

# *Spiritual Provision*

## **On the Path to Self-Development**



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## Welcome to Spiritual Provision!

Our daily routine often gets to us, and we end up lacking energy and zeal. Correct thought leads to correct emotions, which, in turn, leads to correct behavior and a great destiny.

In this publication, we share some reflections, based on natural living, that can lift one up. The messages are organized in order of the journey of self-development. The spiritual provision needed for the journey chronologically is: positive thinking, gratitude, hope, sincerity, self-purification, controlling desires, inspiration, motivation, the journey, and staying the course.

These reflections are based on Islamic traditions but are presented in a manner that can be understood by all. They have been reviewed in detail by Shaykh Hacene Chebbani, Director of the Islamic Information Society of Calgary (IISC).

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## Foreword

During this age of the internet and the hype machine of social media, Lucid Eloquence decided to take another turn and remind the readers of its book "Spiritual Provision" about the beauty and power of the old wisdom which could be derived from the Islamic sources of guidance.

As we confront the questions and challenges of identity crisis and mental health within our circles, there is no better time to reaffirm our enduring spirit of thankfulness, positive thinking, and self-reflection about one's actions, motives, and relationship with the rest of the world.

This book is meant to serve as a guide for those who wish to achieve these goals in the area of self-development.

Calgary, 2021

Hacene Chebbani



“Spiritual Provision” is a publication of Lucid Eloquence -- a technical/creative writing consultancy that empowers clients to achieve thought leadership through quality content such as white papers, case studies, success stories, articles, research, eBooks, blog posts, web content, promotional material, and creative reflections.

Its mission encompasses providing resources for the self-development of the public through writing. Lucid Eloquence services are available remotely worldwide.

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# Positive Thinking

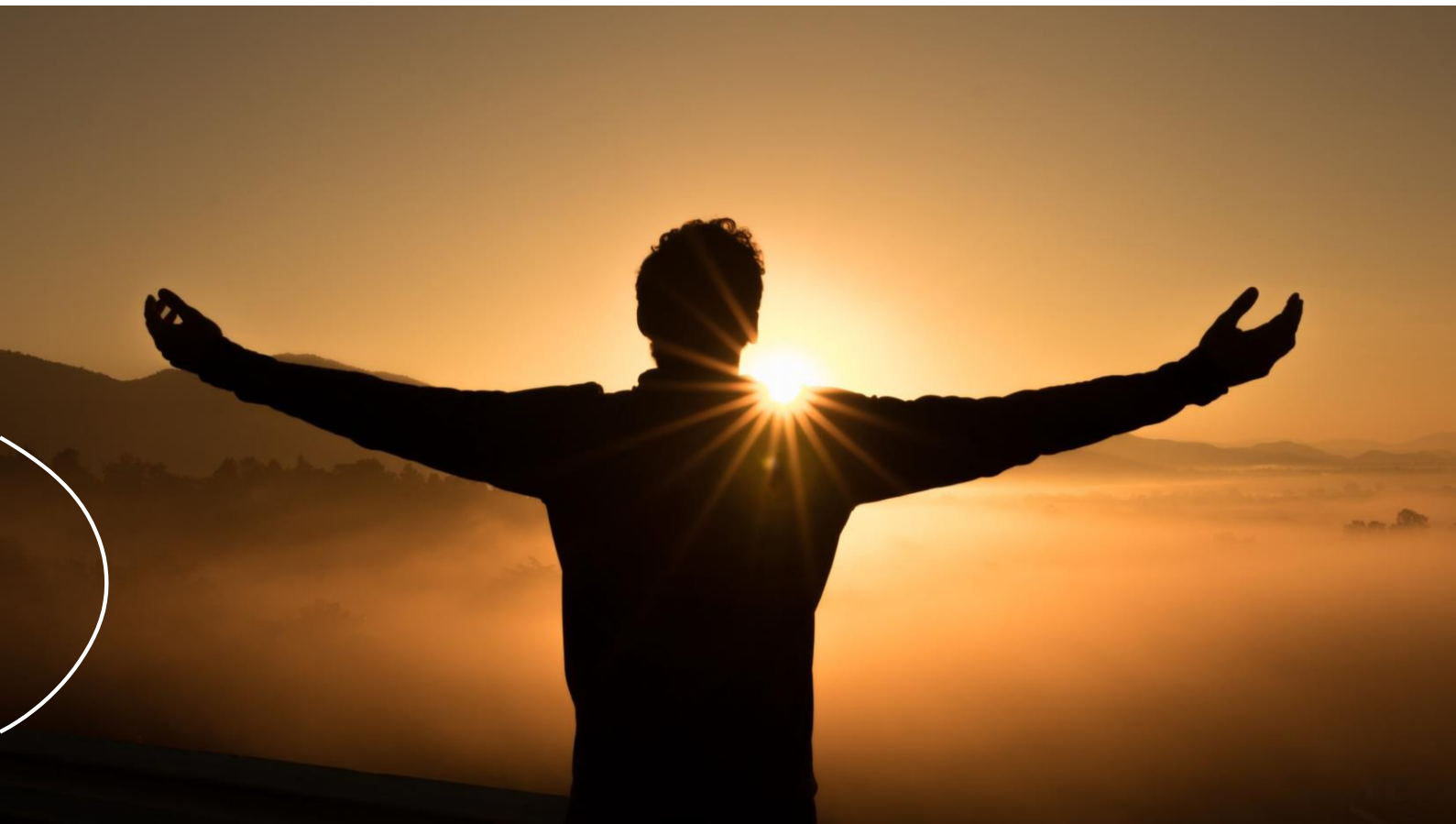
## Thinking Correctly

Having correct thoughts is a great blessing. Contemplation is what separates the living and the vegetative worlds. The higher its form, the higher one's status.

