

### MODULE 3

**Class Title:** Time Management-part 2 – Habit 2: Begin with the end in mind  
(2nd part of a 3 lesson series)

**Aims of the Lesson:** To learn how to “begin with the end in mind” and time management.

**Categories:** Personal Development

**Lesson format:** Power point presentation with narration

Greeting to students) *AssalamalaikumwaRahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*

*(Ta'awwudh) Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanirRajeem*

*(Tasmiyah) BismillahirRahmanirRaheem*

*(Du'a) Rabbishrahlisadriwayassirliamriwahluluqdatumillisaniyafqahuqawli*(Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slide 2:

Last time we talked about time being money. I was thinking about what we discussed in the last class, one of you said that she is not interested in money as such, and I was thinking about it. To be very honest, I was able to relate to that because there was a time when I used to think the same way, that thinking about money is not a very nice thing to do. That thought would cross my mind but over the years I have realized that all these things; whether they are time, money, water, light... all these things are basically resources from Allah (swt), it's up to us how we make use of them. The idea is that we should be making best use of them. Maybe you don't need it for yourself, but there is somebody out there who does. So if you don't need it, give it to them. And earn the blessings of Allah (swt), earn His pleasure that way. So whatever resources we have we do something with them to gain the pleasure of Allah (swt). That's the whole idea, alright? It is very much possible that you don't need it, but there is somebody out there who does! So you can always do something about it.

Slides 3-5:

And if you remember, we discussed that we are the change, that we are the only ones to make the change in ourselves. It is important to make this decision because we want to make the best use of our time. And we talked about the habit of being proactive and did some practice in the end. So today, the second habit that we will be talking about is to 'begin with the end' in mind. Now these habits basically teach us, that whatever we want to do, first of all we should decide our destination and then climb the road to it. Okay.

Slide 6:

So the first thing we need to do is to set a goal for ourselves. I want all of you to think about this question:

‘What should be the end result of my life?’

Think about it, Take a minute and think about it. And be very sure, that when you die what would you like the people around you to say? Be very sure. Don’t share, just take a moment and think about it. Have you all decided what you want to be at the end of your life? Is there anyone who isn’t sure? Can somebody share what they have thought about? Yes?

Student: What if I don’t want to share.

Teacher: It would be nice if you can share.

Student: I want people to think of me as someone honest and nice

Teacher: Somebody who is honest and nice to the people around her.

Student: Somebody who has made a change.

Student: Helped the people in need.

Student: A good daughter.

Slides 7-10:

Teacher: Good goals, *masha’Allah*. First of all we have to decide what our goal will be and then we decide how to get to that goal. This is our ‘circle of concern’; this is what you have decided. Remember what our ‘circle of concern’ is? We talked about it last week. Circle of concern are the things that are in your control, things that you are supposed to be doing; things that you need to do that will bring a change in yourself.

That is circle of concern, because you need to realize that *you* are the one that is painting the picture of your life. You are the only one that can decide exactly what you want. And what is the picture that you want at the end of it? And you are the only one who is making all these decisions; they are only made by you.

Slides 11-13:

So second habit that we are talking about, it teaches us to do ‘the mental creation’ and we need to understand that this process of mental creation has two steps. The first step is the planning and the second step is the execution.

There are two things to it; we must understand the difference between planning and execution.

Planning involves writing, and it revolves around thinking what steps you are going to take. Execution is acting about, doing something about it, and putting the plan into action. Doing the right thing is part of the planning. That you decide I want to be an honest person, I want to be

the person that wants to bring about some kind of a change in the society or in myself, and doing it accordingly. Doing it in the correct way, that is the execution.

Slides 14-17:

Execution is basically climbing effectively the ladder that you put, that you have chosen, and planning is to stop and think and decide that this is the ladder that I really want to climb. That is what planning is and planning has to be done before you do the execution. Planning has to come before the execution. Right.

Now take the example of the 'Titanic'. You all know about the Titanic? It was a huge ship that was beautifully designed, perfectly planned. But what went wrong? Yes. The execution went wrong! The first time round planning was perfect but execution went wrong. And that was the reason why it got destroyed.

