



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL (TAZKIYYAT AN NAFS)

He has succeeded who purifies the soul, and he has failed who corrupts the soul.
Qur'an Surah Ash-Shams 91:9-10

He has succeeded who purifies himself, who remembers the name of his Lord and prays. Qur'an Surah Al-A'la 87:14-15

Human beings are given a choice and a free will – We can choose which path we would like to take. When we make our choice, several factors would influence our choice:

1. Allah's Guidance
2. Shaytan
3. Our Nafs
4. Attraction of this world

Other factors

- companions
- culture/traditions

THE NAFS

The Nafs is an inherent part of you – an innate portion of your pure fitrah [natural inclination].

It has the potential to drive you towards the good and not-so-good direction in life. Yet your inner self or nafs, and its lowly desires constantly directs you towards evil. You have a duty to overcome its weakness and win over its plots. You can achieve this through cultivating a sound heart, one that submits and surrenders to Allah, the Almighty.

Nafs (pl. Anfus or Nufus) lexically means soul, the psyche, the ego, self, life, person, heart or mind. (Mu'jam, Kassis)

Although some scholars have classified the Nafs up to 7 stages, there is agreement among Ulama' that in the Qur'an, Allah (s.w.t.) has described at least 3 main types of the Nafs. And these are in rank from the worse to better:

1. Nafs al-Ammara Bissu' (the Nafs that urges evil),
2. Nafs al-Lawwama (the Nafs that Blames) and
3. Nafs al-Mutma`inna (the Nafs at Peace).

(Chapter 12 v. 53 in the Tafsir of al-Tabari: Jami' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, 30 vols., Bulaq 1323 & also in Imam Baghawi's Tafsir: Lubab al-Ta'wil fi Ma'alam at-Tanzil, 8 vols. Cairo, 1308)

A summary of these states of the Nafs are given by Imam Tabari in his Tafsir of Surah Yusuf verse 53:

(1) Nafs al-Ammara Bissu' (The Soul which Commands):

This is the Nafs that brings punishment itself. By its very nature it directs its owner towards every wrong action. No one can get rid of its evil without the help from Allah. As Allah refers to this Nafs in the story of the wife of al-Aziz (Zulaikha) and Prophet Yusuf (as):

"The (human) soul is certainly prone to evil" **(12:53)**.

Allah also says:

"And had it not been for the grace of Allah and His Mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure; but Allah purifies whomever He wishes, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing." **(24:21)**

This Nafs resides in the world of the senses and is dominated by earthly desires (Shahwat) and passions....

Evil lies hidden in the Nafs and it is this that leads it on to do wrong. If Allah were to leave the servant alone with his self, the servant would be destroyed between its evil and the evil that it craves; but if Allah grants him success and help, then he will survive. We seek refuge in Allah the Almighty, both from the evil in ourselves and from the evil of our actions.

EXAMPLES - ADAM AND IBLIS, HABIL & QABIL, THE RICH MAN AND POOR MAN IN SURAH AL KAHF, THE PHARAOH & HIS WIFE, IBRAHIM (AS) AND HIS FATHER (AZAR)

(2) Nafs al-Lawwama (the Soul that Blames):

Allah refers to this Nafs,

"And I do call to witness the Nafs that blames" (75:2).

This Nafs is conscious of its own imperfections.

Hasan al-Basri said, "You always see the believer blaming himself and saying things like 'Did I want this? Why did I do that? Was this better than that?'...."

Prophet Muhammad SallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam asked forgiveness from Allah at least 70x a day

(3) Nafs al-Mutma`inna (the Soul at Peace):

Allah refers to this Nafs,

"O Self, in complete rest and satisfaction!" (89:27).

This Nafs is tranquil as it rests on the certitude of Allah.

Ibn Abbas (r) said, "It is the tranquil and believing soul".

Al-Qatadah (r) said, "It is the soul of the believer, made calm by what Allah has promised. Its owner is at rest and content with his knowledge of Allah's Names and Attributes, and with what He has said about Himself and His Messenger (الله صلى الله عليه وسلم), and with what He has said about what awaits the soul after death: about the departure of the soul, the life in the Barzakh, and the events of the Day of Qiyamah which will follow. So much so that a believer such as this can almost see them with his own eyes. So he submits to the will of Allah and surrenders to Him contentedly, never dissatisfied or complaining, and with his faith never wavering. He does not rejoice at his gains, nor do his afflictions make him despair - for he knows that they were decreed long before they happened to him, even before he was created...."....