Incorrect thought is destructive and leads to misguidance and loss, whereas correct thought is a means of right actions and growth.

Self-reform, the right education, good company, and a healthy environment are essential for a life of contemplative reflection.

For some, such a life holds more pleasure than the worldly pleasures that people usually covet. If they have faith and these essentials, there is very little else they desire.



## Thoughts Determine Reality

If we look at things in a negative light and express negativity, that negativity will permeate our attitude and our behavior and will impact the consequences of our actions.

In contrast, positive thoughts result in a positive attitude, speech, and behavior, attracting positive people and opportunities.



The feeling of positivity does not always come instinctively. It needs to be sustained through deliberate practice until it becomes habitual. Sincerely declaring praise of God at each phase of life requires daily contemplation and deep gratefulness for one's present circumstances.

People advance in life by learning to successfully combat difficulties. The more a person overcomes their problems, the more they grow. The result of severely crushed sugarcane is a sweet and delicious juice. Likewise, we contribute the most when we have gone through many tests.

If we adopt patience and positive thinking, we can endure almost any situation in life. The key to developing resilience is to have persistent hope for good from God. We must cultivate a good opinion of God as He says "I am just as My slave thinks I am ...".

Thus, success in life depends on our thinking. By developing the right mindset, we can graduate from one success to the next, God willing.



# Gratitude

## We Lack Gratitude



Those who are born rich and famous fantasize about how cool it would be to live an anonymous life. Commoners wish to be royalty while some royalty is ready to give up their titles to become commoners.

The elder wishes that they could be the youngest in the family and vice versa. Some people would do anything to get Western citizenship while others choose to give away such privileges to live a life to which they feel more attuned.

Some work hard to get doctorates while only desirous of work suitable for people with bachelors. Graduates of seminaries lament that they could not get admitted to professional universities while engineers exert the utmost effort to try to formally learn spirituality after graduation.

We should learn to be satisfied with our fates while striving to improve the condition of the environment that God has placed us in. By learning to live naturally, we can equip ourselves to do so and feel genuinely happy in our situation.

## The Crux of Wisdom

Luqman was distinguished by the wisdom that was bestowed on him, the crux of which was to always be grateful. We are to be thankful for whichever situation we happen to be in.

There is no situation without any positive aspects. Gratitude enables us to overcome difficult circumstances, after which we acknowledge it as a blessing in disguise.

Acknowledging, internally feeling, expressing, and acting on these blessings immerses us in gratefulness, which is the foundation of wisdom.



## How to Develop Gratitude



How do we develop gratitude for the hearts that God has given us? Hearts represent our emotions, which have been given to us by God for a purpose.

We give thanks by using them properly. We develop compassionate hearts which have empathy for people, animals, and all creation.

We become emotionally intelligent by trying to understand how people feel. We learn to deal with them based on their disposition.

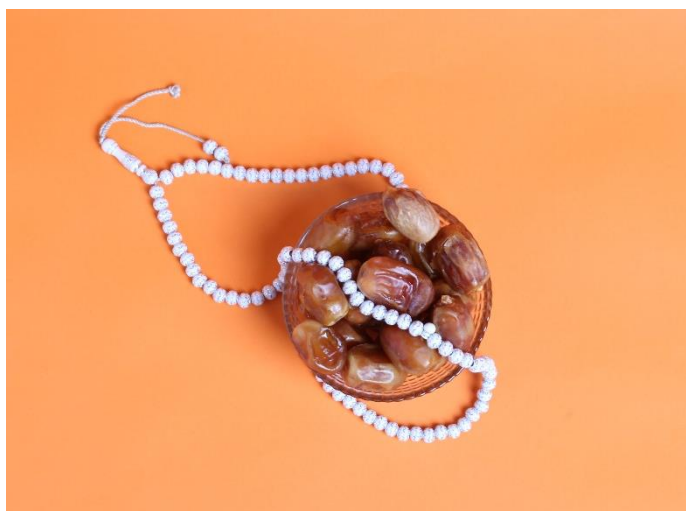
We think about others and feel their pain while trying to help them in whatever way we can, even if all we can do is make supplications for them. We announce our love for people by telling them that we love them for God's sake.

Part of developing gratitude for our hearts is that to keep them alive and healthy by protecting them from rancor, hate, jealousy, hypocrisy, etc.

## Let Us Try to Be Grateful

If we can be anything, let us try to be grateful.

- We can be grateful for a childhood of deprivation, for it built our resilient personality.
- We can be grateful for mediocre schooling, for it gave us a never-quenching thirst for learning and self-improvement.
- We can be grateful for imperfect health, for it made us humble in realizing our weaknesses.
- We can be grateful for the loss of a loved one, for it taught us the meaning of life, making us cherish the relationships we have.
- We can be grateful for the failures in our careers, for they forced us to look deep in ourselves and develop alternate potential talent to benefit our society.
- We can be grateful for the personal injustices we suffered, for they forced us to work harder to prove our true worth.



Gratitude calms and satisfies our psyche, building an abundant mentality that gives us the inner strength to overcome any problem. It teaches us positive thinking, deep reflection, and wisdom, resulting in positive growth.

## The Right of a Blessing

When we get any blessing, we become accountable for it. If we value it and give it its right, it will grow and multiply.

So, what is the right of a blessing? It is to make the best use of it for maximum benefit. If we do not appreciate the blessing and neglect it, it is likely to be taken away from us.

Thus, we need to cultivate gratitude as a way of life to continue to prosper.

