

Fixing our Intentions & Feelings

Actions

Inte
ntio
ns

		Good	Neutral	Bad
Inte ntio ns	Good	Positive	Positive	Negative
	Neutral	Positive if a matter of Deen Zero Otherwise	Zero	Negative
	Bad	Negative	Negative	Negative

Note: We have done examples for each of the nine boxes in class

Power of Intention

So I gave you very university based examples, of Majors. Now let me give you some other examples, because this box right here is considered to be one of the greatest gifts (pointing to the “Neutral Action, Good Intention” box), and when you read the hadith “Innamal a'malu binniyaat”, that is something that Allah Ta’ala has given this Ummah that nobility that they can even be doing a neutral act and make a good intention. I’ll give you an example... I’ll take two of the most mundane things that we do in life, which are sleeping and eating. And we obviously experience this, we are quite famous for both of these things. Even some of you actually, I don’t know everyone, but quite a few of you have quite a zest for eating, right?

Khair, so what will be a good intention for sleeping? Look when we read one of the du’as, these are some of the ‘amals’ that are masnoon, like there are du’as before sleeping, after waking etc... that’s for some other venue, not for this one. Coming to Intention... I am just giving you ‘examples’. A good intention that you can make with whatever intention you want is that you can make better intentions. I would say that the doors of Ijtehad are open to you in Du’a and in Niyyah. You might be able to make better intentions. So for example when a person sleeps, he or she can make this niyyah that “Allah SWT, grant me enough rest from this sleep so that when I wake, I wake up fresh for your ibadah”. Right? That’s just a niyyah, but that’s a way of

sleeping. People don't realize now, I mean the early muslims were so conscious about every moment, they even took their sleep consciously. And we are so the other extreme that we even live in our wakeful state unconsciously. We are mindless while we are awake, and they were mindful about what intention they made when they went to sleep. There are many other such intentions. Now if a person who goes to sleep like that, chances of a person like that getting up for Tahajjud are quite high. Right? It's about the mind, the mentality. That's the way, the state of being.

Or when you eat, you can make the intention that "Allah Ta'ala, give me enough energy from this food, so I can use it in your Ibadah" or "Allah SWT, those atoms in my body that I use in sin, replace those atoms with new atoms from this new food". Or somebody who's ever earned Haram could say that Allah SWT, those atoms in my body that were generated from my haram living, now I am earning Halal living, I have left it again (said jokingly), so Allah Ta'ala now through this eating, generate cells in my body and let the halal food replace the haram food. Right? People make intentions! Now imagine if somebody eats like that, thinking like that, just imagine their eating experience, it would be significantly different, right? They had that emotional feeling that me and you never have. This is how people were. They used intentions.

And even if you think about those Sunnah du'as, I'll explain to you one du'a, the most simple du'a. When the Prophet (SAW) finished eating, he would say "Alhamdulillah". It was his Taqwa, right. Now when you think about it, again what I am trying is to make you think about it in your mind. That what would the Prophet (SAW) be eating? The Prophet (SAW) would go hungry for one day, two days, three days... by hunger I mean absolute Faaqa! Right? Then when he would eat, what would he be eating? Thick barley. Jau ki roti. Barley bread and some type of shorba, some type of saalan. So when the Prophet (SAW) says Alhamdulillah, he's not saying the way we do. When the Prophet (SAW) says that, he is not saying it because it's a Sunnah du'a that he memorized when he was a kid. He is saying that because that is the state of his heart. That when he eats, he is humbled and his heart melts in praise to Allah. That is the Sunnah. Not just the mere lafz of du'a. Now here we run the process backwards. We start with our tongue and we hope that if we recite this formula on our tongue enough then one day it will enter our heart, and after we eat then, we really would feel from the bottom of our heart praise for Allah SWT, and express it like that. Right? But it doesn't happen. We simply forget the whole du'a. We even forget to say Allah. Why? Because we don't feel it. We don't realize that tongue is the manifestation of the heart. Don't flatter yourself and begin thinking that we simply forgot it. No no no. We didn't say it because we didn't feel it. And the Prophet (SAW) wouldn't say it because he 'remembered'. The Prophet (SAW) said it because he felt it, he felt that praise in his heart. That's the difference, right?

