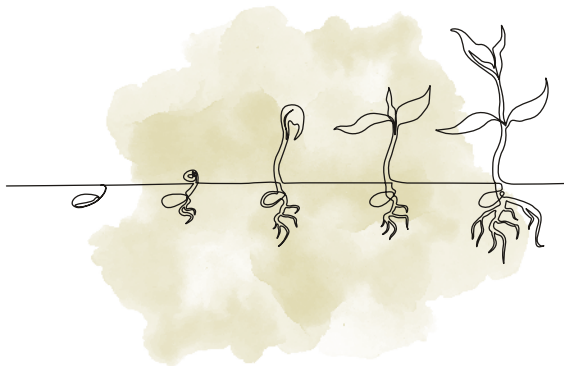


Sha'ban Ramadan Shawwal

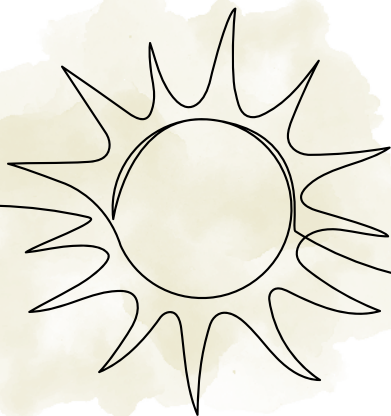
 A guide to nurturing
the soul during these
blessed months 

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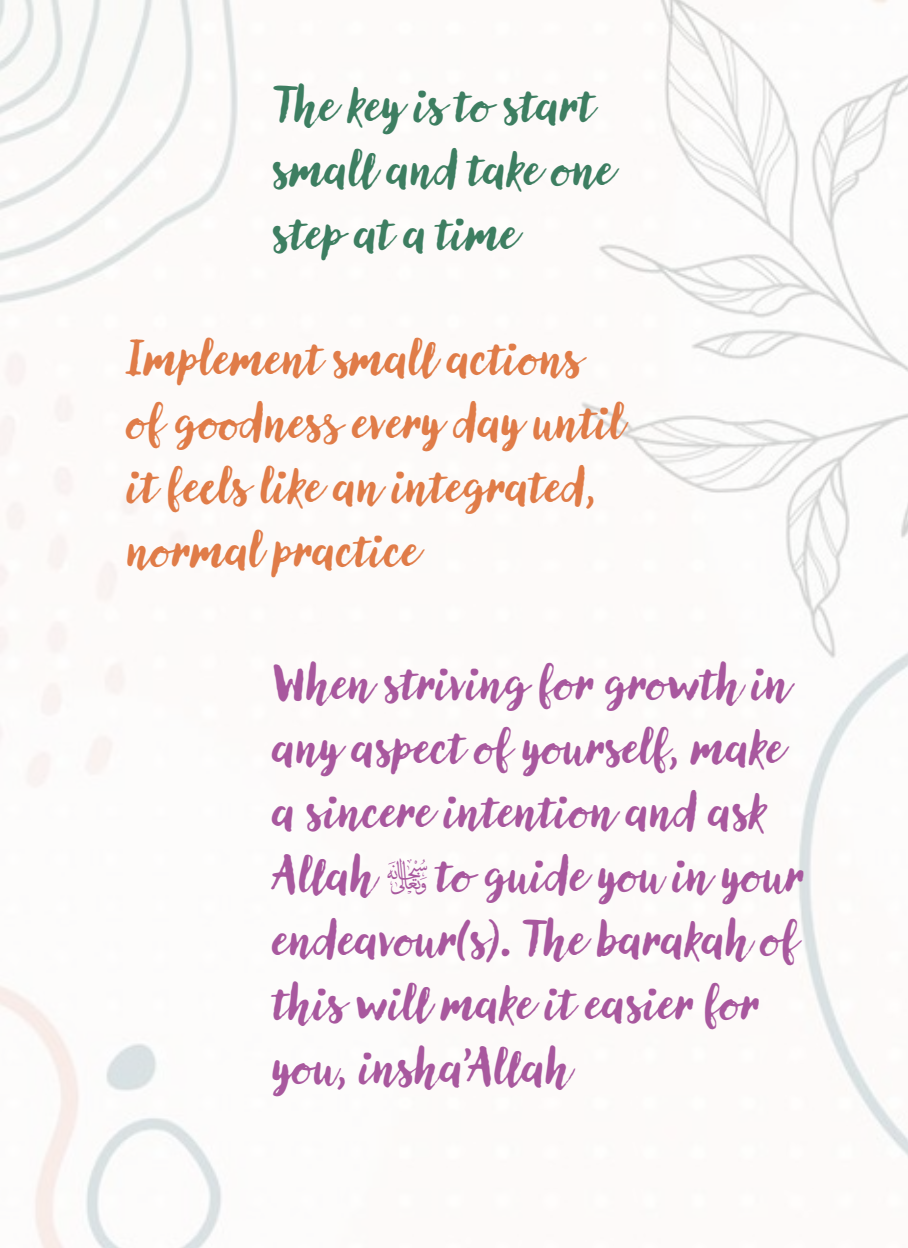