(Al-Tabari: Jami' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 13, Bulaq 1323)

"Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah (Alone)," and then they *Istaqamu* , on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!

"We have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask for.

"An entertainment from (Allah), the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

41: 30-32

Ibn al-Qayyim also mentioned the states of Nafs:

"The Nafs is a single entity, although its state may change: from the Nafs al-Ammara, to the Nafs al-Lawwama, to the Nafs al-Mutma`inna, which is the final aim of perfection....

It has been said that the Nafs al-Lawwama is the one, which cannot rest in any one state. It often changes, remembers and forgets, submits and evades, loves and hates, rejoices and become sad, accepts and rejects, obeys and rebels.

Nafs al-Lawwama is also the Nafs of the believer....It has also been mentioned that the Nafs blames itself on the Day of Qiyamah - for every one blames himself for his actions, either his bad deeds, if he was one who had many wrong actions, or for his shortcomings, if he was one who did good deeds. All of this is accurate.

(Madarij as-Salikin fi Manazili Iyyaka Na'budu wa Iyyaka Nasta'in, vol. 1 pg. 308)

Sa'id Hawwa says regarding these Nafs:

"Depending upon its condition, the Nafs exist in multidimensional. When the Nafs is tranquil because of obeying Allah, and the soul opposes its desires, this soul is known as Nafs al-Mutma`inna. Regarding this, Allah has spoken about it in the Qur'an (89:27-28). But if the soul does not attain peace with itself, rather being exposed to desires, then such soul is known as the Nafs al-Lawwama because this soul reproaches its owner due to the owner's carelessness in fulfilling out Allah's wishes - Qur'an (75:2). More so, if the soul submits to lusts and allows itself to be seduced by Shaytan, such a soul is known as Nafs al-Ammara Bissu'. Allah tells the story about the wife of al-Aziz (Zulaikha) in Qur'an (12:53).

Why Purify the Soul?

1. The Quran and Sunnah, the authoritative sources of Islam, emphasize purifying the soul repeatedly. If these divine sources emphasize something, it must be important for us because Allah wishes to guide us. Obviously, Allah and His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would not waste our time! An example is the verse in which Allah tells us, **"Prosperous are those who purify themselves."** (87:14)

2. One of the reasons why Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was sent was to purify the souls so they could worship their Lord. **THE PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO WORSHIP ALLALH (51: 56).** Unlike what many Orientalists have said about Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and all the negative images created by the media about Islam, one of the missions of Prophet Muhammad was to teach us, the believers, how to purify our souls. It is sad that whenever people talk about spirituality, most do not think of the profound spiritual legacy of Prophet Muhammad

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)! Please remember that purifying you from the inside and turning you into a better human being, a purer Muslim, was the goal of your Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mission.

3. There are rewards to be obtained by purifying your soul. Rewards are promised by Allah to the person who purifies his soul by practicing obedient devotion and staying away from distractions (like sins and evil). **"Gardens of lasting bliss graced with flowing streams, and there they will stay. Such is the reward of those who purify themselves!"** (Quran 20:76)

PRINCIPLES OF PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL

- **1. Purification is in Allah's Hands**

Allah Alone can Purify our soul....and whom He Wills. No one can be purified unless Allah Purifies.

4: 49, 24: 21, 49: 7-8, 49: 17, 53:32

Therefore, if someone wants to purify himself/herself, be upright, turn to Allah.

- **2. Therefore ask Allah for it by supplicating to Him**

Du'a is very important for purifying the souls. Du'a is the key to all good. Prophet (SAW) made du'a for every single moves, e.g. sleep, going market, going out of the house, going into city, going to toilet, etc.

You are asking the Most Generous – Allah. Any type of good that you are hoping for yourself – ask Allah. Everything comes from Allah, by turning your heart towards Allah.

Purity of tawheed – everything you ask from Allah – jobs, solving problems, etc.

EXAMPLE OF A DU'A.

اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لِي دِينِي الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةٌ أَمْرِي وَ أَصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِي وَ أَصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي وَ اجْعَلِ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ وَ اجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ

O Allah! Rectify for me my Deen which is a means of guarding my matters and my world which is a means of my livelihood, and make good my hereafter in which is my returning, and make my life a means of abundance of all good and my death a means of comfort and peace free from all evil. (Sahih Muslim, #2720)

It is difficult for dunya to be straight without Allah's Help and Guidance. For the akhirah, it is difficult to get the right result without Allah's Help.

Fatir 35 : 15-17

15. O mankind! it is you who stand in need of Allah, but Allah is Rich (Free of all wants and needs), Worthy of all praise.

16. If He will, He could destroy you and bring about a new creation.

17. And that is not hard for Allah.

Abu Dharr reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Allah the Exalted said: **O my servants, I have forbidden oppression for myself and I have made it forbidden among you, so do not oppress one another. O my servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance from me and I shall guide you. O my servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food from Me and I shall feed you. O my servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing from me and I shall clothe you. O my servants, you sin by night and day and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness from me and I shall forgive you. O my servants, you will not be able to cause harm to me and you will not be able to cause benefit to me. O my servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you, to become as pious as the most pious heart of anyone of you, that would not increase my kingdom in anything. O my servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you, to be as wicked as the most wicked heart of anyone of you, that would not decrease my kingdom in anything. O my servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you, to rise up in one place and make a request of me, and were I to give everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what I have any more than a needle would decrease the sea if put into it. O my servants, it is only your deeds that I record for you and then recompense for you, so let him who finds good praise Allah and let him who finds other than that blame no one but himself."**

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2577

And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright. 2: 186

Omar (RA) – said that he is NOT concerned if Allah will answer his du'a but he is concerned is HE WILL MAKE THE DU'A.

- **3. The Quran is the Book which leads to Purification of the Soul - al Qur'an kitabi tazkiyatinnafs**

Qur'an is a book of tazkiyyah

3: 164 Indeed Allah conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses (the Qur'an), and purifying them (from sins by their following him), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur'an) and *Al-Hikmah* [the wisdom and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. his legal ways, statements, acts of worship, etc.)], while before that they had been in manifest error.

50: 37 = Verily, therein is indeed a reminder for him who has a heart or gives ear while he is heedful.

29: 51 = Is it not sufficient for them that We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) which is recited to them? Verily, herein is mercy and a reminder (or an admonition) for a people who believe.

17: 9 = Verily, this Qur'an guides to that which is most just and right and gives glad tidings to the believers (in the Oneness of Allah and His Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ, etc.). who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a great reward (Paradise).

10: 57 = O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord (i.e. the Qur'an, ordering all that is good and forbidding all that is evil), and a healing for that (disease of ignorance, doubt, hypocrisy and differences, etc.) in your breasts, - a guidance and a mercy (explaining lawful and unlawful things, etc.) for the believers.

17: 82 = And We send down from the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism and act on it), and it increases the *Zalimun* (polytheists and wrong-doers) nothing but loss.

21: 45 = Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "I warn you only by the revelation (from Allah and not by the opinion of the religious scholars and others).

Whenever Allah conferred this gift to recite the Qur'an at all times – the heart will be purified. The person who recite all the time strived against the soul – priorities more than others.

Then he should also understand, ponder, study and acting upon the Qur'an.

You should recite the Qur'an everywhere - in the bus, waiting for the train, queue in the airport.

2: 121 = Those (who embraced Islam from Bani Israel) to whom We gave the Book [the Taurat (Torah)] [or those (Muhammad's Peace be upon him companions) to whom We have given the Book (the Qur'an)] recite it (i.e. obey its orders and follow its teachings) as it should be recited (i.e. followed), they are the ones that believe therein. And whoso disbelieves in it (the Qur'an), those are they who are the losers.

- should read TAFSIR

Hasan Basri - imams of tabeen - "Qur'an was revealed so that people can act upon its teachings."

Some people recite the Qur'an but still commit shirk, like hanging verses around neck, amulet. BUT if people did all these, give advice nicely - don't judge.

- **4. No one can be purified except by following the example of our Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam**

33: 21 = Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad ﷺ) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.

3: 31 = Say (O Muhammad ﷺ to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah then follow me (i.e. accept Islamic Monotheism, follow the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*), Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

He (SAW) - The Best of mankind. Allah sent him (SAW) as a mercy to mankind.

"Follow the prophet (SAW)" - emulate him (SAW) closely. Avoid innovations

Taroktu feekum amroini, lantadhillu maa tamassaktum bihima - kitabillah a sunnatin nabiyyi - I am leaving you 2 things: and you will be never be le astray if you cling on to them: the Qur'an and my sunnah - last sermon of prophet (Muhammad SAW).

- **5. At-tazkiyyatu takhliyyah wa tahliyyah.**

Purification - takhliyyah stay away from certain matters, tahliyyah -adorn and apply certain things

Takhliyyah - leave certain statements, acts that are not pleasing to Allah (stay away from haram) - including people

Tahliyyah – do righteous actions (act upon the obligations)

Should be achieved by means of things that **are legislated. NOT Innovations.**

24: 30 = Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do

e.g. wearing white thobe – how to keep clean – stay away from ketchup, dirty places

87: 14-15 = Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do

GOOD DEEDS e.g remembrance of Allah, salah, fasting

29:45 = Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do

2: 45 = And seek help in patience and *As-Salat* (the prayer) and truly it is extremely heavy and hard except for *Al-Khashi'un* [i.e. the true believers in Allah - those who obey Allah with full submission, fear much from His Punishment, and believe in His Promise (Paradise, etc.) and in His Warnings (Hell, etc.)].

2: 183 = O you who believe! Observing *As-Saum* (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become *Al-Muttaqun*

58: 11 = Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.

- **6. close any door which leads to corruption**

Any doors which lead to disobedience – you must CUT the act, close the door.

«ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا، وَعَنْ جَنْبِي الصِّرَاطِ سُورَانِ فِيهِمَا أَبْوَابٌ مُفْتَحَةٌ، وَعَلَى الْأَبْوَابِ سُتُورٌ مُرَخَّاةٌ وَعَلَى بَابِ الصِّرَاطِ دَاعٍ يَدْعُو: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ هَلُمُّوا ادْخُلُوا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَدَاعٍ يَدْعُو مِنْ فَوْقِ الصِّرَاطِ فَإِذَا أَرَادَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يَفْتَحَ شَيْئًا مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ قَالَ وَيْحَكَ لَا تَفْتَحْهُ فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ فَتَحْتَهُ تَلَجَّهُ فَالصِّرَاطُ الْإِسْلَامُ وَالسُّورَانِ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَالْأَبْوَابُ الْمَفْتَحَةُ مَحَارِمُ اللَّهِ وَذَلِكَ

الدَّاعِي عَلَى رَأْسِ الصِّرَاطِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَالدَّاعِي مِنْ فَوْقِ
الصِّرَاطِ وَاعِظُ اللَّهِ فِي قَلْبِ كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ»

(Allah has given a parable of the straight path, and on the two sides of this path, there are two walls containing door ways. On these door ways, there are curtains that are lowered down. on the gate of this path there is a caller heralding, `O people!11 come and enter the straight path all together and do not divide. ' There is also another caller that heralds from above the path, who says when a person wants to remove the curtain on any of these doors, `Woe to you! Do not open this door, for if you open it, you will enter it. The (straight) path is Islam, the two walls are Allah's set limits, the open doors lead to Allah's prohibitions, the caller on the gate of the path is Allah's Book (the Qur'an), while the caller from above the path is Allah's admonition in the heart of every Muslim.) At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Gharib."

There it is important to shut any doors which lead to corruptions.

e.g. sunnah of going to someone's house – knock the door 3x, if no answer – leave. Etiquette as guests must be maintained if he enters, wait to be seated, ask permission to use toilet.

ANY THREADS WHICH WILL LEAD TO EVIL MUST BE CUT OFF.

Nothing is more important than protecting the soul and the heart. Take good care. If you lose anything, inshaAllah you can make it up. If a person dies upon shirk, nifaq, disobedience....there is no second chance. LOSING THE DEEDS IS A CALAMITY.