So these people and this world of intention was all about their feelings. And their outlook and the way they viewed every single thing that was neutral in their life as a challenge, that is there any way we can make some intentional effort that somehow links it to Allah SWT? And maybe we get sawab. If you sleep like that six hours a day, those six hours would be just like sawab. You eat, and you eat one two three four five times a day, and every time you make some intention like that, you can get sawab.

عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَبِي حَفْصٍ عُمَرَ ابْنِ الْخَطَّابِ
 رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ، سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
 وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ
 مَانَوَى فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى
 اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصَيِّهَا أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ
 يَنْكِحُهَا فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ. رَوَاهُ إِمَامَا الْمُحَدِّثِينَ
 أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ الْمَغِيرَةِ ابْنُ
 بَرْدِزْبَةَ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَأَبُو الْحُسَيْنِ مُسْلِمُ بْنُ الْحَجَّاجِ بْنِ
 مُسْلِمٍ الْقُشَيْرِيُّ النَّيْسَابُورِيُّ فِي صَحِيحَيْهِمَا اللَّذَيْنِ هُمَا
 أَصَحُّ الْكُتُبِ الْمُصَنَّفَةِ.

On the authority of Ameer ul-Mu'mineen (the Commander of the Faithful), Abu Hafs `Umar ibn al-Khattab radiAllahu anhu, who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam say:

"Actions are but by intentions and every man shall have only that which he intended. Thus he whose migration (Hijrah to Madeenah from Makkah) was for Allah and His Messenger, his migration was for Allah and His Messenger, and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his migration was for that for which he migrated.

Reported in Bukhari and Muslim

Brief commentary:

- Many scholars started their books with this hadith
- Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbali said this is one of the ahadith that the religion revolves around
- It is equivalent to a third of knowledge because we are rewarded for three things: what the heart contains, what the tongue says and what our limbs do, and this hadith is pinnacle in dealing with matters of the heart
- The word إنما is used for exclusivity i.e. Actions are exclusively done by intentions
- Some scholars said there is an ellipses (implied meaning) in the first statement, in that it is talking about correctness of actions, as we are only judged in the hereafter for actions which we intended to do and are not judged for accidental actions (which had no

intention behind it), i.e. the first statement is saying "Actions which you will be judged upon on the day of judgement are the ones you intended to do"

- In the Arabic, it may seem that the second statement *نوى ما امرئ لكل وإنما* is a repeat of the first one, but the meaning of both is that the first statement is saying: for every correct action you do (action that you are held accountable for), there is an intention behind it, and the second statement is saying: the reward for the doer for his deed is according to his pious intention
- Doing sins could prevent you from doing righteous actions
- The first 3 people to be dragged into hellfire are people who done good actions with insincere intentions
- The opposite of sincerity is *riyaa'*, which means: showing off
- *Riyaa'* is considered as a minor form of shirk, and can disqualify a person's good deeds
- *Riyaa'* in Islam is when we do an act of worship for other than the sake of Allah alone
- *Riyaa'* is of many levels, many of which are hidden. Some examples of *riyaa'* are:
 - You do an action solely for the sake of the people
 - You do an action for the sake of Allah, but when you do it in front of others, you find it easier to do e.g. praying qiyam-ul-layl
 - You do it for the sake of Allah and it is not made easier by others looking at you, but you feel happy when others know you did this action, and you try hard to let them know you've done it e.g. pray in front of them or mention that you've just did this act of worship
 - You do it for the sake of Allah and it is not made easier by others looking at you, but you feel happy when others know you did this action, however, you do not directly try to make it visible that you have done this action, but you try to make it known indirectly e.g. swollen eyes or dry lips to let others know you've been crying or fasting
 - You do it for the sake of Allah and do not let others know you've done it, but you expect to be respected by others because you do such and such acts of worship
- This hadith mentioned two things, dunya and women, as they distract us the most from the hereafter
- The main theme of this hadith is about sincerity and purifying our intentions
- We need the three I's for our deeds to be accepted:
 - Iman (Being a Muslim)
 - Ikhlas (sincerity)
 - Ittibaa' (following the way of the prophet (sallaAllahu 'alayhi wasallam))
- Without any of the three above, our deeds will not be accepted, hence it is vital that we be sincere with Allah in our acts of worship
- Some definitions of sincerity:
 - You do the action solely for the sake of Allah
 - You do not want a witness for your action other than Allah, and you do not seek reward for it from other than Allah
 - Purifying the action from any defects
 - When your inner is the same as your outer
- Some of the salaf have said that if you see sincerity in your sincerity, then your sincerity requires more sincerity, for the level of deficiency you see in your sincerity is in fact the level of sincerity you have!