*Habits don't
form overnight*

*Allah ﷻ does not change
the condition of a people
until we want to change
it ourselves*

*Everyone has their
own journey, it's
not a competition
– it's continual
development*



The key is to start
small and take one
step at a time

Implement small actions
of goodness every day until
it feels like an integrated,
normal practice

When striving for growth in
any aspect of yourself, make
a sincere intention and ask
Allah ﷻ to guide you in your
endeavour(s). The barakah of
this will make it easier for
you, insha'Allah



Your seeds SHA'BAN



This is the month to *prepare* ourselves spiritually, mentally and physically—the month to start sowing the positive seeds, and to begin creating the right environment for growth and change.

Think about the type of spiritual growth you want to see in the much-awaited month of Ramadan. How are you going to create the right 'environment', 'temperature' and 'lighting' for the seeds of your connection with Allah ﷻ to start blossoming?

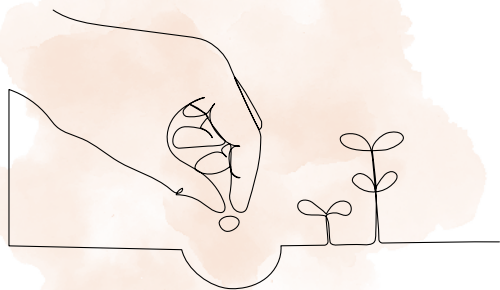
This is a powerful analogy to remember for your own spiritual growth during the blessed month. Think about what you want your spiritual growth to look like during and beyond Ramadan.

Do you want your connection with Allah ﷻ, much like a plant, to be seasonal (short term growth) and limited only to one holy month? Or do you want a connection that sustains and grows healthily beyond the month of Ramadan (long term growth)?



If we wish to achieve the healthier, long term growth, your first steps ('seeds') will therefore need to be planted *before* Ramadan, in the month of Sha'ban.

How could you start to implement small, good practices in the weeks leading up to Ramadan to enable you to truly flourish within it, and beyond?



Your sustenance **RAMADAN**



This is the month of nurturing and feeding your soul.

In this sacred month, we begin to really feel the joys of our renewed spiritual growth and are keen to maintain this feeling for thirty days.

This is best done when we are careful and attentive with our actions to ensure our spiritual connection thrives, much like a blossoming plant, and is the healthiest it can be.

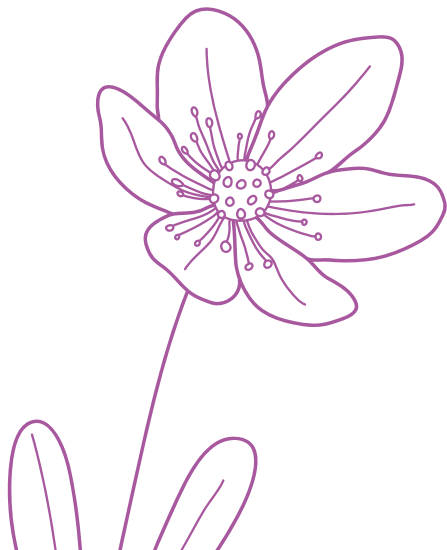
Keep nourishing your soul, little by little. Do not give up on your efforts.

