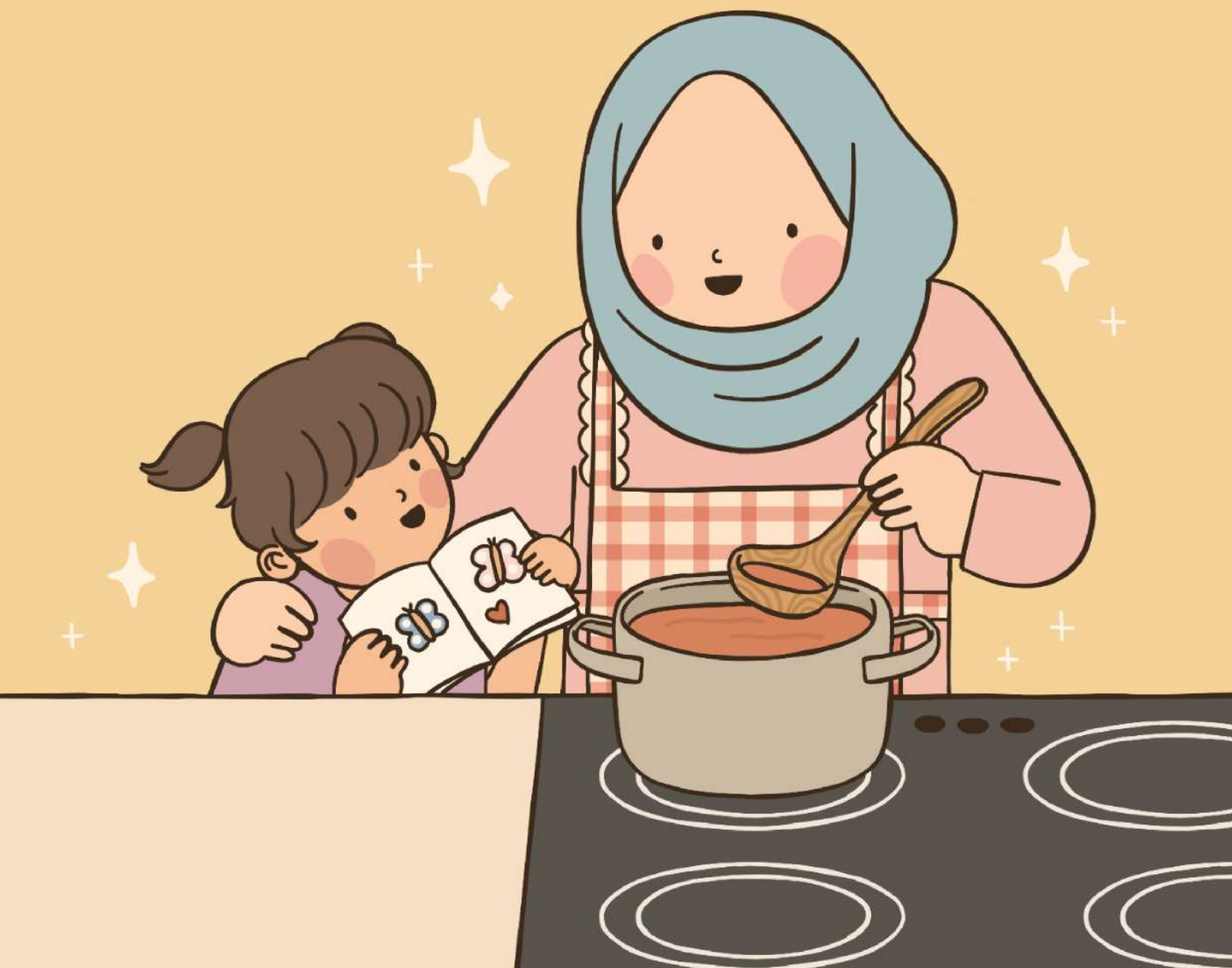


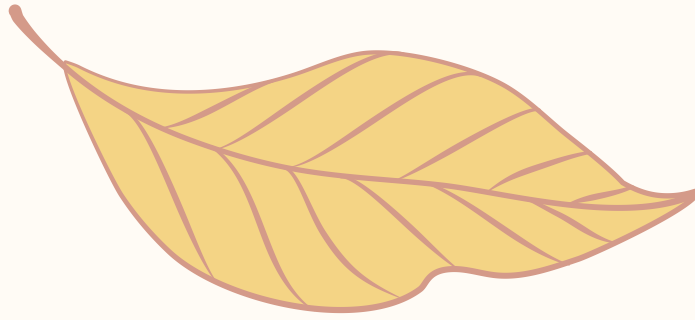
episode 3:

