

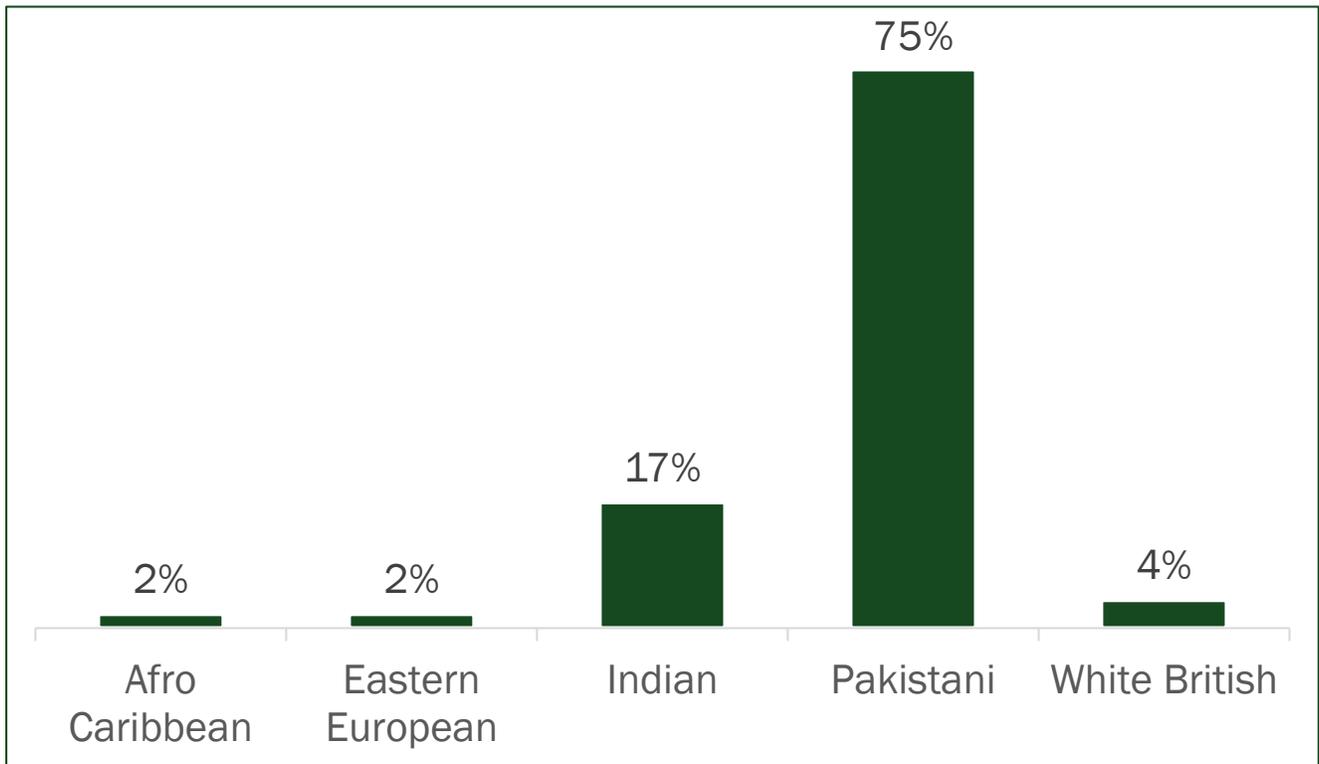


**NURTURING THE SOUL:
TAZKIYAH IN THE LIGHT OF
THE PROPHET
MUHAMMAD'S TEACHINGS**

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Ethnicity of Participants – 53 Attendees



Nurturing the soul: Tazkiyah in the light of the prophet Muhammad's teachings

Ustadha Rummana began her Ālimiyyah studies at the age of sixteen under the guidance of Shaykh Riyadh and Shaykh Naveed Jameel ash-Shaami, graduating from Mohiuddin Girls College in Burnley. She later advanced her studies with the late Mufti Ashfaq Ahmed Ridawi (may Allah grant him Jannah) at the Sayyida Khadija Institute in Nottingham.