You all have been in bumper cars? You enjoy it. It's a lot of fun. It is? Definitely! But it doesn't get you anywhere does it? You keep on going from here and there, but you don't get anywhere, there is no destination. So basically we don't want to be like bumper cars and we don't want to end up like the Titanic as well. We need to have proper balance between the two things, that's why planning is extremely important.

Slides 18-20:

We can't build a house without having a plan. Actually you can, some people do that. People who can't afford to hire architects do that. But is it the best way to go about it?

Student: They do have some kind of a plan in mind.

Teacher: Absolutely! You are absolutely right. Even if they don't employ anyone to do it, they do have something in mind, this is where the bathroom will be, this is where the kitchen will go, whatever. Some kind of a plan is always there, and has to be there. So planning has to be there before the execution. Before the physical execution! Just as it is unwise to start building your house without a plan, it is unwise to start your day, week, month, your year and your life without a plan. How many of you have thought about it, and really have a plan for your life? You have. *MashaAllah*, What have you planned?

Student: I have decided what I want to do after school.

Teacher: You have decided what you want to do after you get out of school. What have you decided?

Student: I want to be a scientist.

Teacher: Okay, *Masha'Allah*. Is there anyone who wants to be a doctor? You? *MashaAllah*. So you do have some kind of a plan in mind, right. And you have decided what kind of an end you want.

Slides 21-22:

Let's look at an example of planning from the Qur'an. Now this is a very famous *qissa* {story} from Musa (as). Musa (as) had prayed to Allah (swt):

"O my Lord, extend my chest (with faith, knowledge and affection) and ease my task for me and remove the impediment from my speech. So they may understand what I say, and give me a minister from my family, Haroon my brother. Add to my strength through him and make him share my task."(Surah Taha:25-32)

This is one of the *du'as* that I recited at the beginning of the class. It is the same *du'a*. When Musa(as) made this *dua* to Allah (swt), he identified certain areas where he felt that he needed to work, because Allah (swt) had given him a huge responsibility. He was telling him to go to Pharaoh and preach to him, alright, since Musa (as) had to do this huge job he identified the areas he had to work on.

Slide 23:

He realized that he has to do the job of a *da'ee* (one who calls people to Allah), he has to do *da'wah* (preach).He must have knowledge wisdom and deep faith, and for that he also needed very good communication skills. So he asked Allah (swt) to make his tongue very clear so that Pharaoh can understand what he is saying and in addition to that he also asked for a helper. So basically he asked for human resource and support, and he asked for his own brother because he knew that he would be his best support. Also Haroon (as) had great communication skills which would be of great benefit to the cause. It is mentioned in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Qasas 28, verse 34: **"And my brother Aaron is more fluent than me in tongue, so send him with me as support, verifying me. Indeed, I fear that they will deny me."**

Slide 24:

Another example is the breaking of idols by Ibrahim (as). (Surah Al-Ambiyah 2: verse 51-67)  
Do you know that incident when Ibrahim (as) had broken the idols? Does anyone know that?  
Can someone quickly tell me what had happened? Do you know what had happened?

Student: Once Ibrahim (as) had broken idols that the people of his town used to worship. His father was the caretaker of these idols so while he was away, Ibrahim (as) broke them and left the biggest intact.

Teacher: Yes, very good. It wasn't just his father, the whole town. Everyone had gone to some *mela* {fair} or something and they all had gone to some other town. Ibrahim (as) had planned it all, he decided to stay back when they had gone for the celebrations. And when everyone had gone, he took his axe, broke all the idols and kept the axe on the biggest idol. What is this? This is all planning, he thought about it. Okay. And you must have heard of the planning of Yusuf (as), can anyone quickly tell me that? What was that?

Student: Allah (swt) had taught Yusuf (as) to interpret dreams. Once the king dreamt that there are seven fat cows emerging from the river, followed by seven weak ones. The weak cows devoured the fat ones. He then saw seven green and healthy ears of wheat followed by seven dry ones. The dry ones ate up the green ones. Then Yusuf (as) interpreted the dream and provided the king with a solution to the problem. (Surah Yusuf 12; verse 43-49)

Teacher: Masha'Allah, yes absolutely. Yusuf (as) said that the seven fat cows and the seven healthy ears consist of seven years during which the country would see high productivity. That would be followed by seven years of famine. Unless the years of high productivity were managed wisely, the years of famine would totally destroy the kingdom. He told the ruler that it would be prudent to save for the years of famine, for the famine would be wide spread. Absolutely, that was all planning! So planning has always been there, and it was promoted by the prophets, and Allah (swt) likes us to plan. He had planned the universe. Okay.

