



Beneficial Means for a Happy Life

English

إنجليزي

الوسائل المفيدة للحياة السعيدة



Author

Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmān ibn Nāsir As-Sa'di
(may Allah have mercy upon him)

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Beneficial Means for **a Happy Life**

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may Allah have mercy
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Foreword of the Author

Praise be to Allah, to whom all praise is due. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, and his Companions.

Indeed, everyone desires the comfort of the heart, its tranquility, joy, and the removal of worries and sorrows. Through it, a good life is achieved, and happiness and delight are completed. There are religious reasons, natural reasons, and practical reasons for this, and they can only be fully realized by the believers. As for others, even if they achieve it through some means and reasons that their wise ones strive for, they miss out on aspects that are more beneficial, more enduring, and better in state and outcome.

However, in this treatise, I will mention the causes that come to mind for this highest aspiration, which everyone strives for.

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Among them is he who has achieved much of it, thus living a pleasant life and enjoying a good life. And among them is he who has failed in all of it, thus living a life of misery and experiencing a life of the wretched. And among them is he who is in between, according to what he has been guided to. And Allah is the One who grants success and is sought for help in all good and in repelling all evil.

Chapter

1- The greatest and most fundamental means for this is faith and righteous deeds. Allah Almighty says:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do.} [Surat an-Nahl: 97]

Allah, the Exalted, informed and promised those who combine faith with righteous deeds a good life in this abode and a fine reward in this world and in the eternal abode.

The reason for this is clear, for those who have true faith in Allah, which yields righteous deeds that reform hearts, morals, this world, and the Hereafter, possess principles and foundations through which they receive all causes of joy and happiness, as well as

causes of anxiety, worry, and sorrow.

They receive joys and delights with acceptance and gratitude and by using them in beneficial ways. When they use them in this manner, it brings about great matters of joy, hope for their continuation and blessing, and the anticipation of the reward for those who show gratitude, which surpasses in goodness and blessings these delights that are their fruits.

They face adversities, harm, anxiety, and distress by resisting what they can resist, alleviating what they can alleviate, and with beautiful patience for what they cannot avoid. Through this, they gain beneficial resistance, experience, and strength from adversities, and from patience and expecting the reward from Allah, they achieve great matters that diminish adversities, replacing them with joy, good hopes, and the aspiration for Allah's grace and reward, as the Prophet (ﷺ) expressed in the authentic Hadīth when he said: **«How wonderful is the affair of the believer! Indeed, all of his affairs are good for him. If something good happens to him, he is grateful to Allah, which is good for him. And if something bad happens to him, he is patient, which is good for**

him. This is for none but the believer». [Narrated by Muslim]

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed that the believer's gains, goodness, and the fruits of his deeds multiply in every instance of joy and adversity that befalls him. Thus, you find two individuals faced with a circumstance of either good or evil, yet they differ greatly in their reception of it, according to their differences in faith and righteous deeds. The one characterized by these two traits receives both good and evil with the aforementioned gratitude and patience and what follows them, resulting in joy and delight, the removal of worry and distress, anxiety, and constriction of the heart, and the misery of life, thus achieving a good life in this abode. The other one receives pleasures with insolence, arrogance, and tyranny. His morals deviate, and he receives them as animals do, with greed and panic. Yet, his heart is not at ease but rather scattered in various directions: scattered due to his fear of losing his beloved things, from the many oppositions that often arise from them, and from the fact that souls do not stop at a limit but are always yearning for other matters, which may or may not be attained. Even if

they are attained hypothetically, he remains anxious from the aforementioned directions and receives adversities with anxiety, panic, fear, and distress. Do not ask about the misery of his life, the intellectual and nervous illnesses, and the fear that may lead him to the worst states and the most dreadful disturbances, for he does not hope for any reward, nor does he have the patience to console him and ease his burden.

All of this is observed through experience, and if you reflect upon a single example of this kind and apply it to the conditions of people, you will see the great difference between a believer who acts according to the requirements of his faith and one who does not. This is because the religion strongly encourages contentment with Allah's provision and with what He has bestowed upon His servants from His diverse bounty and generosity.

