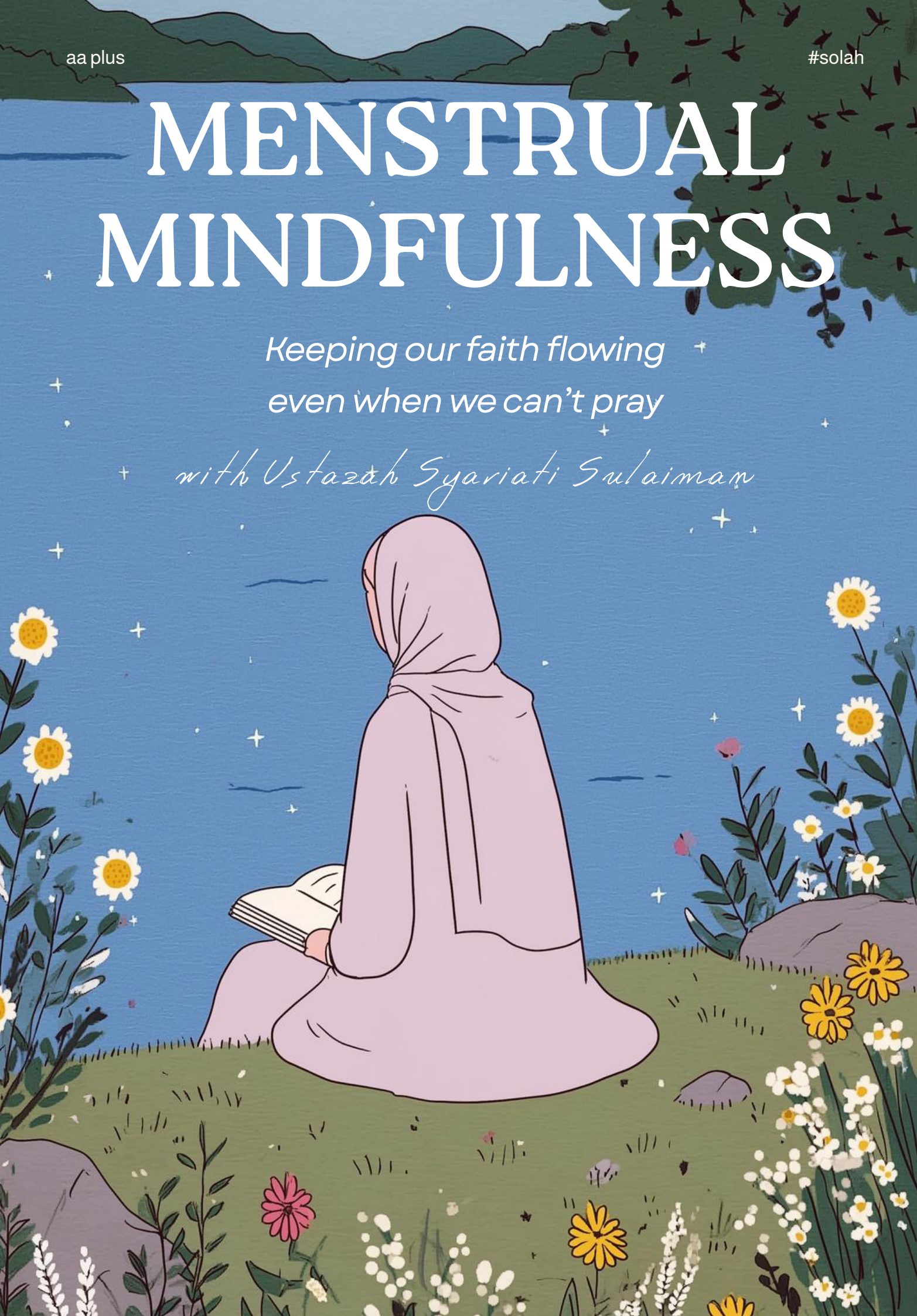


MENSTRUAL MINDFULNESS

*Keeping our faith flowing
even when we can't pray*

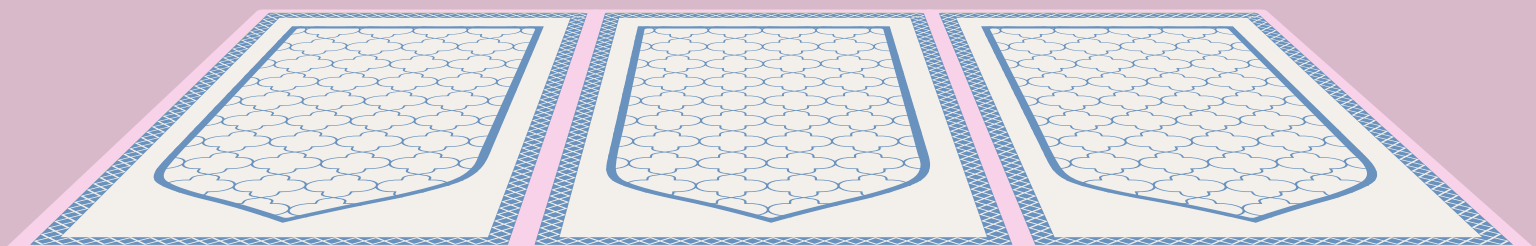
with Ustazah Syariati Sulaiman



The Yearning of a Worshipper

- We want to continue to worship Allah SWT, and since Solah is our core worship, we don't know how to fill this gap when we take a pause from Solah when we menstruate. We feel disconnected from Allah SWT.
- However, let's reframe this: it is not a disconnect; it is **a feeling of longing**.
- When we are unable to pray; we long for prayer. Yet, at times we can pray, we hastily move through our prayers. The irony of not being connected while we can pray, yet yearning for prayer when we can't. :(

- When we sincerely ask what we can do if we cannot pray, it comes from a place of yearning to seek the pleasure of Allah SWT. We yearn to gain closeness to Him and to feel that our entire body is bowing down and worshipping Allah SWT physically.
- Ultimately, **we believe we are worshippers of Allah SWT**. We believe that we have been put on this world solely to worship Him, and when a huge ibadah like Solah is taken out of our lives momentarily, we feel something missing and seek to find its replacement.



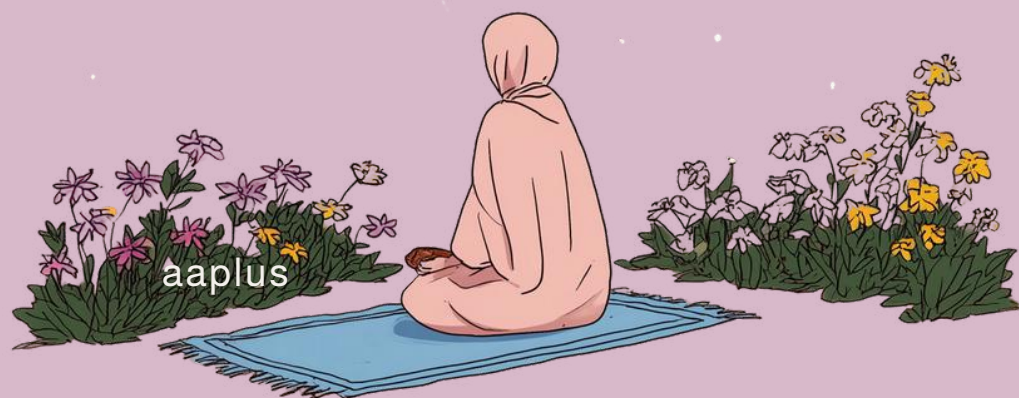
A Necessary Pause

- As believers, we must hold the belief that during specific periods of the month, we are unable to perform Solah out of His Mercy for us.
- We have to remember that **the Mercy of Allah SWT upon us never stops, even when we are not praying.** Allah doesn't pause His mercy.
- We have to expand our understanding of what worship is. We have to open our hearts to truly believe that there is not only one way to connect with Allah SWT.
- When we don't pray, we are not stopping from worship to Allah SWT. Instead, **we switch our worship. #switchnotstop**

- For example, we are required to maintain a particular standard of cleanliness when we pray, and we have to maintain this cleanliness even outside prayer since we are generally people who pray. There is no excuse for us to switch to haram activities when we cannot pray (due to our period).
- When we replace our space of worship with things that force us to stop worshipping or remembering Allah SWT, we are only opening the door to busying ourselves with mindless activities and stopping us from being mindful of the timings for Solah.
- It's not that Allah SWT has paused the ibadah that we can do. Rather, **it is us who has put a pause on worshipping Allah SWT.** :(

Are you Mindless or Mindful?