REWIRING SELFLESSNESS

How To Serve With Joy, Without Burning Out

With Aida Azlin + Ustazah Farhana Munshi



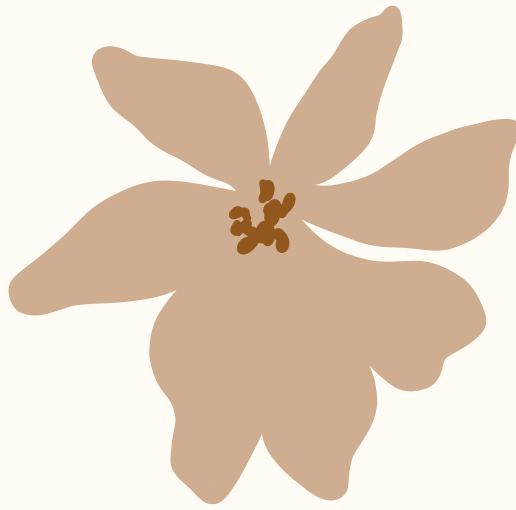


A Trait that Allah Loves

- The trait of Selflessness shines very strongly in the most righteous of human beings, Prophet SAW. It shines in him SAW over and over again from the beginning of his life to the end of his life.
- Before him SAW, every prophet also shone with the trait of selflessness. It enabled them to do what they do on this Earth in the path of Allah SWT.
- Every single righteous person is righteous by this trait of selflessness - to prefer someone over yourself.
- The righteous get happier and happier in their selflessness. The more selfless they are, the happier they get.



Selflessness is
opposite to
what is being
pushed forward
in our time -
Self-Love.



Selflessness is Self-Embracing

- If we give in to someone else, or are sacrificing for them in a disgruntled manner, that is not being selfless. Doing this destroys the Self because it is resisting the service that it is providing.
- Selflessness is self-embracing. Seeking to serve all the time because service brings pleasure to Allah SWT, and eventually to the Self.
- The Prophet SAW demonstrates to us very clearly what selflessness is all about. If we are only ever doing it for Allah SWT, we will not ever see that we are being trampled on. We will see it as Allah's Blessings and Gift that He keeps placing in our path opportunities to help others. That's how we gain happiness - in doing what is good.

Verses of the Selfless believers

There are many verses in the Quran on good traits. Surah Al-Insan was revealed on behalf of Sayyidatina Fatima RA, and speaks about the greatness of selflessness in the sight of Allah SWT.

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

And give food—despite their desire for it—to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, (Al-Insan 76:8)

إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا ﴿٩﴾

‘saying to themselves,’ “We feed you only for the sake of Allah, seeking neither reward nor thanks from you. (Al-Insan 76:9)

إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا غَمًّا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٠﴾

We fear from our Lord a horribly distressful Day.”
(Al-Insan 76:10)

فَوْقَهُمْ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا ﴿١١﴾

So Allah will deliver them from the horror of that Day, and grant them radiance and joy, (Al-Insan 76:11)

Concept of Selflessness

- The problem with the modern world is that it keeps pointing us to the wrong direction and to the extremes all the time.
- Our Prophet SAW had done enough in pointing to us what is correct and true.
- Ustazah Farhana studies with a teacher that teaches the understandings or mentalities that Rasulullah SAW corrected. He takes concepts that people have in life (such as the concept of happiness and service) and he brings Hadiths from Rasulullah SAW to re-define and correct these concepts.
- There's a clear misunderstanding of what selflessness is, hence leading them to being miserable when in service.

*We think
we may
be doing
good, but
we are
not
actually
doing
good.*

Three meanings of عَلَى حُبِّهِ



وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive, (Al-Insan 76:8)

1) Out of love for Him i.e. Allah SWT

- Selflessness in this case is shown through the act of feeding others. Sayyidina Ali RA and Sayyidatina Fatima RA were fasting and were going to break their fast with it, but instead they give it to others.
- Sayyidatina Fatima RA and Sayyidina Ali AS made a vow to fast for 3 days because their children were sick. Hence Sayyidina Ali RA would go out every single day and work for that food.
- By the love of Allah, they gave away what they just earned for that day for their family

2) Out of love for giving

- The love of service - if you love service, would you ever complain about it?