When a believer is afflicted with illness, poverty, or similar trials that everyone is susceptible to, he, through his faith and contentment with what Allah has apportioned for him, remains at peace, not yearning in his heart for what has not been decreed for him. He looks to those below him and not to those

above him. His joy, happiness, and comfort may even surpass those who have attained all worldly desires if they lack contentment.

You will find that one who does not act according to faith, when afflicted with poverty or deprived of worldly needs, is in utmost misery and distress.

Another example: When causes of fear arise and distressing events befall a person, you will find the one with true Imān (faith) steadfast in heart, tranquil in the soul, and capable of managing and directing the matter that has confronted him with whatever thought, word, and deed he can muster. He has prepared himself for this distressing occurrence, and these are conditions that bring comfort to a person and fortify his heart.

One who lacks faith is found to be in the opposite state; when fears arise, their conscience is disturbed, their nerves become tense, their thoughts scatter, and they are overtaken by fear and terror. They are beset by external fear and internal anxiety that cannot be fully expressed. This type of person, if they do not find some natural causes that require much practice, their strength collapses and their nerves become tense,

due to the absence of faith that encourages patience, especially in critical situations and distressing, troubling circumstances.

Both the righteous and the wicked, the believer and the disbeliever, share in acquiring bravery and in the instinct that mitigates and diminishes fears. However, the believer is distinguished by the strength of his Imān, his patience, his reliance on Allah, his dependence on Him, and his anticipation of His reward—matters that enhance his bravery, alleviate the burden of fear, and ease difficulties for him, as Allah, the Exalted, has said:

﴿إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۖ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝١٠٤﴾

{If you are suffering, they too are suffering as you are suffering, but you hope from Allah that which they hope not.} [Sūrat an-Nisā': 104] The assistance and specific support of Allah reach them, dispelling fears. Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَاصْبِرُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝٤٦﴾

{And be steadfast, for Allah is with those who

are steadfast.} [Surat al-Anfāl: 46]

2- Among the reasons that alleviate grief, distress, and anxiety is «ihsān» towards the created beings through words and actions and various forms of kindness, all of which are good acts of «ihsān.» Through them, Allah removes worries and sorrows from both the righteous and the wicked, according to their situations. However, the believer has the most complete share and portion, distinguished by the fact that his «ihsān» stems from sincerity and seeking reward.

Allah makes it easy for him to do good deeds due to the goodness he hopes for, and He wards off hardships from him because of his sincerity and seeking of reward. Allah Almighty says:

﴿لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ (١١٤)

{There is no good in much of their private talk, except for one who enjoins charity, kindness, or reconciliation between people. Anyone who does that, seeking Allah's pleasure, We will give him a great reward.} [Surat an-Nisā': 114]

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Allah Almighty has informed that all these matters are good from whom they originate. Goodness attracts goodness and repels evil. And the believer who seeks divine reward is granted a great reward by Allah, among which is the removal of worry, distress, and similar afflictions.



Chapter

Among the reasons for alleviating anxiety arising from nervous tension and the heart's preoccupation with certain disturbances is to engage in beneficial work or knowledge. This diverts the heart from being occupied with the matter that caused the anxiety. He may forget, due to this, the causes that brought him worry and distress; thus, his soul rejoices, and his activity increases. This reason is also shared between the believer and others. However, the believer is distinguished by his faith, sincerity, and seeking reward in his engagement with the knowledge he learns or teaches and in the good deeds he performs. If it is an act of worship, then it is worship; and if it is a worldly occupation or a habit, he accompanies it with a righteous intention and aims to use it as an aid in obeying Allah. This has a significant effect in dispelling worries, anxieties, and sorrows. How many people have been afflicted with anxiety and persistent distress, leading to various illnesses, only to find their effective remedy in forgetting the cause of their distress and anxiety and engaging in one of their important tasks.

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It is appropriate that the work one engages in should be something the soul finds comfort in and yearns for, as this is more conducive to achieving this beneficial purpose, and Allah knows best.