- We become less mindful of the things that we usually do when we are preparing to pray. For example, we may put on excessive makeup or nail polish that takes more effort to remove.
- We end up utilising time for rest on excessiveness or non-beneficial activities, when we should be honouring the rest that Allah SWT has given us.
- Allah SWT has given us permission to pause Solah because there are biological processes occurring in our bodies during our period



Types of Worship we can do when can't pray:

- Learning
- Heart
- Behaviour
- With People
- Work
- Money
- Jobs
- Limbs
- Mind
- Knowledge
- Speech
- Tongue
- Body
- Allah
- Wajib
- Sunnah

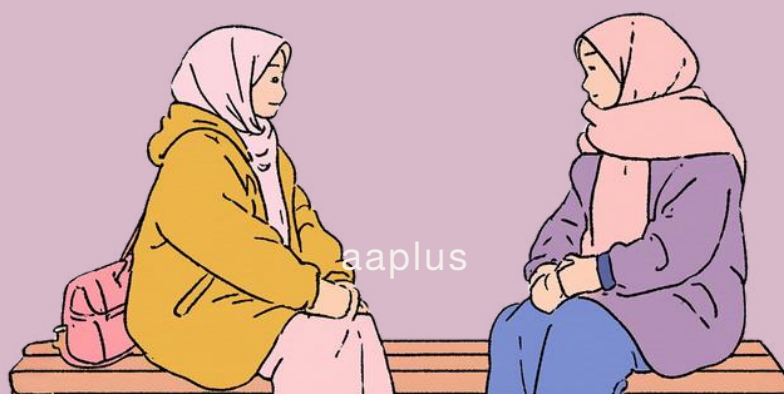
*The whole of our entire being
submits to Allah SWT!*



Our Entire Being is in Worship

- A Muslim does not enter into worship only during the five designated times of Solah. They continue to worship Allah SWT outside Solah.
- We worship Allah with our entire being and body. What Allah has given us should be used to worship Allah SWT.
- **Some questions we can ask ourselves:**
 - What are we eating?
 - What are we doing to our bodies?
 - Do we have knowledge about how to fuel ourselves during the time of period?
 - How are we making ourselves feel stronger, better, less moody?

- How do we eat? Why do we eat certain things that make us feel worse?
- What are we doing with our hearts?
- Are we fuelling it constantly so we do not feel that disconnect?
- Are we doing zikr?
- Do we know that there are certain things that we can do?
- Are we learning and using the brain, the intellect that Allah SWT has given us?
- What are we doing with our language?
(Remember: Our period is not a licence to misbehave with people.)
- Are we using our moment of pause to cause unhappiness around us?
- What do we do with our money? Do we like indulge in unbeneficial things?



A Good Believer

- Everything that we own, the relationships that we have, our behaviour and speech with people, etc., are all acts of worship.
- **It is obligatory upon a believer to behave to the best of their ability.** It can be difficult to act in a certain way or to communicate kindly when we are easily triggered or experiencing pain; however, this is precisely where our strength is showcased, as shown in the following hadith:

“He who believes in Allah and the Last Day must either speak good or remain silent.”

(Muslim)



- When we are on our period, we realise that there are so many kinds of worship that Allah SWT has gifted us. How are we using these gifts? Are we accepting these gifts graciously, or do we allow ourselves to become entitled, spoiled people just because?
- We are not mindful; we forgot that our whole life is for worship. Therefore, in all our actions, **we must ensure that we are in control of our efforts to seek the pleasure of Allah SWT.**

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

Faith has over seventy branches or over sixty branches, the most excellent of which is the declaration that there is no god but Allah, and the humblest of which is the removal of what is injurious from the path: and modesty is a branch of faith.