If we carefully examine even the most adverse situations, we will find so many opportunities for which to be genuinely thankful.





## Gratitude As Worship



It humbles us. It heals us. It makes us optimistic. The resulting change in mentality endows us with confidence and enables us to successfully deal with any challenge.

Gratefulness is an act of acknowledging the blessings of God, which can only come from Him. Being ungrateful is a form of hiding the acknowledgment of the capabilities of God. It is a form of denial of God.

## Learning Thankfulness

We need to learn to be thankful.

- We learn the value of health when we sit with the sick.
- We learn the value of the ability to give when we sit with the destitute.
- We learn the value of the security when we sit with orphans and widows.
- We learn the value of simple sensory blessings when we sit with the blind.
- We learn the value of time when we sit with the elderly.

Those who fail to value their blessings are often deprived of them.

Let us practice gratitude!





## Differently Abled

They now call the disabled differently-abled. If we examine humanity at large, we find that there are hardly any who use ALL of their God-given abilities to the max.

We develop the abilities on which we work consistently. When an ability is taken away from us, we develop a group of complementary abilities to compensate for that loss. These supplementary abilities might be developed to a degree that is not found in normal people.

A blind person might develop a superior sense of touch, hearing, taste, smell, and feeling. Thus, their loss of a sense was a gift that helped them become more acutely sensitive than ordinary folk.

Our abilities, means, and circumstances do not develop without a reason. Both our resources and their absence, are a blessing for us if we perceive them through the lens of gratitude. What matters is how much we make use of what we have to benefit others.



## Curse

- Long life is a curse if it is full of God's disobedience.
- A life of luxury is a curse if it makes us lazy.
- An unexpected windfall is a curse if it destroys our natural way of life.
- A higher degree is a curse if it takes us away from God.
- Excessive knowledge is a curse if it makes us arrogant.
- A popular company is a curse if it has a bad influence.
- A higher position is a curse if we are left with no time for our loved ones
- Many children are a curse if they do not learn to honor their parents.
- Social privilege is a curse if we fail to use it to make positive change.

All blessings are curses if we are not grateful enough to recognize them as the blessings they are.

O my friends, we should never feel belittled if we seem less in any way, as we never know what pain others feel in their apparent blessings.

Rather, let us contemplate and be satisfied with the innumerable ways that God has uniquely ennobled us.



# Harboring Hope

## Perception of Life

It seems like almost all there is to life is related to our perception of it. People who have a habit of harboring positive thoughts tend to have a happy life, while those who keep complaining experience bad consequences. In the process, they experience difficulties, miseries, and depression. Their perception has a direct effect on the quality of one's life. This is a natural law.

Indeed, optimism is a prominent characteristic in the personality of successful people. Certainly, having positive thoughts and a good opinion is a form of worship. We can reflect and write down three things in our diary that we can give thanks about for that day daily. If we do this exercise persistently, our outlook, health, quality of life, and the events that result from it will all improve. Countless scientific experiments in the field of Positive Psychology have shown this to be true. We can remove all negatives from our lives. Stop listening and paying attention to those who do nothing but complain. Replace negatives with positives. Volunteer in activities with groups of people who are improving the condition of humanity. Be with those who are positive and their positivity will affect you.

Know that having good hopes is a natural medicine that leads to a fulfilled and happy life. You have the power to decide which attitude to adopt. Be positive. Engage in exercises that build gratitude. It has been shown to have amazing therapeutic value. Be with positive people and cut off all avenues of negativity from your life.



## Despair Destroys Us



It shakes our resolve. It engenders negativity. It stresses our minds. It removes tranquility from our hearts.

By deliberately harboring hope and spreading positive energy into our environment, we vaccinate ourselves from despair. Doing positive and useful work helps keep us enthusiastic about the future.

Most people like to complain, and this makes us hopeless if we make the mistake of giving them our ear. We need to practice social distancing from them, for our protection.

Know that relying on God puts certitude in the hearts of believers. They know Him and His power to turn defeat into victory, confusion into vision, and abuse into honor. We need to learn to trust The All-Mighty, The Wise.

## Environment of Hope

Although we fly, balancing hope and fear, to fail, we need only listen to Satan whose propaganda is designed to kill hope. Once hope is destroyed, we are destroyed.

We need to always have hope. Thus, it is incumbent on us to create a positive environment around us, one that is full of hope and invites others to flourish in it.

Hope inspires. Hope immunizes from defeat. Hope keeps the struggle alive. Hope turns the tide. Hope makes the impossible, possible. Hope keeps us going in the face of exhaustion. Hope allows us to sustain great losses with a smile.

As believers, we are the most hopeful. We think positively about God. We trust that His plan is the best. Even if we suffer here, we have hope in the hereafter.



## Hope Makes Us Undefeatable

How strange is the condition of man?

Every passing year, his abilities deteriorate, he loses companions and he is afflicted by ailments and setbacks. Although he slows down and pauses for direction, he keeps contributing.

Hope is a comprehensive tonic that reenergizes resolve, even for those living a waning life. Man can defy all odds and prove all his critics wrong as long as he relies on God and has self-belief.

Believers have their eyes firmly fixed on the afterlife. Worldly losses are meaningless to them as their meaning lies in the world to come. They do not tire or give up, as they keep toiling until their last breath to squeeze the maximum number of good deeds from this place of test.



# Sincerity

## Pure Intentions



A person might help someone if they perceive that that person may be useful to them; they will keep good relationships with a relative that might become a safety net in times of crisis. They are honest because it is the best policy, they are generous because it raises their social status, they work hard because they will look good in the eyes of the bosses.

