

The Five Basic Essentials for Maintaining Your *Iman*

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1. Recite the Qur'ān

Recite as much of the Qur'an as you can daily, whether it is one *juz'*, half a *juz'* or just a few pages, or even half a page. Just to it everyday without fail. The point is to recite the Arabic verses of the Qur'an, as it has its own light and blessing, and try to reflect over the meaning when you can.

2. Seek forgiveness (*istighfar*) 100 time morning and evening daily

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

Astaghfirullāha Rabbī min kulli dhambiw wa atūbu ilayh

I seek forgiveness from Allāh my Lord from every sin, and I repent to Him.

By doing this each morning or evening, we will be cleansed of the sins of the past several hours, thereby remaining closer to Allah. After Fajr and Asr is the best time for this *dhikr*, but anytime thereafter is also OK.

3. Invoke Blessings on the Prophet ﷺ 100 times morning and evening daily

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلٰى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ

Allāhumma salli 'alā Sayyidnā Muhammadiw, wa 'alā āli
Sayyidnā Muhammadiw, wa bārik wa sallim

After being purified through *istighfar*, we want to adorn ourselves with Allah's blessings. The best way to do this is by invoking blessing on the Prophet ﷺ. He said that anyone who sends one blessing on the Prophet ﷺ, Allah sends ten blessing on the person. We also do this as a reminder to ourselves of the relationship we share with the Prophet ﷺ and present this to him as though we are presenting a gift to him with utmost love.

4. Meditation, introspection (*muraqaba, muhasaba*)

Spend at least 10-15 minutes each day in private reflection or in intimate discourse with Allāh. Either think about our imminent death and how it will be when we depart this world, or think about all the bounties Allah has provided us and how we are still ungrateful. Allāh Most High says in the Qur’ān:

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا

“And remember *the name* of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with *complete devotion*” (Qur’ān 73:8)

Another very powerful meditation is through silent remembrance (*dhikr*). Allāh Most High says in the Quran:

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ

“And remember your Lord within yourself in humility and in fear, without raising your voice” (Qur’ān 7:205)

Close your eyes and bow your head, disconnect yourself from everything in this world and turn your attention to your heart. Imagine that Allāh Most High is sending His guidance, mercy (*rahma*) and light on to your spiritual heart (focus below the left part of the chest), just as Allāh Most High says in the Qur’ān:

وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ

“Whoever believes in Allah He will guide his heart” (Qur’ān 64:11).

Think that your heart is receiving this guidance and mercy from Allāh, and out of gratitude, your heart begins to remember Allāh, by saying *Allāh, Allāh, Allāh*. You avoid saying anything with your tongue; you only imagine that your heart is radiating the words *Allāh, Allāh, Allāh*, and you are sitting and listening to this silently. Shaytan will distract you in every which way possible during this. However, if you are able to develop your concentration and do this successfully for 10-15 minutes, you will be in control.

5. Attend at least one spiritually boosting gathering

At least once a week, attend a gathering in which your *iman* is boosted. This is not a regular ISOC/MSA management meeting, but one that is specifically targeted to bring people closer to Allah. If you cannot find an actual gathering with a shaykh, listen to one online. There are a number of live broadcasts you can tune into, otherwise you can at least listen to a recording online of one.

Insha Allah, these five easy steps will help you maintain your *iman* and avoid the lows. It will help you recover quickly from any low that you may experience. The worst is when the *iman* drops and we stay down, unable to recover. May Allah protect us and grant us His love. Your brother Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera.