impact they had.

Everything. What I was hoping you would conclude, what came back to me was, is the only way that I can perform self-honesty safely is if I have someone to compare myself to. And that's the only way our brains work. We have to be able to compare ourselves to somebody. So as a father, as a spouse, as a son, as a sibling, if you have no one to compare to, then you're making things up as you go along. If no one taught you, no one gave you, here's the standard, then you're just making things up. Which means that you have to seek knowledge. You have to seek the truth. You have to compare yourself to the right individuals, and you have to have a mentor who will help you.

So self-honesty is not something that you're capable of doing absolutely alone. You're going to need some degree of help. You're going to need some degree of guidance in the whole process, or else you're going to fall off rails pretty quickly. So I'll end with that, inshallah ta'ala. These were the points I wanted to share with you this morning. I do realize that I'm sharing a lot of points, but I'm expecting that over the course of the week, you're either taking notes or you're listening to it more than once, and you're trying to think about this within your reflection, your timing for reflection. As I said, there are daily focuses, things that you should think about every day.

There are certain principles or rules within Tazkiyya, and amongst them is that you perform some degree of contemplation, and you take some of these concepts and you think about them deeply. And you kind of unveil some of the aspects of how you're nafs. Next week, I'm going to focus a little bit more on the story of Ayyub as a powerful example in the realm of self-honesty, and a little bit more on the story of Ka'b ibn Malik. Both stories I pointed out to you so that you can think about a little bit yourself if you want to and contemplate. But these two stories really do explain to us a certain degree of what this activity or this pillar of tazkiyah is. Is all about. I will end with that, inshallah.

**Video Link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHv1\\_9WFTLw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHv1_9WFTLw)