(At-Tirmidhi)



aaplus



Branches of Faith

- **‘Declaration of Faith and remembrance of Allah’**: Why are we not doing a lot of Dhikr when we are on our periods? Why do we have a disconnect from Dhikr during this time?
- **‘Removing something injurious from the path’**: This is to remove an obstacle from people's path. If you see a stone or a banana peel, for example, pick it up and throw it away. If you see an obstruction, warn people about it.
- We do these deeds because we want to be among the faithful and because Rasulullah ﷺ said so.

- **‘Modesty as a branch of faith’**: We must be modest in the way we dress and behave. Modesty is not just wearing clothes that conceal our Awrah; it is also in the way we talk.
- For example, are we proud? Do we eat in public during Ramadan even though we are excused from fasting? Do we like to show off?
- **‘Cleanliness as another branch of faith’**: Are we practising cleanliness in our daily lives, even outside of Solah?



Ibadah of the Heart

- We always seek to know what we can do or what is allowed during our period. We focus so much on **doing** yet **certain kinds of ibadah are internal**. They are the **ibadah of the heart**.
- Allah SWT mentions in Surah al-Azhab Ayah 35 different good qualities of men and women side by side, and they will earn a great reward if they possess the qualities mentioned in the verse. When you cultivate, develop, and cherish these qualities in your heart, you will also reap significant rewards.

What Allah Says

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَالْقَنَاتِينَ وَالْقَنَاتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ
وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ
وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ
وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.

(Surah Al-Ahzab 33:35)

‘Believing men and women’

- We accept that we have our period and by following the prohibitions during our period, we are submitting to Allah SWT. We believe that this is how He wants us to live, and we live it.
- We submit to Him by embracing how He created us and the emotions that we are meant to feel as women. The inconveniences we go through to keep ourselves clean is part of submitting to Allah SWT.
- We submit to Him therefore we believe, and belief is in the heart.

‘Obedient men and women’

- Obedience must come from the heart. If you are resistant to Allah SWT, you will not want to obey Him. You would want to challenge Him.
- When we desire something other than what Allah SWT has given us, we try to intervene and go against Divine Decree.



‘Truthful men and women’

- When we are on our periods, we have to be truthful to ourselves and Allah SWT. To be truthful to yourself is to acknowledge that you don't feel your 100 percent at certain times of the month.
- You have to be truthful to other people by being patient. This is very important because a lot of women misuse their period to be impatient with everyone.
- We need to be gracious, strong, resilient, mindful and frequently make Dhikr, exemplifying the Women of Paradise who would immerse themselves in different acts of worship.

- If they cannot recite the Quran, you may listen, teach or learn instead. They would also give charity no matter how little or how much they had.
- They were people who spoke the truth and were humble, and would always find ways to serve Allah SWT. These are women who have good mention from Rasulullah ﷺ. They did not use their period as an excuse.



‘Charitable men and women’

- You don't have to be in a state of Wudhu to give charity. You can give charity in the best possible way, just like Sayyidatina Aisha RA, who once polished and perfumed the coins that she wanted to give in Sadaqah.
#MaShaAllah
- Charity is something you do for Allah, and you would want to do it in the best presentation. **You are presenting your charity to Allah SWT.**



‘Men and women who guard their private parts’

- The manner in which we dress, the way we communicate with others, and how we interact with the opposite gender are all reflections of how we present ourselves as a Muslim woman who submits to Allah and adheres to the guidance provided by Allah SWT.
- All the boundaries and rules are meant to protect us. We do our part to take care and guard our private parts and our modesty.



Remember:

All of the qualities
are practices that
we ought to engage
in on a daily basis.
They are means for
us to gather
immense blessings
during our period.



Breakout Room Activity:

1) What Ibadah are you switching your Solah with while on period? What qualities or activities can you practice or inculcate?

2) Plan a period project to complete during your period days.



Take Care of You

- As we age, it may take a lot of energy to do normal activities while on our period. It's important to **prioritise taking care of your body**. If you're extra hungry, eat. **Learn more about what your body needs and how it can thrive** instead of survive. You cannot constantly give in to your nafs and eat whatever you desire.
- Learn how your body works, and how to preempt yourself when your period is coming. Pay attention to what you should be doing as a Muslim woman **to serve Allah in the best state of mind and body**.