Slide 25:

Now as Muslims we need to realize the things that we should be keeping in mind in order to make plans for ourselves.

The first thing is we should focus on long term goals; we shouldn't always focus on something that is very close. It is alright to have short term plans, but long term plans are something we should be thinking more clearly about. And we should have a vision.

What is a vision? Vision is the ability to see further than one's surroundings and circumstances. Okay. We will quickly go through this and I will give you an example of the vision thing. And we need to look at the bigger picture, look at everything and look at it from all angles. We must not be short sighted and once we are decided, we should focus on our goals and try not to get distracted.

Slide 26:

Now, in order to understand what is a vision, let's look at a story from the Prophet (pbuh)'s life. Does anyone know how many Muslims were there at the time of *Badr*?

Student: 313

Teacher: Yes. And how many *kuffar*?

Student: Thousand.

Teacher: Okay, so there was a companion of *Rasool Allah* (pbuh), Sa'id ibn Mu'ath (ra), who said:

"Oh Prophet of Allah (pbuh), let us build for you a shelter and put your riding camels in readiness beside it. Then we will meet our enemy, and if God strengthens us and makes us victorious over them, that is what we fervently desire. But if not, then you can mount and ride back to join those whom we left behind us in Madinah...they would not have stayed behind, if they had known that you would be faced with war. Through them God will protect you, and they will give you good counsel and fight at your side." <sup>1</sup>

Slide 27:

You see, *Saeed* (ra)'s vision was that he was concerned about the safety of *Rasool Allah* (pbuh), so he proposed this plan that we should have a shed made and have the horses ready in case the Muslims lose, *Rasool Allah* (pbuh) should have an escape route. Since him being alive was extremely, extremely important. The survival of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) was far more important than winning the battle, because this was just the beginning of the spreading of Islam. So they knew that Allah (swt) is the only one who is the owner of life and death, and He is the only one who can give death to anybody, but still they planned for the Prophet's (pbuh) safety. You know they knew that if Allah (swt) doesn't want *Rasool Allah* (pbuh) to die right now, he will not. But they planned for it; they made a contingency plan.

Slide 28-30:

And another example from *seerah* is of Prophet (pbuh)'s migration to Madinah, you see he devised a top secret plan with his closest companion, Abu bakr (ra) and hired Abdullah ibn Irakib as a guide for the journey, he didn't say, "Okay I'm just going to Madinah, I'm not going to need anyone." He knew that he will have to take a route that was not commonly used, so he hired a guide for it and he asked Abu Bakr (ra) to prepare a camel load of food and drinks. And he instructed Asma (ra), Abu Bakr's daughter and her brother Abdullah to provide him and their father with food and news in their hiding place. So they made arrangement for food as well as news, they wanted news of the enemy's movements. And he also instructed Abu Bakr's servant, Amir Ibn Qayela, to graze the herd of sheep nearby. Whenever Asma and Abdullah would come to *Rasool Allah* (pbuh) to give them food or the news, this man was appointed to make sure that they didn't leave any foot prints behind. All he had to do was to make sure, and he would take care of the sheep so people wouldn't wonder why isn't anybody grazing the sheep today? So all these things were taken into account and *Rasool Allah* (pbuh) also told his son in law Ali (ra) to

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<sup>1</sup> The Sunnah of Planning in Islam (attached; pg: 2)

lie down on his bed all wrapped up pretending to be him. They also misled the enemy by taking a different route.

So you see Rasool Allah (pbuh) always took steps and made changes in matters he could do something about, he would not just go and do something blindly. After this if you remember they had gone and hidden in the cave of Saur, and after that they met Abdullah ibn Irakib who was their guide to take them through a different route closer to the 'Dead Sea' and they didn't take the normal shorter route. So Rasool Allah (pbuh) drew up his plan of migration with care and deliberation. He didn't just leave it like that.<sup>2</sup>

Slide 31:

Another thing that we are going to talk about is the advice of the Prophet (pbuh). He said that if the 'Hereafter' is about to occur and in the hands of one of you is a plant that he was about to plant in ground, he must do so as long as he has the time. [Bukhari]

The idea being that if you have an opportunity to do a good deed even if the world is about to end that very minute, do it! Okay, don't waste the opportunity, just go ahead and do it.

