

# ALI 352 : Spiritual self discipline

## Session Two

Ponder over this:

Every action of a person has two effects:

- 1) External or societal effect
- 2) Internal or effect on the soul

From Ethical Discourses

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# Agenda

- Commencing the Journey
- Exercising the soul
- Step 1 : Focusing only on God
- Step 2 : Conquering the *Nafse Ammarah*
- Step 3 : Making the heart receptive

# Commencing the Journey

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ  
كَدْحًا فَمُلَاقِيهِ

O human being, you are struggling towards your Lord a struggle, then you will meet Him.

**Sura Inshiqaq, 84:6**

# Exercising the Soul

## 1) Training

Train your soul by performing good deeds. Every good deed is a training to do that which God wants rather than what the soul wants.

Do the good not for the self but for God. The most important issue in relation to the training of the soul is sincerity. Whenever the sincerity of a person increases, the effects which they have on one's soul in training will also increase.

## 2) Feeding

Nourish your soul through regular inspiration.

Lugman tells his son: O My son, seek wisdom for it enlivens the dead heart the way rain enlivens the dead earth.

Look after your soul and watch over it.

### 3) Molding

What type of soul do you want?

Remember that the soul will be the body of the Hereafter.

Change some things in your soul. Counter negative thoughts.

Plant positive thoughts and concentrate on them.

# Step 1 – Focusing only on God

i) Everything belongs to God

- Creation

- Power

- Control

- Nurture

He it is who created the heavens and the earth in six periods and He is firm in power. He knows that which goes deep down into the earth and that which comes forth out of it, and that which comes down from the heaven and that which goes up into it and He is with you wherever you are; and Allah sees what you do.

**Sura Hadid, 57:4**



## Step 2–Conquering the Nafse Ammarah

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي

most surely the soul commands towards  
evil, except such as my Lord has had  
mercy on

**Sura Yusuf, 12:53**

My God, to You I complain of a soul  
commanding to evil, rushing to offenses,  
eager to disobey Thee,  
and exposing itself to Thy anger. . . .  
many its excuses, drawn out its expectations  
when evil touches it, it is anxious,  
when good touches it, grudging;  
inclining to sport and diversion,  
full of heedlessness and inattention,

Whispered prayer of the Complainers  
Sahifa Sajjadiyya

# Step 3 – Making the heart receptive

- Soften it by the remembrance of Allah
- Awaken it by thinking of the needy
- Enliven it through warnings and advice
- Subjugate it through the remembrance of death