- We are not meant to just survive, we are meant to thrive! When you can afford to thrive, you should thrive. As Muslim women, we need to thrive since we are representing a family. We are nurturers and educators; we have so many important things to do. **Taking care of our body is an amanah.**
- During your period, **give yourself permission to sleep in and rest** because Allah gave you that permission to rest. Don't feel guilty about not staying up for Fajr etc., because guilt manifests itself in different ways, especially for Muslim women. We may impose standards on ourselves while on our period, but we're different people at different times of the month, with different needs.

Pause to Please Him

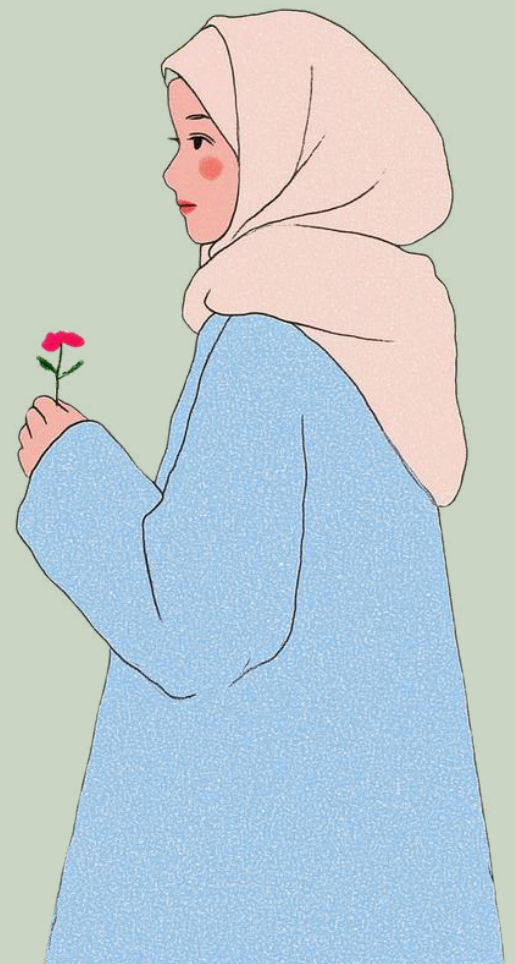
- Whatever we choose to do during our period - rest or work -, Allah SWT is always with us. **Ultimately, we want to please Him.** If we decide to take on projects during our period, it shouldn't make us stressed. It should be a means of ease for us during our period. Don't overwhelm yourself beyond your capacity.
- **Women's pause is not a punishment.** We are allowed to sleep in; to clean ourselves a few times a day; or to be mindful of the things that may affect our hearts. Because of the fluctuations in our hormones, we tend to be sensitive. We should be aware of feelings tainting our hearts that may develop into other acts that may harm us or others.
- This is a time to look within; to detox, to remove and to cleanse.

Do Not Disconnect

- There are many forms of ibadah that can increase during menstruation, so we should not feel disconnected.
- Perhaps we have been fed with negative images of women during period, pregnancy, labour, etc. **Where are the images of women who are calm and strong?**
- There's no reason for us to feel disconnected from Allah SWT during our period. If we're in pain, we should be pleading with Allah SWT to ease the pain for us. We can pray for future generations of women to go through an easier time during their period. We should cry and connect with ourselves and plead to Allah SWT.

Final Reminder

- Remember: **Worship is not just through Solah.** Continue to worship Allah SWT Who created us and gave us life and brings death to us to test us.
- You are still accountable when you are menstruating - the angels don't stop writing the deeds that you do, whether it is good or bad.
- We have to remind ourselves that **we are believing women who are committed to hold ourselves to high standards set by Allah SWT in the Quran, for us to follow.**



The Best in Deeds

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ
لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ

*‘He is the One’ Who created
death and life in order to
test which of you is best in
deeds. And He is the
Almighty, All-Forgiving.*

(Surah Al-Mulk 67:2)

Remember:

We have to
reset and
relearn what it
truly means to
be worshipping
Allah SWT.