In contrast, some people do the same good deeds but with a different motivation. They are motivated by higher intentions. In doing so, they are sincere to God, to themselves, and to the person toward whom they do good. Their expectations are not with the helped, but with God.

Thus, they do good to those who might never be able to repay them. They connect with a relative from whom they have no expectations. They are generous, even in secret. They do good work even if their bosses do not find out.

In doing so, they transform themselves and graduate to the next level of development. Thus, in their sincerity and unselfishness lies their true self-benefit.



## What Makes Us Tick?

If we wish to understand someone, we need to understand what motivates them. The cause of motivation is generally either deprivation or altruism. Whereas those motivated by deprivation tend to develop a scarcity mindset, those who are motivated by altruism tend to develop an abundant mindset.

If we desire self-improvement, we need to re-examine our motivations. “Indeed, actions are judged by their intentions,” said Prophet Muhammad (SWAS). Hence, to develop an abundant mindset, we can try to develop worthy altruistic intentions.

There is a difference in the paradigm of Reality that a believer experiences from what others see with their naked eyes. A believer sees from the perspective of the value system that God has intended for them. Their definition of success might seem like that of failure to others. To them, apparent success without sincerity is a failure and apparent failure is in fact success if they are indeed sincere.

At work, one can never achieve true success without sincerity, no matter how many signs of apparent success are displayed. One’s work is a divine trust and one must do one’s utmost to never betray that trust, but rather to fulfill it in the most excellent of manners.

One’s motivation is to please one’s Lord and one constantly fears His punishment. This is the primary driver for a believer, rather than to meet the KPIs, get a good performance rating, get a promotion, get an award and essentially look good in the eyes of anyone other than God. In many ways, if one is more motivated by these other factors, one’s sincerity is in doubt. Showing off is a kind of sin. It does not matter if their manager, VP, SVP, and CEO change, their Lord will always be the same. Their true expectation will always come from Him. If one is sincere, then one will consciously hold himself accountable to God, even before one is held accountable by any man-made system, which can never be perfectly fair, no matter how much it is attempted.



## Purely for God

When we earn enough, the thought of earning more to make use of our free time crosses our minds.

Consider using that time to do something purely for God. By taking an inventory of our skills, experience, and passion, we can plan how to positively impact our environment, by God's will. If we decide to work on a side project purely for God, it can rejuvenate us, and provide meaning and context to our life journey.

It is surprising how few resources are needed to get started. The internet is full of free information and tools. One person can influence the world, by God's will, with scarcely any cost.

It is important to keep the intention sincerely for God. We do not work to stroke our ego or to seek praise or favors. If we do it for God, He can bless our efforts many-fold. Our reward is not limited to the hereafter. It gives meaning to our lives at a time when most people are chasing the material world. It boosts faith and wellbeing as it gives us personal satisfaction. It increases skills and builds our personalities. All this impacts us financially, as we enjoy living blissful lives even with a low income.



# Purifying Oneself

## Forgive Others

Before you die, I request that you die now, just for a minute. Close your eyes and think about your funeral while you are on the bier with the procession group. In what state do you want to be after death? Be in that state now. Correct your mistakes. Improve your character. Ask forgiveness for your sins. Open a new page of good character and behavior. Wash hatred from your heart. Clean your conscience.

Let us die every day for only one minute – sixty seconds – so that we may reflect, repent and improve our deeds. If we live this minute every day, we will return to be upright, loving the good, useful to people, generous, mild-mannered and approachable. Whoever forgets death will live in forgetfulness, will not be watchful of his Lord, and will not be accountable to oneself.



How unfortunate are those who fill their hearts with rancor, hatred, and envy until they become ruins, inhabited by snakes and scorpions. We must have mercy on ourselves before having mercy on others from this destructive war inside us that does not benefit anyone.

*Look at the flower and not at its thorn and  
Watch the moon and do not be engrossed in the darkness.*

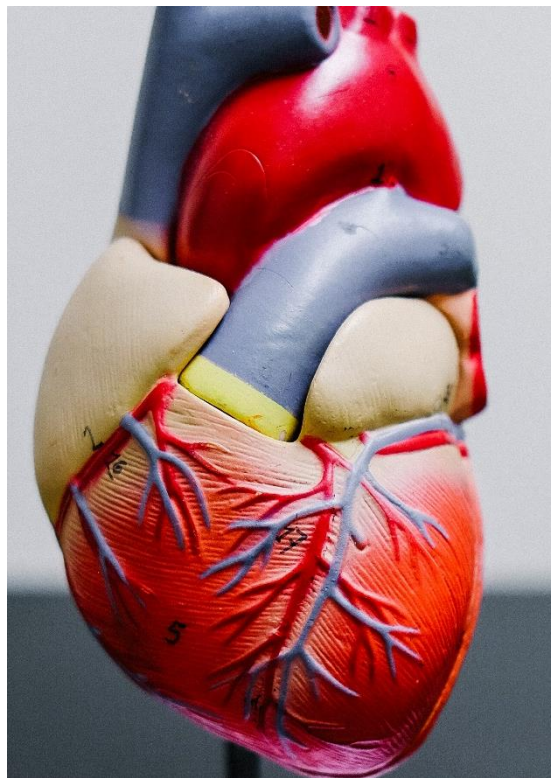
*But:*

*The eye denies the sunlight due to its sickness,  
And the mouth denies the taste of water from its ailment.*

## The Heart

The soul of a person is affected in two major ways: what one takes in and his actions/reflections.

To purify our souls/hearts, we need to consume healthy foods/drinks in moderation, hear good speech, read good literature, and watch good sights. Similarly, we should regularly have good contemplations and do good deeds daily.