- Ibn Al-Qayyim said about the pious intention: "Forgetting to look at others, by constantly looking at Allah" i.e. not caring what others think by always worrying what Allah sees
- We need to have a sincere intention for everything we do so that we may be rewarded for it e.g. intend to go to sleep to be able to be stronger to worship Allah, intend to eat to be able to be stronger to worship Allah, etc
- The scholars have said "The worship of the heedless is a habit, and the habits of the righteous are worship" i.e. the heedless ones are not concentrating in their worship as it is just a habit, but the righteous turn even their habits into worship e.g. eating, sleeping etc
- The intention is the driving force in your heart that pushes you to do this action. It is not something that you merely say with your tongue so for you to have a sincere pious intention, you must have this intention (e.g. playing football to be healthy or to meet with brothers and increase in brotherhood) before carrying out the action, and it must be the reason that pushes you towards this action, so if it is not there, you would not do the action

Benefits and Action points:

- Whenever you feel a difference whether people look at your act of worship or not, then know you have an element of riyaa' in you which you must seek to dispel
- Avoid all forms of riyaa' mentioned in the commentary above
- To avoid riyaa' we must know what causes it. It is caused by 3 main principles. Below are the causes of riyaa' and how to dispel them:
 - Desiring to be praised
 - Remind yourself of the pleasures you get in Jannah, and compare if you want to swap them for the minute pleasure of being praised in the dunya
 - Hating to be criticised
 - Remind yourself of your imminent stand before Allah and compare which criticism is more important, the criticism of the people or the criticism of Allah
 - Know that if Allah is pleased with you, then He will make the people pleased with you too
 - Desiring what is in the hands of the people
 - Remind yourself that what is with Allah is far greater
 - Remind yourself that what is in the hands of the people ultimately belongs to Allah, and only He decides if you get something or not
- Being Sincere in your worship of Allah brings many benefits. These include:
 - It is a reason to be saved on the day of judgement
 - It is a great source of good deeds
 - It can magnify the reward of a small action
 - It can change your habits into acts of worship
 - It is a reason for your sins to be forgiven
 - It is a reason for calamities to be removed
 - It is a reason to be raised in rank
 - It saves a person from trials and tribulations
- In order to achieve sincerity, we need to :

- See the good actions we do as a blessing from Allah over us for giving us the ability to do them
- Not ask for any rewards for it as we know we are slaves of Allah and slaves do not ask for rewards for what they do
- Not be pleased with what we do and look for its defects and try to improve next time (while never feeling that we have reached perfection in what we do)
- Know what Allah deserves and that we will never be able to worship Him as He deserves
- Try our utmost to perfect the action, but be shy from Allah as it is not perfect
- Try our utmost to not let anyone see or know about the action
- Understand that we only did this action because Allah has written for us to do it so all the credit goes to Him