3) Out of love of the people

- they love others more than they love themselves

BONUS:

4) You will never achieve righteousness until you donate some of what you cherish. And whatever you give is certainly well known to Allah. (Ali Imran 3:92)

- The one thing we love the most, is ourselves. More than money and anything else.
- We love ourselves and all the good for ourselves - when we are rested, relaxing, pampered and get to have whatever we have.
- When the above verse was revealed, one of the Companions got up, went to Rasulullah SAW and gave away his beloved beautiful orchard - which was the most beloved of his wealth to him - for the sake of Allah and the Prophet SAW.



A pinch of Selflessness

- Selflessness has the element of ‘a pinch’ but it will lead us to happiness.
- Ibn Ahmad bin Hambal’s mother urged him to travel far and wide to seek knowledge although it hurt her that her son is not in her presence. She showed selflessness for the religion. She knew that her son had a gift in studying and memorising, and true enough he was a gift for the Ummah but it came at the expense of her choosing to be alone in her house for years while her son travels the world for knowledge.
- She even had contentment that he chose not to marry early in his life because he was so focused on studying and learning. She held her desire to have grandchildren when she was alive and never got to meet them.

- And give food—despite their desire for it—to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, (Al-Insan 76:8)
- Whenever Allah SWT quotes a statement in the Quran, it emphasises its importance:
- 'saying to themselves,' "We feed you only for the sake of Allah, seeking neither reward nor thanks from you. (Al-Insan 76:9)
- They didn't want thanks, reward or recognition; all they wanted was the pleasure of Allah and to be saved from the Judgement Day.
- They see their service as a way to save their own souls, not as a favour to others. Essentially, those who receive our service are the ones doing us a favour by giving us the opportunities to help our own souls to serve!
- So Allah will deliver them from the horror of that Day, and grant them radiance and joy, (Al-Insan 76:11)

Never glancing at wealth



- As a young child, Rasulullah SAW went out to shepherd to help his uncle who was poor.
- Incident of Ta'if: The Prophet SAW make Du'a for the people who abused him at Ta'if. He SAW was sent as a mercy to humankind.
- Bedouins used to demand for wealth from the Prophet SAW but he SAW himself was poor. He SAW would just give what he had and even took debts to give to the poor. His selflessness is beyond anything.
- Selflessness is an essential trait when it comes to calling others to Allah SWT.



*He would never
be caught
glancing at
wealth in any
way whatsoever.*

The Opposite of Selflessness

- Scholars and teachers used to sleep only a few mins in a day and wrote books and teach and guide others out of sincerity for Allah SWT. And Allah preserves their work till today so much so that we are still benefitting from their work.
- The Nafs is the opposite of selflessness. The Self wants to lay down and relax - this naf is spoilt. We have to keep rewiring ourselves, and Syaitan would keep undoing these wires.

How do you 'rewire' yourself
whenver your Nafs overpowers you?



Study Break



Timestamp: 17:27

Greetings to Khadijah RA

- Abu Huraira reported: The Angel Gabriel came to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and he said, “O Messenger of Allah, here is Khadijah coming to you with a dish of stew, food and drink. When she arrives before you, greet her with peace on behalf of her Lord and myself. Give her glad tidings of a palace in Paradise made of reeds, wherein there will be no turbulence, nor fatigue.” (Bukhari and Muslim)
- In reply to the Salam, Sayyidatina Khadijah RA stated:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ السَّلَامُ وَعَلَى جِبْرِيلَ السَّلَامُ وَعَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ
وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

Allah is Salam and peace be upon Jibra'eel and the Beloved Prophet mercy and blessings be upon them.

- Even her response was selfless. She RA focused only on Allah SWT, and nothing about her.
- Sayyidatina Khadijah RA was THE one wife of Rasulullah SAW who served him SAW so selflessly without any complaint at all. She RA never upset her husband ever in her life RA.
- He SAW even defended her after her death - his love for her RA was so strong.
- Before she met Rasulullah SAW, she RA was looking into marrying the last prophet. Her cousin, Waraqah told her that she would need to prepare for a difficult life. She RA responded that she was prepared out of her love for Allah SWT. She knew that nothing would be difficult if Allah was her goal.
- She embraced the difficult life with Rasulullah SAW. In fact, she RA climbed the mountains in her 50s to give food to Rasulullah SAW in the Cave of Hira.