### How to Keep the Heart Alive?

- Harbor positive thoughts and feelings
- Forgive people
- Have high aspirations for improvement
- Adopt good manners
- Keep good company
- Seek forgiveness
- Greet people positively
- Trust in God
- Commit to an effective daily routine

Take the time to daily contemplate constructively about higher concepts.



## Compete with Yourself



In this world, people are obsessed with running the rat race – whether it is at work, in the family, or society.

Envy, hatred, jealousy, and rancor fill hearts as we try to get the upper hand and make our rivals look bad. We practice dirty tricks to make fun of others and look good among decision-makers.

If only we consider changing our perspective, we will achieve more. When we see someone succeed, we

can try to be genuinely happy for them while also trying to develop their successful capabilities in ourselves.

In an organization where people compete with themselves rather than others, the atmosphere is positive, synergy thrives and people remain happy and productive.

## Controlling Desires

### Loss

We should fear the loss of meaning rather than the loss of wealth in our lives, for, with meaning, one can regain wealth or live a life where the significance of wealth is diminished, but without meaning, wealth does not bring genuine happiness in our animal-like lifestyles.



## Look Death in the Eyes

- Ask a terminally ill person whether they would like to dine in a luxurious mansion or become healthy?
- Ask a terminally ill person whether they would like to travel first class around the world or play with their grandchildren?
- Ask a terminally ill person whether they would like to receive a windfall or donate to a perpetual charity?
- Ask a terminally ill person whether they would like to drive a Bentley or get an increase in faith through understanding?
- Ask a terminally ill person whether they want to win the jackpot or be with their childhood friends?



What they long to do is to give something in charity or to bow down and do prostrations in just two units of prayers, if they only could.

The only difference between the terminally ill and us is that they have realized that they will die, whereas we are still deluded about our longevity.

## Relish Blessings... Little by Little

When they were younger, I used to bombard my kids with toys, DVDs, books, games, and activities. Later, I learned how important it is to drip-feed them such resources so that they are ready to fully take advantage of them. Although they were happy to see so many surprises in the past, they are more content now that they can use them properly.



When most people think of having a good life, they almost always think about having a lot of wealth. Like a hungry man invited to a luxurious feast, they might throw themselves greedily at the delicacies, confused and excited about what to devour first.

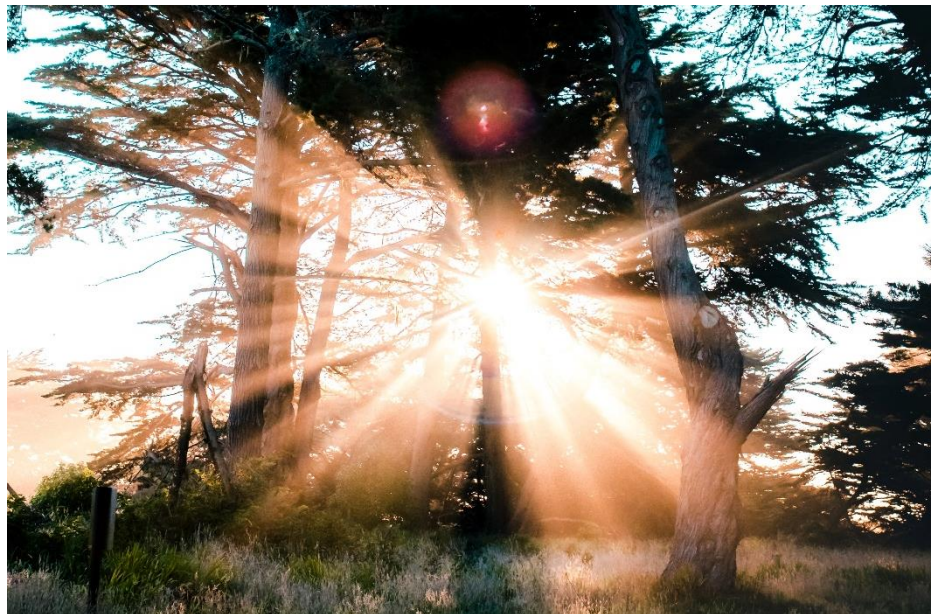
Yet, food is most enjoyable when one has earned it lawfully by oneself, even if it is simple fare. Taking time to eat deliberately with loved ones and enlightening conversation enhances the experience. Being thankful by remembering the blessings of The Provider fills the heart with satisfaction. Praise be to God.

Wealth, like food, is best enjoyed little by little when it is meaningful.

## Simple Pleasures

- Have we ever basked in the early morning sunshine?
- Have we ever honored our parents with the best surprises?
- Have we ever been transformed by some emotional Quran recitation?
- Have we ever held our first newborn in our arms?
- Have we ever walked on a moonlit beach?
- Have we ever had romantic conversations with our seasoned spouse?
- Have we ever enjoyed the feeling of comprehending complexity?
- Have we ever explained a concept eloquently?
- Have we ever returned to our hometown to find past acquaintances?
- Have we ever stood up before dawn to prostrate before God?
- Have we ever fed a poor beggar at a nice restaurant?
- Have we ever seen history come back to live in a good museum?
- Have we ever marched through fresh thick snow on a crisp and sunny winter morning?
- Have we ever tasted authentic traditional food of a foreign culture?

If we have, we have tasted the simple and natural pleasures of life which are more satisfying than all the expensive thrills.





## Inspiration

Our daily routine defines who we are, what we think, and our future actions. Oftentimes, we grow up with a societal narrative that dictates what we are supposed to accomplish in our lives. For most of us, it is what our parents, media, friends, community, school, university, workplace, and country have ingrained in our thinking. As we progress in life, the stereotypical societal expectations are enhanced and reinforced, without us ever taking the time to think about why we are doing what we are doing.