One of the ways to dispel anxiety and worry is to focus all one's thoughts on the tasks of the present day, cutting off concern for the future and sorrow for the past. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) sought refuge from anxiety and sorrow, as mentioned in the Hadīth narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim. Sorrow over past matters that cannot be changed or rectified is of no benefit, and anxiety caused by fear of the future may be harmful. Therefore, a person should be a person of his present day, concentrating his earnestness and diligence on improving his present day and time. Focusing the heart on this leads to the perfection of deeds and provides solace from anxiety and sorrow. When the Prophet (ﷺ) supplicated or guided his Ummah to a supplication, he indeed encouraged reliance upon Allah and hope in His grace, alongside earnestness and diligence in striving to achieve what is being supplicated for. Abandoning what one used to supplicate for its removal, as supplication is

accompanied by action. The servant strives for what benefits him in religion and worldly life, and asks his Lord for the success of his aim, seeking His assistance in that, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said. **«Strive for what benefits you, seek Allah's help, and do not lose heart. If anything befalls you, do not say: «If only I had done such and such, such and such would have happened»; rather, say: «Allah has decreed, and He does whatever He wills.» For saying «if» opens (the door to) the devil's work.»** [Narrated by Muslim]

The Prophet (ﷺ) combined the command to strive for beneficial matters in all circumstances, seeking Allah's help and not succumbing to helplessness, which is harmful laziness, with submission to past and inevitable matters and witnessing the decree and predestination of Allah.

He divided matters into two sections: one in which a slave can strive to achieve or obtain what is possible or repel or alleviate it, in which the slave exerts his effort and seeks the help of his deity. Another type where this is not possible, and in such cases, the servant finds peace, contentment, and submission. Undoubtedly, adhering to this principle is a cause for joy and the removal of worry and distress.

Chapter

One of the greatest reasons for the heart's comfort and tranquility is making Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) abundantly, as it has a remarkable effect on the heart's relief and peace and the removal of worry and distress, as Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ﴾

{Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured.} [Surat ar-Ra'd: 28] The remembrance of Allah has a profound impact in achieving this desired goal due to its unique quality, and for the reward and recompense the servant hopes for.

Speaking of Allah's apparent and hidden blessings, recognizing and discussing them dispels worry and distress, urging the servant towards thankfulness, which is the highest and most elevated of ranks, even if the servant is in a state of poverty, illness, or other trials. When he compares Allah's countless blessings upon him with the adversity he faces, the adversity

bears no ratio to the blessings.

When Allah tests a servant with disliked matters and afflictions and the servant fulfills the duty of patience, contentment, and submission, the servant's burden becomes lighter, and their hardship lessens. The hope for reward and recompense and the devotion to Allah through patience and contentment transform the bitterness into sweetness, making the sweetness of its reward overshadow the bitterness of patience.

Among the most beneficial things in this context is to employ what the Prophet (ﷺ) guided us to in the Authentic Hadīth, where he said: **«Look at those below you, and do not look at those above you, for that is more likely to hold you back from belittling the blessings Allah has bestowed upon you.»** [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri] When a servant keeps this noble perspective before his eyes, he will see that he surpasses many of creation in well-being and its accompanying blessings and in provision and its accompanying benefits, regardless of his circumstances. Thus, his anxiety, worry, and distress will vanish, and his joy and contentment with the

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favors of Allah, in which he surpasses others below him, will increase.

The more a servant reflects on the apparent and hidden blessings of Allah, both religious and worldly, he sees that his Lord has bestowed upon him goodness and warded off numerous evils. Undoubtedly, this dispels worries and sorrows and necessitates joy and happiness.



Chapter

Among the causes that bring joy and remove distress and anxiety is the effort to eliminate the causes of worries and to acquire the causes of happiness. This is achieved by forgetting past adversities that cannot be reversed and understanding that preoccupying one's thoughts with them is futile and absurd and that such behavior is foolishness and madness. Thus, one must strive to prevent his heart from dwelling on them, and similarly, he must strive to prevent his heart from being anxious about the future, concerning supposed poverty, fear, or other adversities he envisions in his future life. He knows that future matters, with their unknown good and evil, hopes and pains, are in the Hands of the Almighty and Wise Lord, and that the servants have no control over them except to strive to attain their benefits and ward off their harms. The slave realizes that if he diverts his thoughts from anxiety over his future affairs, relies on his Lord for their rectification, and finds peace in Him regarding them, then his heart will be reassured, his conditions will be set right, and his worries and anxieties will be

removed.