In 2018, she travelled to Tarim, Yemen, to study at the esteemed Dar al-Zahra, founded by Habib Umar bin al-Hafiz, deepening her connection to traditional scholarship and spirituality.

Throughout her journey, Ustadha Rummana has inspired many through her teaching, sincerity, and compassion, with numerous sisters embracing Islam through her guidance. She is known for her charismatic character, spiritual depth, and ability to engage and uplift the youth,

nurturing love for Allah (The Most High) and His beloved Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him).

Introduction

In Islam, every action is judged not merely by its outward appearance but by the **intention (niyyah)** behind it. As the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“Actions are judged by intentions.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Ultimately, all deeds will be presented before **Allah (SWT)**, and it is our sincerity that determines their acceptance. Even noble actions such as giving charity will only hold value if done purely for the sake of Allah. This understanding is central to the process of **Tazkiyah**, the purification of the soul.



Understanding the Soul (Nafs)

Every human being possesses a **soul (nafs)**. It is an essential part of our being, constantly requiring care, discipline, and spiritual nourishment. Just as a child needs supervision and guidance to remain safe, our soul

also needs continual reminders and protection through remembrance of Allah, reflection, and self-control.

Through **Tazkiyah**, a person learns to govern the soul instead of being governed by it. The goal is to train the nafs so that it aligns with the pleasure of Allah and becomes a source of peace rather than temptation.



The Three Types of Nafs

1. Nafs al-Ammārah (The Commanding Self)

This is the lowest stage of the nafs — one that **commands to evil**. It is dominated by desires, passions, and temptations. Such a person commits sins openly and without remorse. The nafs becomes sovereign over the individual, controlling their actions and leading them away from righteousness.

Allah mentions this type of nafs in the Qur'an:

“Indeed, the soul is ever inclined to evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy.” (Surah Yusuf 12:53)

In this state, the individual obeys their desires instead of their conscience or divine guidance.

2. Nafs al-Lawwāmah (The Self-Reproaching Soul)

This nafs represents a **stage of awakening and struggle**. The person still commits sins but feels deep **remorse**, guilt, and self-reproach afterward. Allah refers to this in the Qur’an:

“And I swear by the self-reproaching soul.” (Surah Al-Qiyamah 75:2)

Here, the individual is engaged in an internal battle, sometimes overcoming their desires, sometimes falling into them. The feeling of guilt is a **positive sign**, indicating spiritual awareness and a desire to change. This is the stage of reflection and repentance, where the believer begins to work toward purification.

3. Nafs al-Mutma’innah (The Peaceful Soul)

This is the **highest and most refined state** of the soul, one that is serene, content, and at peace with Allah’s decree. The desires of this soul are purified; it only yearns for what pleases Allah.

Allah addresses this nafs directly in the Qur’an:

“O tranquil soul, return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him].” (Surah Al-Fajr 89:27–28)

At this level, a person finds true contentment in obedience, and peace in remembrance of Allah. Their heart no longer struggles with temptation, for it is fully aligned with divine will.

The Relationship Between the Nafs, Body, and Ruh

The **nafs** is distinct from the **ruh (spirit)**. The ruh is the divine element breathed into humans by Allah, while the nafs belongs to our **physical and psychological self**, encompassing desires, emotions, and ego.

The Qur'an mentions both aspects of the nafs:

1. As the *self* — “And remember your Lord within yourself (nafsika).” (Surah Al-A'raf 7:205)
2. As the *ego or appetite* —representing our internal inclinations and impulses.

Our journey in life involves balancing the needs of the body and the nafs with the purity of the ruh.

Practical Aspects of Tazkiyah

To attain purification of the soul, one must engage in **daily discipline** and **constant remembrance of Allah**. Just as the body requires food, the soul requires spiritual nourishment through prayer, fasting, charity, reflection, and moral behaviour.

Scientific Research and Islam highlight a **connection between the brain and the gut**, reminding us that physical and spiritual health are linked. Islam's teachings about moderation in eating, cleanliness, and fasting align beautifully with this understanding.

Fasting, for example, is not just a physical act but a spiritual exercise to strengthen self-control. A believer should aim to live every day with the **spirit of Ramadan** — mindful of food, time, prayer, and charity.