Like a plant's roots that become overwhelmed and weakened by overwatering at once, we need to be careful with our additional acts of worship during Ramadan, and beyond.

Striving to achieve absolutely everything in your fasting day while aiming for a perfect, well-rounded Ramadan will mean you are likely to exhaust yourself. Often, that mental exhaustion leads to a spiritual exhaustion. Setting high expectations is commendable, but remember to be kind to yourself. Be selective with what you do with your time, just like disciplining the amount of water given to a plant in a day. This way, you will have the mental space and drive to maintain a healthier connection with Allah ﷻ; you can truly embrace the mercies of Ramadan and connect more deeply.



It is the *quality* of your connection, not the quantity of your extra, voluntary practices that cultivates a *healthy* spiritual growth.



Your renewal SHAWWAL



Welcome to Shawwal. The beautiful habits we have worked so hard to nurture over the last two months are in full bloom.

Your spiritual connection with Allah ﷻ is feeling healthier than ever, insha'Allah, and you want to hold on to that special feeling of contentment for as long as possible.

Keep nourishing that connection by maintaining those good practices. Pray that your growth is even better than last year. Let this be the year where your closeness to Allah ﷻ thrives and survives against the test of time.

Life in this world is full of challenges and tests; these will keep coming—but we are now so much better equipped to face them as we have become truly strengthened from within.

Our bond with Allah ﷻ feels more resilient, strong, and firmly planted. We have tasted our own potential to be the best version of ourselves.

Beauty lies in the reality that we can only get better every year.

So let's keep trying.





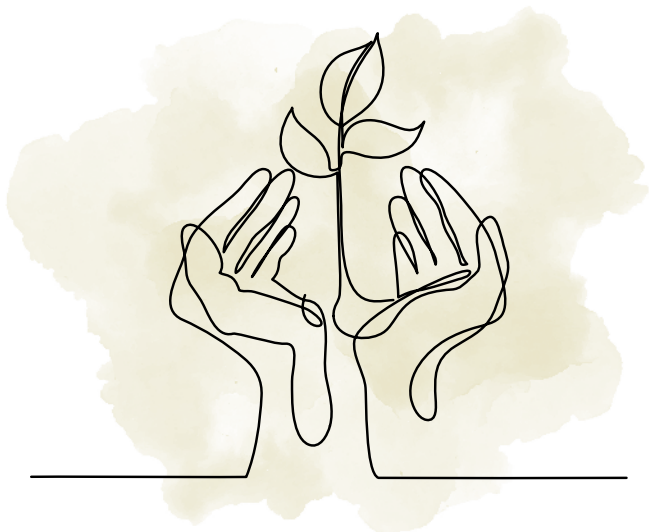
If you remain firmly rooted in your faith,
you will eventually see the *beautiful fruits*
of your perseverance.

No one will reap except what they sow.
(Al-An'am, 6:164)



Ibn 'Umar ﷺ reported that our Prophet
Muhammed ﷺ said: *"There is a tree amongst trees,
the leaves of which do not wither and that is like a
Muslim; it resembles a faithful believer..."* (Bukhari)

Opening prayer



- ✿ I pray to Allah ﷻ that we make sincere intentions in becoming more God-conscious in the month of the Sha'ban, and that we plant seeds (implement good practices) in this month that will enable our closeness with Allah to develop, and our attainment of His mercy to flourish before we reach Ramadan.
- ✿ I pray that during Ramadan, our drive to attain a stronger connection with Allah ﷻ continues to flourish, and we are attentive to the many blessings

and rewards (barakah) this brings to our lives. I pray that we use our days and nights as a time of deep introspection, and are able to fulfil this pillar of our religion to the best of our ability. I pray that we use this sacred month as a time of sustenance for the soul—an opportunity to hit pause and think about how we can strengthen our closeness with Allah ﷻ from within ourselves and through others.

✿ I pray that we continue to strengthen the good habits we have worked hard to instil, no matter how big or small, into Shawwal and beyond. I pray that we can become more *mindful* in our spiritual practices, focusing on nourishing ourselves from *within* to help us attain a resilient, thriving and enduring connection with our Lord, rather than completing practices for short term goals and rewards.

Ameen