One of the most beneficial practices in considering future matters is to use this supplication that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to supplicate Allah with: **«O Allah, rectify for me my religion, which is the safeguard of my affairs, and rectify for me the affairs of this world, wherein is my livelihood, and rectify for me my Hereafter, to which is my return, and make life an increase for me in every good, and make death a relief for me from every evil.»** [Narrated by Muslim] Also his saying: **«O Allah, Your mercy is what I hope for, so do not leave me to myself for an instant, and set right all my affairs for me. There is no true god but You.»** [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd with an authentic Isnād] If a person frequently recites this supplication, which ensures the well-being of his religious and worldly future, with a present heart and sincere intention while striving to achieve it, Allah will fulfill what he supplicated and hoped for and worked towards, and his worries will turn into joy and happiness.



Chapter

One of the most beneficial means for alleviating anxiety and worries when a servant is afflicted with calamities is to strive to mitigate them by considering the worst possible outcomes and preparing oneself for them. Once he has done this, he should endeavor to lessen what can be lessened to the best of his ability. Through this preparation and beneficial effort, his worries and sorrows will dissipate, and he will be able to exert his efforts in bringing about benefits and averting the harms that are within his capacity to manage.

When the causes of fear, illness, poverty, and deprivation of beloved things befall him, he should face them with tranquility and prepare his soul for them to the utmost extent possible. For indeed preparing the soul to endure hardships makes them easier and lessens their severity, especially if he determines himself by affording them to the best of his ability. Thus, he combines preparing the soul with the beneficial effort that distracts from worrying about calamities, and he strives to renew the strength to

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resist adversities, relying upon Allah and having good confidence in Him. Undoubtedly, these matters have a great benefit in attaining happiness and expansion of the heart, along with what the servant hopes for immediate and future reward. This is something observed and experienced, with numerous instances from those who have tried it.



Chapter

Among the greatest remedies for the ailments of the anxious heart, and even for physical illnesses, is the strength of the heart and its resistance to disturbance and agitation by the illusions and imaginations brought about by negative thoughts. Anger and confusion are among the painful causes, and the anticipation of adversities and the loss of beloved things plunges one into worries, sorrows, and diseases of the heart and body, as well as nervous breakdowns, which have harmful effects that people have witnessed in many detrimental consequences.

When the heart relies upon Allah and places its trust in Him, without succumbing to illusions or being dominated by negative imaginations, and it trusts in Allah and hopes for His grace, then worries and grief are driven away, and many physical and spiritual ailments are removed. The heart attains strength, openness, and joy that cannot be expressed. How many hospitals are filled with patients suffering from illusions and corrupt imaginations, and how much

have these matters affected the hearts of many strong individuals, let alone the weak, leading to foolishness and madness. The one who is protected is the one whom Allah has protected and guided to strive against his own self to acquire beneficial means that strengthen the heart and dispel its anxiety. Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ﴾

{Whoever puts his trust in Allah, He is sufficient for him.} [Surat at-Talāq: 3] i.e., grants him sufficiency in all matters concerning his religious and worldly affairs.

The one who relies upon Allah has a strong heart, unaffected by illusions and undisturbed by events, knowing that such disturbances stem from a weakness of the soul, from baseless fear and anxiety. He understands that Allah has guaranteed complete sufficiency for those who rely upon Him. Thus, he trusts in Allah and finds peace in His promise, causing his worries and anxieties to vanish, his hardship to turn into ease, his sorrow and grief into joy, and his fear into security. We ask Allah Almighty for well-being and to bestow upon us strength and steadfastness of heart

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and complete reliance upon Him, for which He has guaranteed all good and the removal of all adversity and harm.



Chapter

And in the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): «**A believing man does not hate a believing woman; if he dislikes one of her characteristics, he will be pleased with another.**» [Narrated by Muslim] Two Great Benefits:

The first benefit: Guidance on dealing with the wife, the relative, the companion, and the associate, and everyone with whom you have a relationship and connection. You should prepare yourself for the fact that there must be a flaw, deficiency, or something you dislike in them. When you find this, compare it with what is incumbent upon you or what is appropriate for you in terms of maintaining the connection and preserving love, by remembering their positive aspects and both specific and general objectives. By overlooking the faults and considering the positive aspects, companionship and connection endure, comfort is achieved, and you attain what you seek.