Du'a

- Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) reported:

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) seldom left a gathering without supplicating in these terms: "Allahumma-qsim lana min khashyatika ma tahulu bihi bainana wa baina ma'sika, wa min ta'atika ma tuballighuna bihi jannataka, wa minal-yaqini ma tuhawwinu 'alaina masa-'ibad-dunya. Allahumma matti'na biasma'ina, wa absarina, wa quwwatina ma ahyaitana, waj'alhul-waritha minna, waj'al tharana 'ala man zalamana, wansurna 'ala man 'adana, wa la taj'al musibatana fi dinina, wa la taj'alid-dunya akbara hammina, wa la mablagha 'ilmina, wa la tusallit 'alaina man-la yarhamuna, (O Allah, apportion to us such fear as should serve as a barrier between us and acts of disobedience; and such obedience as will take us to Your Jannah; and such as will make easy for us to bear in the calamities of this world. O Allah! let us enjoy our hearing, our sight and our power as long as You keep us alive and make our heirs from our own offspring, and make our revenge restricted to those who oppress us, and support us against those who are hostile to us let no misfortune afflict our Deen; let not worldly affairs be our principal concern, or the ultimate limit of our knowledge, and let not those rule over us who do not show mercy to us)."

Many people play games in the religion. They must be concerned because this affects our hereafter.

- **7. tazdakkur maut - Remembering death**

59: 18, 66: 6, 2: 281 , 7: 9, 23: 102, 99: 7-8

If he does good, he will ask

- **8. Be careful who you chose as companions**

“A person is on the religion of his companions. Therefore let every one of you carefully consider the company he keeps.” [Tirmidhi]

“And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes pass beyond them, desiring adornments of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect.” (Qur’an, 18:28)

The Prophet ﷺ reminds us of the importance of good company in this *hadith* (record of the Prophet ﷺ): “A good friend and a bad friend are like a perfume-seller and a blacksmith: The perfume-seller might give you some perfume as a gift, or you might buy some from him, or at least you might smell its fragrance. As for the blacksmith, he might singe your clothes, and at the very least you will breathe in the fumes of the furnace.” [Bukhari, Muslim]

The Prophet ﷺ (peace be upon him) was reportedly asked: “Which of our companions are best?” He replied: “One whose appearance reminds you of God, and whose speech increases you in knowledge, and whose actions remind you of the hereafter.” (al Muhasibi)

- **9. Be aware, don't be secured – until death**

Don't say – “I'm ok....I am on the right path”

Our heart is between Allah's fingers

Continue to purify yourself – until death.

Du'a –

Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir recorded that Umm Salamah said that the Prophet used to supplicate,

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

“Yaa, muqallibal qooloobee thabbit qalbee ‘alaa deenik”

O, You Who changes the hearts, make my heart firm on Your religion.

He (SAW) then recited,

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

"*Rabbanaa laa toozigh qooloobanaa ba'daidz hadaytanaa wahablanaa milla dunka rahmatan innaka antal wahhaab.*"

Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly, You are the Bestower.

[Surah Al 'Imran 3: 8]

[Ibn abi Hatim; at Tabari]

[At- Tirmidhi].

Fatir 35 : 15-17

How Do You Purify Your Soul?

You do not have to deprive yourself of specific foods or dress in special clothing. You don't even have to climb into a cave or sit in meditation for hours. Spirituality is built into the very fabric of Islamic beliefs and practices.

1. To understand the pure Tawheed. The Quran says: "**Devote yourselves to Allah and assign Him no partners, for the person who does so is like someone who has been hurled down from the skies and snatched up by the birds or flung to a distant place by the wind.**" (Quran 22:31)

Your belief is fundamental. These days people think you can be spiritual by following any religion, or no religion for that matter! Islam teaches the opposite. You cannot truly purify your soul unless you hold the correct beliefs about the Creator of your soul. As a Muslim, you have accepted that only Islam provides you with the correct beliefs about your Creator. That is why the pure Tawheed is so important.

2. Practicing devotional acts of obedience and abandoning prohibitions and to endure in doing both of them. Repetition and routine have great spiritual value, therefore endurance is the key. Devotional acts enlighten the heart and energize the limbs, whereas prohibitions darken the heart and make a person lazy. Think

about it: if you want to purify yourself, would you do it with spiritual practices created by men or with devotional worship prescribed by Allah?

What are many “spiritual” people into these days? They dance or whirl to get into a mystic trance. They listen to meditation music, relaxation music, or they do traditional yoga or practice reiki. As a Muslim, try to find your comfort in the ritual prayer by learning them properly and focusing on Allah and what you are saying when you perform them. With persistence and practice, you will enjoy your prayers and learn to relax with it. Instead of mystical music, train your ears to listen to the Quran and train your tongue to recite it with the correct rules of recitation. It is far superior to any music!

3. Seeking religious knowledge at the hands of qualified scholars who are also well versed with the diseases of the heart and their cures according to the way of the prophets. Knowledge is the key. The person who purifies his soul by spiritual exercises and sitting in isolation, techniques that the prophets did not teach, is like a sick man who treats himself. The prophets knew how to cure the hearts. There is no way to purify the soul or rectify it except through their way and submitting to it. Good scholars will allow you to ask your questions and guide you with proper knowledge. It is important to follow the spiritual path of the Prophet that are found within the teachings of Islam. When one scrutinizes the method used by modern teachers like Deepak Chopra or the Dalai Lama they will surely realize the vanity and uselessness of their methods.

4. Keeping good company and being careful in selecting your friends. The company you keep will help you with purifying your soul and staying away from distractions. A person is greatly influenced by their surroundings. Good company will help you when you go through lows in your life in general or as a Muslim. A good friend will remind you when you forget and encourage you when needed. Being around like minded people, practicing Islam will not make you feel you don't fit.

Benefits of Purifying the Soul

- Success in this life and in the life to come.
- Satisfaction and comfort of the heart.
- Steadfastness in practicing Islam and obeying Allah.

A soul that is strong and prepares itself with the remembrance of Allah, seeking forgiveness from Him and turning towards Allah, will be more able to overcome the hurdles of life.

Du'aas for Purifying the Soul:

From Zayd ibn Arqam, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) made du'a

DU'A:

اللَّهُمَّ اتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا وَ زَكَّاهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا أَنْتَ وَلِيِّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا

Allahumma, 'aati nafsi taqwaaha, wa zakkihaa Anta khairu man zakkaahaa, Anta waliyyuhaa wa maulaaha

O Allah, grant my soul its piety and purify it, for You are the best to purify it. You are its protector and guardian” (Muslim)

10 ways you can overcome your Nafs

1. Constant purification. Increase in your worship acts and strive for obedience of Allah (swt) at all times. Follow His guidance through the teachings of the Quran and Hadith. You should prioritise with the compulsory acts such as five daily prayers, even as you try to pick up the supererogatory ones.

2. Conscious awareness – TAQWAHVV Z. Your nafs is conscious and as such you have control over decisions you make that will impact your daily life and the hereafter. Therefore be conscious of Allah (swt) at all times and make a choice to break free from the negative desires and inclinations.

3. Avoid sins and prohibitions. And always follow an evil thought, speech or act with a good one. You can achieve this through learning and seeking beneficial knowledge. In that way, you can sieve the truth from falsehood; and permissible acts from prohibitions.

4. Remember the test of life. This temporary life is a test and a preparation for the ultimate abode – the everlasting world and hereafter. Which then is more worthy of striving for?

5. Follow the Sunnah. In our beloved Prophet (saw), we have the perfect example. So follow him and you won't go wrong.

6. Think of positive & negative effect of every action. For example, with the 5 daily prayers the benefits from physical to psychological bring serenity and a tranquil effect even beyond the prayers. While delaying/missing prayers due to laziness and negligence may bring about guilt, feeling of burden, regret, need to make excuses etc in addition to amassing sins.

7. Use your time wisely. Assess your time & accompanying deeds. And try to keep positively busy with **rewarding acts**. Do something for the Ummah without expecting a profit. Make it an investment for your hereafter.

8. Keep good company. Mind your environment and those you choose to stay around. Choose those who can help guard your creed & deen.

9. Purify your acts through your intention. Renew them as often as you can, centred on Allah's pleasure and to earn paradise. Isn't paradise and its wonders enough motivation to give up the instant gratifications for?

10. Make Dua. Make supplications for a sound & pure heart; one that is filled with Allah's love but yearns for even more of Allah's (swt) love.

{The heart can only become sound, achieve success, take pleasure, be satisfied, experience enjoyment, become pleased, attain serenity and calmness through the ibadaah (worship) of its Lord; having love of Him and turning to Him (in repentance). Even if it were to attain every type of pleasure from creation, it will not acquire serenity & tranquillity. This is because the heart possess an intrinsic need for its Lord, since He is its deity, love and pursuit and with Allah the heart achieves joy, pleasure, delight, amenity, serenity and tranquillity.}

[Ibn Taimiyyah's essay of Servitude]