Focus on ONE



- What makes selflessness easy is to really focus on Allah SWT. Usually we would look at ourselves or the action of what we are doing. This is a formula for disaster.
- If your service is dependent on who you serve, that would make you weak.
- We tend to get frustrated when people don't give thanks or complain and criticise. But if we do them for Allah SWT, we will try our best to catch ourselves before we spiral into unhappiness.
- If we want to pursue the high path to Allah SWT, we need constant reconnecting back with Allah SWT. It is only then we keep rewiring our mindsets. Our one-on-one time with Allah SWT will fuel us.

Solution to Self- Obsession

- In our time, people navigate between the two extremes:
- 1) having too much of the Self i.e. being self-absorbed, arrogant etc, or
- 2) having low self-esteem- self-loathing. Those who don't believe in God prescribed self-love as the solution to self-loathing.

The solution to self-hating or
self-loving is Allah-loving.

- Self-loathing is the same as self-obsession because both are obsessed with the Self.
- Their focus in the Self, the Self, the Self. We will not find the solution if we keep looking at our Self. The solution is to stop looking at the Self and instead look at the One who created, preserves and protects us and gives us what we feel in our hearts.

The solution
to self-hating
and self-loving
is Allah-loving.



Guarding Allah's rights

- Allah SWT is the One who removes the negativity in ourselves, and puts in positivity in ourselves.
- There is no way we can find who we are if we don't find Allah first. It's only when we started to get to know Allah then we can understand our purpose in this life.
- When we get to know Allah SWT and we learn more from Allah about ourselves because Allah teaches us.
- If we keep giving, who is looking after us?

احْفَظُ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظْكَ

Be mindful of God, and He will take care of you. (Tirmidhi)

- If we guard over Allah's commandments, Allah will guard over us. He will preserve us. We will find ourselves automatically in the best state of what we can ever be.



What Allah wants us to
do is not for Him; it is
for our own good.

What He made Wajib
on us is exactly what
we **NEED**.



Guarding people's feelings

- Story of Habib Abd al-Qadir al-Saqqaf: His selflessness is to the extent that he would not show pain or sadness in his face if he knew it was going to affect someone. Once he was in the car, he told the driver to stop by the side of the road. When the Habib was opening the door, the driver saw that the door was slammed in on Habib's fingers. He did not inform the driver because he did not want to hurt the feelings of the person who slammed the door (unintentionally) on him.
- He did not make a sound when the doors slammed on his fingers for fear of hurting the person's feelings.

*What
would we
have
done if
we were
in his
shoes?*

- Story of the a scholar who pretended to be deaf in front of a woman who farted in his presence in order not to embarrass or offend her.
- What other stories of selflessness have you heard of?
- The pious guard over people's feelings so much. They would go through difficulties just not to hurt other's feelings. It is from their Akhlak.
- The earliest example of Selflessness came from the story of the two sons of Prophet Adam AS, Habil and Qabil.
- And recite to them the story of Adam's two sons, in truth, when they both made an offering [to Allah], and it was accepted from one of them but was not accepted from the other. Said [the latter], "I will surely kill you." Said [the former], "Indeed, Allah only accepts from the righteous [who fear Him]. (Al-Maidah 5:27)

- If you should raise your hand toward me to kill me - I shall not raise my hand toward you to kill you. Indeed, I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds. (Al-Maidah 5:28)
- Indeed, I want you to obtain [thereby] my sin and your sin so you will be among the companions of the Fire. And that is the recompense of wrongdoers." (Al-Maidah 5:29)
- And his soul permitted to him the murder of his brother, so he killed him and became among the losers. (Al-Maidah 5:30)
- Allah places us here not to serve our own selves. He places us here as Khalifah, to do work. The worker do not look at their own selves.
- We can't use our circumstances as an excuse. No matter where Allah place us, there is an opportunity to serve and to be selfless. Every opportunity is the right time to serve. We are created to serve.



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not to serve our own
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