The second benefit: It is the removal of worry and anxiety, the preservation of clarity, and the continuous fulfillment of obligatory and recommended rights, resulting in comfort between the parties. Whoever

does not follow the guidance mentioned by the Prophet (ﷺ)—rather, reverses the matter by focusing on the faults and being blind to the good aspects—will inevitably experience anxiety, and the love between him and those he is connected with will be troubled, and many of the rights that each must uphold will be severed.

Many people of high resolve prepare themselves to be patient and composed when disasters and distressing events occur. However, when trivial and simple matters arise, they become anxious, and their tranquility is disturbed. The reason for this is that they have accustomed themselves to handling major matters but neglected the minor ones, which have harmed them and affected their peace. The prudent person prepares himself for both minor and major matters and asks Allah for help in dealing with them and that He does not leave him to his own devices even for the blink of an eye. Thus, the minor becomes easy for him, just as the major has become easy. Remaining with tranquility of the soul, serenity of the heart, and comfort.



Chapter

The wise person knows that his true life is one of happiness and tranquility and that it is very short. Therefore, he should not shorten it with worries and indulgence in distress, for that is contrary to true life. Thus, he will be stingy with his life, allowing much of his life to be consumed by worries and distress. There is no difference in this between the righteous and the wicked, but the believer has the greater share and beneficial portion of this description, both immediately and in the Hereafter.

It is also incumbent upon one, when afflicted with adversity or fearing it, to compare it with the rest of the blessings they enjoy, whether spiritual or worldly. Through such comparison, the abundance of blessings they possess becomes evident, and the adversity they face diminishes in significance.

Similarly, they compare the potential harm they fear might befall them with the numerous possibilities of safety, ensuring that a weak possibility does not outweigh the many strong ones. Thus, their anxiety

and fear dissipate. They assess the greatest of the potential outcomes that might affect them, preparing themselves for their occurrence if they happen. They strive to avert what has not yet occurred and to remove or mitigate what has already happened.

One of the beneficial matters is to realize that the harm from people, especially through foul words, does not harm you but rather harms them, unless you occupy yourself with concern over it and allow it to dominate your emotions. In that case, it harms you as it harms them. However, if you pay it no heed, it will not harm you at all.

And know that your life follows your thoughts; if your thoughts bring benefit to you in your religion or worldly matters, then your life will be good and happy. Otherwise, the matter is the opposite.

One of the most beneficial ways to dispel worry is to train yourself to seek gratitude only from Allah. When you do good to someone who has a right over you or even to someone who does not, know that this is an interaction between you and Allah. Therefore, do not concern yourself with the gratitude of those to whom you did a favor, as Allah Almighty has mentioned

regarding His chosen servants.

﴿إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا﴾

{“We feed you only for the sake of Allah; we seek from you neither reward nor gratitude.”}[Surat al-Insān: 9]

This is particularly emphasized in dealing with family and children due to the strong connection you have with them. When you resolve to cast away evil from them, you find relief and comfort. One of the causes of comfort is embracing virtues and acting upon them according to the natural inclination without the affectation that troubles you, leading you back empty-handed from attaining virtue, as you have taken a twisted path. This is part of wisdom: to transform murky matters into clear and sweet ones, thereby increasing the purity of pleasures and removing the impurities.

Keep beneficial matters in front of your eyes and work towards achieving them. Do not turn to harmful matters, thus distracting yourself from the causes of worry and sorrow. Seek comfort and focus your mind on important tasks.

Among the beneficial matters is to complete tasks immediately, allowing for future focus. If tasks are not completed, the remaining previous tasks accumulate with the upcoming ones, increasing their burden. However, if everything is completed in its time, you approach future matters with strength of thought and strength of action.

You should choose the most beneficial deeds, prioritizing the most important ones. Distinguish between what your soul inclines towards and what you have a strong desire for, as its opposite leads to weariness, boredom, and distress. Seek assistance in this through correct thinking and consultation, for whoever consults will not regret. Study carefully what you intend to do, and when you ascertain the benefit and resolve, then place your trust in Allah, for Allah loves those who trust in Him.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his Companions.



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