Some consider this to be a modern phenomenon, but the truth of the matter is that it has been apparent throughout history. Many great men came to a point in their lives where they questioned the prevalent morals, values, beliefs, and customs in their societies. The wise men of old took the time to meditate in the wilderness before inspiration descended upon them. Even those who have been trained in the religious sciences and who have accomplished great stature, come to a point where they seek to understand basic assumptions of life.

A child might innocently say something profound while a Ph.D. holder might find it difficult to see holistically.

For insights, we do not necessarily need qualifications and certifications. Often, the more “regulated” we are, the more occluded from reality we become.

Inspiration requires a person to be clean from the inside, having correct thoughts and worthy aspirations. It requires natural living with ample opportunities for worship, work, study, and reflection throughout the day.



# Motivation

## You Are Important



The action of you reading this message implies that you are important. Your existence in the universe at this precise moment is not a coincidence. God knows that you have a great role to play; that is why He did not create the universe without you.



There is a difference between being important and being arrogant. We are arrogant when, in our sense of self-importance, we start looking down on others.

An arrogant person feels important for the wrong reasons. They think they are important because of wealth, praise, recognition, awards, race, social status, citizenship, education, skills, abilities, beauty, a network of friends, etc. All of these things come and go.

A person should feel important because they know that their Lord has not created them in vain. They have a destiny to fulfill. How can someone who talks to the Most Powerful Being several times a day feel unimportant?

The truth is that each one of us is important. We should all feel important while respecting the importance of those around us. Nevertheless, we should not consider ourselves important in the wrong manner. It is this inferiority/superiority complex that stops individuals from fulfilling their true potential.

Praise should not result in puffing us up and criticism should not break us down.



## Taking Responsibility



No matter how talented a person is, how many degrees they have, the amount of training they have, or the people they know, it is often their degree of responsibility that they have that determines if they will succeed or fail in life.

The underdog with a point to prove often trumps the privileged candidate due to their greater ownership of responsibility.

Likewise, a self-motivated individual who has discovered themselves is more likely to succeed than someone unsure of themselves due to responsibility that is greater than they are willing to take. Responsibility is one of the many hidden keys to success.

Such keys of success are often neglected as we tend to only focus on the superficial factors blindly pursued by the rest of the world.



# The Journey

## Setting Sail

Setting sail is a sophisticated science in its own right. Despite the most unfavorable winds, if we set our sails just right, we can make the most of it and reach our destination safely.

The winds are the problems and calamities that we face in life and setting sail is the approach or thought process that we adopt to take advantage of the winds. It is all in our perspective and mindset. If we want, we can thrive in the most difficult situations.

Ships do not sink when they are surrounded by dangerous waters. Waters cause them to sail and reach their ports. It is when the water is allowed inside the ships that they scuttle. The water represents our fears, which, when outside us, propel us toward excellence, but when we let them enter, they drown us.

When traveling on a ship, we need to have the patience to wait out the storms and the long journey. We do not have the option to give up halfway. Likewise, in life, we must develop the patience to stay on the natural way of life.

When we finally reach our destination, we do not exult. Rather, we should attribute it to the mercy of God and be grateful.



## Pursuing Dreams

If we adopt the right methodology to pursue our dreams, we will be pulled to our goals rather than having to push ourselves toward them. Even when we are tired, we would be motivated to keep working for them.



What if we have a system where we are automatically pulled towards every good thing we decide to achieve?

Being instinctively pulled to our goal is healthy and fulfilling while being pushed to a goal makes us stressed, unbalanced, and negative.

Our paths to our dreams are what form our journeys.

If we only focus on the destination, the journey will be miserable as it becomes a burden. We will detest it. We must enjoy the journey to get the most out of it.

We do not have to postpone positive emotions until the end. Instead, we must feel happy, satisfied, grateful, empathetic, loving, and at peace during the journey.

Throughout the journey, we live the good life of faith, and of being helpful and good to people.

The journey will transform who we are. Who we become during this journey might be more important than the destination we may cherish.

## Admitting Mistakes



The prophets had exemplary characters and they avoided sins, nevertheless, God allowed them to make mistakes.

Jonah left his community without permission and David made a hasty judgment.

They were made to make mistakes, to demonstrate their human nature so that they could relish in the human feeling of seeking forgiveness and remorse.

They used to fall prostrate upon realizing their mistakes. Every mistake was a chance for them to grow and come back stronger than before.

The prophets showed us how admitting mistakes makes us responsible. By acknowledging our shortcomings, we learn to overcome them.



## Worthy Ambition



We must gather the courage to live the worthy dreams that we believe in, no matter how far-fetched they may seem.

For there is very little that fills a person with purpose, ambition, energy, altruism, and yearning to create a better world than noble goals.



## Developing People

The ancient civilizations were great builders.

- The Egyptians built the pyramids.
- The Celts built Stonehenge.
- The Greeks built the Acropolis.
- The Romans built the Colosseum.
- The Chinese built the Great Wall.
- The Persians built Persepolis.
- The Aztecs built Templo Mayor.
- The Nabateans built Petra.
- The Indians built Mohenjo-Daro.
- The Cambodians built Angkor Wat.
- The Gandharans built the Bamiyan Buddhas.

Yet, what the prophets built was much more valuable, long-lasting, and effective. Rather than building structures, they built exemplary personalities. The companions they prepared became the best of mankind, of which the world saw neither before, nor after.



## Staying the Course

### Keep Trying

In this world, pleasure comes from the process of becoming, not necessarily a designation; from the hardships of a journey, not necessarily a destination; and from the struggle to understand, not necessarily a credential.