Reflection and Self-Assessment

It is important not to judge others but to reflect on **our own spiritual state**:

- Which level of nafs am I at?
- Do I feel remorse after sinning?

- Do I find peace in acts of obedience?

The purpose of such reflection is **self-improvement**, not comparison. Through consistent effort and remembrance, the soul can rise from **Ammārah** to **Lawwāmah**, and ultimately to **Mutma'innah**.



Conclusion

In the end, everything comes down to **intention and sincerity**. Every action, whether prayer, charity, or work, gains value only when done purely for Allah's sake.

Tazkiyah is a lifelong journey of cleansing the heart and training the soul. Through awareness, reflection, and consistent devotion, we can

transform our inner self into one that finds true tranquillity in the remembrance of Allah and submission to His will.

Glossary / Index of Key Terms

Term	Meaning / Explanation
Allah (SWT)	The Arabic word for God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. SWT stands for <i>Subhanahu wa Ta'ala</i> , meaning "Glorified and Exalted is He."
Ālimiyyah	A traditional Islamic course of advanced study focusing on Qur'an, Hadith, FiqhS (jurisprudence), Arabic, and other sacred sciences. Graduates are known as <i>'Ulamā</i> (scholars).
Aman / Itminān	Spiritual peace, serenity, and contentment of the heart through closeness to Allah.
Charity (Sadaqah)	Voluntary giving of wealth to those in need purely for the sake of Allah.
Dar al-Zahra	A renowned women's Islamic institute in Tarim, Yemen, founded by Habib Umar bin al-Hafiz, known for combining traditional scholarship with spiritual refinement.
Deen	The complete way of life prescribed by Allah, encompassing faith, worship, ethics, and conduct.
Habib Umar bin al-Hafiz	A distinguished Yemeni scholar, spiritual guide, and founder of Dar al-Mustafa and Dar al-Zahra in Tarim, Yemen.
Hadith	The sayings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, recorded and preserved by his companions.
Hukm	A divine command, decree, or ruling from Allah.
Islam	The faith and way of life revealed by Allah to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, meaning "submission to the will of Allah."

Mufti	A qualified Islamic jurist authorized to issue religious rulings (<i>fatāwā</i>) based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.
Nafs	The self, ego, or inner self — encompassing desires and inclinations that can lead to good or evil.
Nafs al-Ammārah	The commanding self — a state of the soul that inclines toward evil and acts without remorse.
Nafs al-Lawwāmah	The self-reproaching soul — a state in which a person feels remorse after sinning and strives to improve.
Nafs al-Mutma'innah	The peaceful or tranquil soul — the highest state of spiritual serenity and contentment with Allah's decree.
Niyah	Intention — the inner purpose or motive behind one's actions. In Islam, deeds are judged by intention.
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ	The final Messenger of Allah, sent as a mercy to all mankind. <i>Ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> means "Peace and blessings be upon him."
Qur'an	The final revelation from Allah to humanity, preserved in Arabic and providing complete guidance for life.
Rabb	Lord, Sustainer, and Nurturer — one of the names of Allah denoting His care for all creation.
Ruh	The soul or spirit — the divine essence breathed into humans by Allah.
Sadaqah	Voluntary charity given for the sake of Allah.
Salah	The five daily prayers that are obligatory for Muslims and a means of connecting with Allah.
Sayyida Khadija Institute	An Islamic educational institution in Nottingham dedicated to women's religious studies and spiritual development.
Sawm	Fasting — abstaining from food, drink, and desires from dawn until sunset, particularly during Ramadan.

Shaykh	A title for a learned or spiritually mature Muslim scholar and teacher.
Subhanahu wa Ta'ala (SWT)	A phrase meaning “Glorified and Exalted is He,” used when mentioning Allah’s name.
Tazkiyah	Purification of the soul – the process of cleansing one’s heart from sins and cultivating sincerity and virtue.
Ustadha	An honorific title for a female Islamic teacher or scholar.
Ummah	The global community of Muslims united by faith.
Yemen (Tarim)	A historic city known as a centre of Islamic scholarship and spirituality, home to Dar al-Zahra and Dar al-Mustafa.

**Report created by the Tea & Chat participants
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