Never give up!

Keep trying!



## Don't Stop Now!

We can resolve to never let the negativity around us make us negative. If we analyze our situation carefully, we will come to realize that we enjoy so much good in life and we should be thankful for it. So much of humanity is prepared to sacrifice everything to get a fraction of the blessings that we take for granted.

We must never let the situation stop us from retaining our continuous good intentions, thoughts, and actions. When we stop, our hearts die, and when our hearts die, we become useless.

Realize my friends, that each one of us has been bestowed with unique talents and abilities. These are the gifts for which we are responsible so that we may give back to society while organically growing as an individual.


Our vision is everything; let us constantly polish it so that it may change us to transform our world.





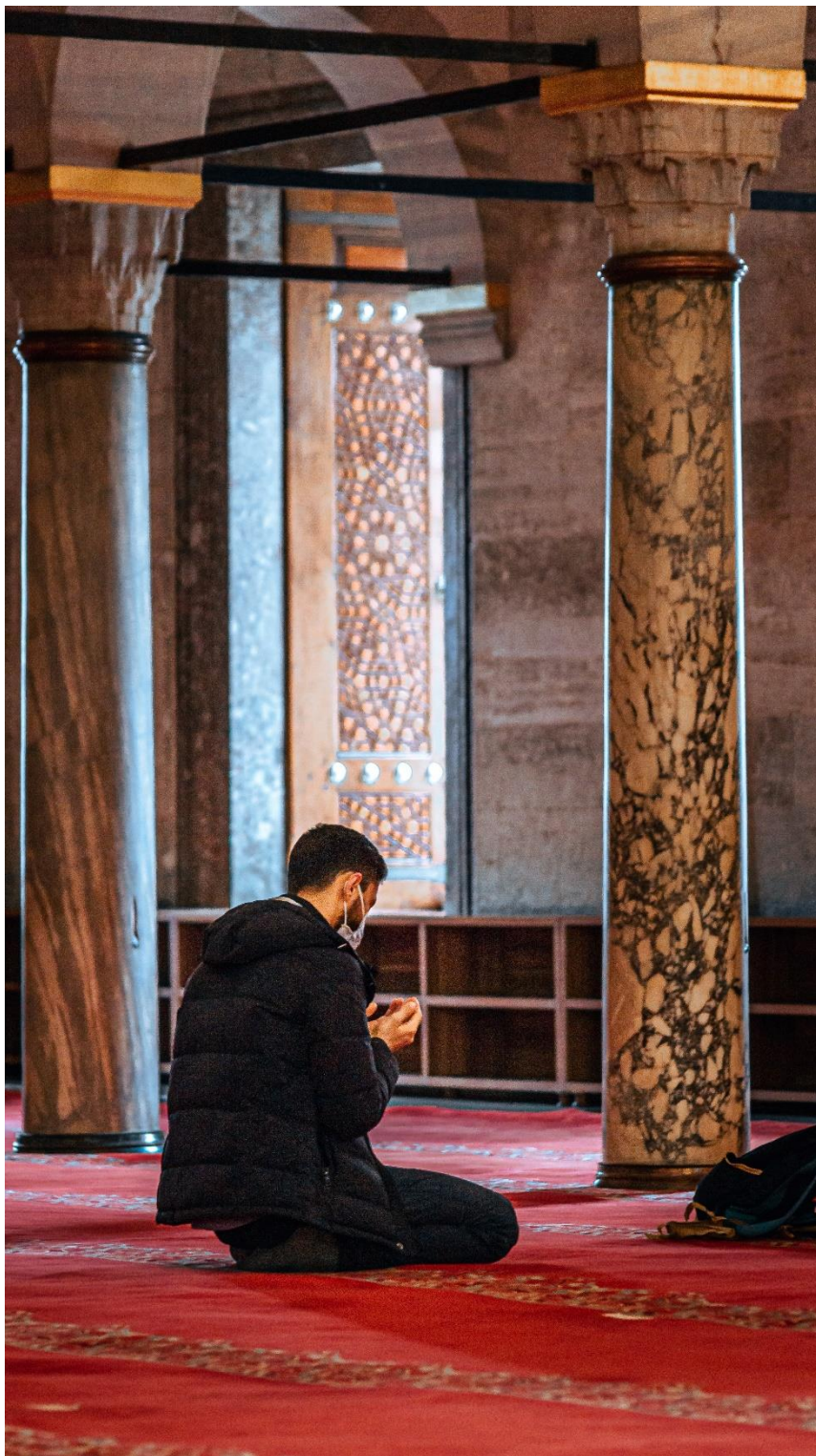
## Can We Try?

- We can try to stay silent, but we need to speak out for injustice.
- We can try to love solitude, but we need to collaborate with people for good.
- We can try to be comfortable with who we are, but we need to meet and learn from all the people of the world.
- We can try to be nice to everyone, but we need to be selective in our choice of confidantes.
- We can try to keep refining our vision, but we need to align it with corporate, industry, national, and global conditions.
- We can try to be flexible, forgiving, and accommodating, but we need to take principled stands when needed.
- We can try to work diligently, but we need to leave the consequences to God.
- We can try to respect the right traditions, but we need to selectively adopt modernity for our mission.
- We can try to accept our environment, but we need to work on changing ourselves to transform it.
- We can try to accept the injunctions of faith, but we need to use reason to understand them after submission.
- We can try to be serious about the issues of life, but we must not forget our sense of humor.



We can try to give good sincere advice, but first, we need to try our best to follow it ourselves. Yes, we can try...

## God's Counsel



Life is not perfect. Nobody knows us as we do. Nobody knows our situation as we do. We are unique. There is nobody in the whole universe who is exactly like us. What may be right for them might be problematic for us, and vice versa.

We take advice from people who understand us and our situation well. They need to be educated in the subject matter. Ultimately though, we need to regularly seek counsel from God and be satisfied with it.

## Make the Impossible Possible

- How many times have people have pulled out victorious from the jaws of defeat?
- How many times have the few overcome the many?
- How many times have the victims escaped their fate?

Every day things happen against all odds. Every day miracles happen. We are a people who believe in miracles from God. We trust Him and if we believe that something is from Him, we will exert full effort with the faith that it will happen despite all odds, by the will of God.



## Fulfill Your Purpose

Stagnant freshwater turns foul, leftover food turns stale, abandoned cars become dysfunctional, absentee property deteriorates, and docked ships rust.

According to natural law, everything is constantly fulfilling the purpose for which it was created. When it stops playing its part in the theatre of life, it has to leave the stage.

Freshwater fish annually exert tremendous effort to swim upstream to lay eggs. Penguins face bitter cold nesting in the dead of the Antarctic winter. Monarch butterflies migrate thousands of kilometers annually. The humble bee spends a lifetime of effort to produce a single spoonful of honey.

These creatures full of action testify to their liveliness. They are constantly contributing to the game of life. Yet, some of us long to become inert. This desire to “retire” represents the lack of proper personal perspective in life. When the journey is strenuous and does not make sense anymore, it is tempting to stop. Thus, the lack of new goals and projects makes an active man inert.

Planets do not halt their motion, tides do not die, and seasons do not pause while the rivers keep flowing. Like everything in the universe, we have a purpose that we need to discover and keep alive.

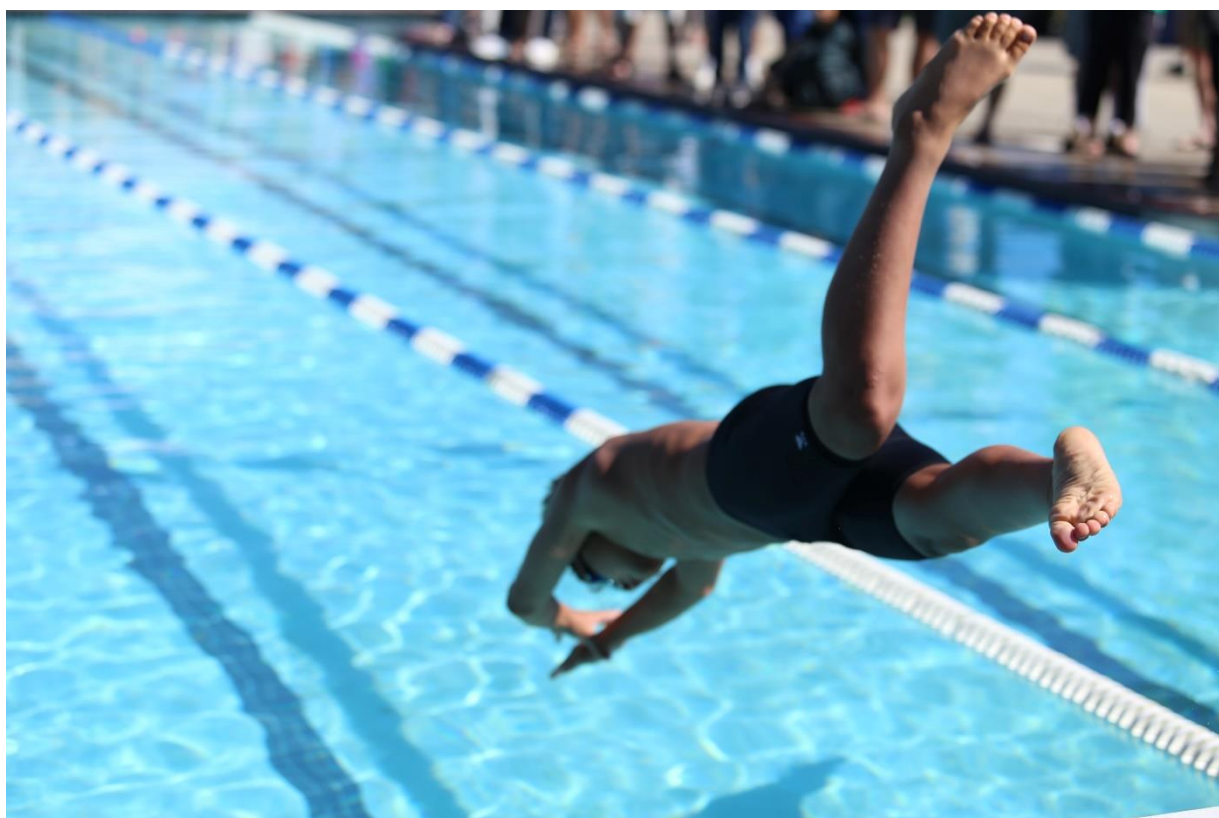


## With the Eye on the Prize

In a TV interview, a newly elected Prime Minister revealed his secret to success.

He said that he learned a great deal from his training in the military. Part of the drills they were made to perform was to dive in deep water and retrieve a sunken brick. He said that to do it successfully, one needs to learn to focus on the goal and concentrate on the task. If one gets distracted by things happening in the periphery, one can never make it. The key is to have a general awareness of one's surroundings but to focus entirely on the goal.

If our goal is the afterlife, why are we distracted by frivolous things in the periphery of our trajectory? We need to be aware of the events around us and take advantage of all opportunities that would allow us to achieve our goal, but the supreme focus must be on our brick at the bottom of the pool.





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God bless you.

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