Slide 32:

And Umar bin Kattab's (ra) advice is: "For your worldly affairs construct your plans based on the assumption that you are going to live forever and as for the Hereafter construct your plan on the assumption that you are going to die tomorrow."<sup>3</sup>

Can anyone give me an example of what are the plans that we make for the worldly things?

Student: We save money and invest in houses and land

Teacher: ...the property that we make for our children. So now when Umar (ra) is saying construct your plans for the world based on the assumption that you are going to live forever. What does this tell you? It means we should be making most of whatever worldly resources that we are provided with. Okay. If we have some resources and we need to make some property, *Alhamdulillah* there is nothing wrong with that. Ok. And as for the work reserved for the Hereafter construct your plans on the assumption that you are going to die tomorrow. Don't delay your religious duties, if you have to do your *salah* try to do it as quickly as possible. Don't delay it. If you need to give your *zakat* just give it, don't delay it and don't wait for *Ramadan*. Alright. That is the idea.

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<sup>2</sup> The Sunnah of Planning in Islam (attached; pg: 4-5)

<sup>3</sup> The Sunnah of Planning in Islam (attached; pg: 3-4)

Slide 33-34:

So planning is a must before execution, before you decide to do anything. And planning should be very, very clear.

Slide 35:

One big misconception is when we say, ‘Don’t plan and have *tawakkal* on Allah (swt)’, Allah (swt) will do everything, you don’t have to do anything, and you just keep sitting. Do you think if we start doing that anyone of us will be able to get any food? Sorry?

Student: What did you just say? Can you please repeat the word and explain what it means?

Slide 36:

Teacher: *Tawakkal*. Okay we will try to understand what is *tawakkal*, and also try and understand the difference between *tawakkal* and planning. You see the word *tawakkal* means ‘trust in Allah (swt)’. But the important thing to understand in *tawakkal* is that you have to work for it.

Slide 37:

Because Allah (swt) has said it in the Qur’an that man can have nothing but what he strives for. (Surah An-Najm 53:39)

Only if you work for something then you will get it. But if you don’t work for it, Allah (swt) is saying that it would not be possible.

Slide 38:

And there’s this hadith of Rasool Allah (pbuh), that one day the Prophet noticed a *Bedouin* leaving his camel without tying and he asked why was he doing so? The *Bedouin* answered that I put my trust in Allah (swt), the Prophet (pbuh) told him to tie his camel first then put his trust in Allah (swt). [Tirmidhi]

Slide 39:

This is the important rule, this is what we need to understand about *tawakkal*, that you do your best first and then Allah (swt) will do the rest. But you have to put in your best effort.

Slide 40:

So we need to plan then execute and exhaust our resources. Every possible thing that we can come up with, we should be doing and then do *tawakkal* on Allah (swt). And then whatever the result is, it might not be what we wanted it to be, but we need to learn to accept it because that is



the decision of Allah (swt). This is a very important point that we must learn to accept. There will be times when our best efforts will not bring out our desired result. But we must learn to accept the outcome with grace because that is the result that Allah (swt) has planned. We plan because we don't know Allah's Plan. Because if we don't plan we'll never know what to do and will always feel lost.

Slide 41:

So we can easily say that: If you fail to plan, basically you plan to fail. So that is the importance of planning.

Slide 42:

Now we are going to do a practice exercise. I want you to think of an upcoming event, something that is about to happen. Can anyone tell me something?

Student: A party.

Teacher: Okay let's think about a party. You want to plan a party for your friends. So what would you like to be the end of the party? You have anything in mind?

Student: Everyone should have fun!

Teacher: Ok, you want that at the end of the party when all your friends are leaving they should tell you that they are glad they came to the party because it was good fun.Ok. So what steps should you take to make your party a success? You all can give suggestions.

Student: Make a list of things to do. Ask my mother what food items we can keep.

Student: Order food.

Student: Think up games to play.

Student: Make some give-aways with some personalized message for each friend.

Teacher: *Masha'Allah*. Good ideas. So after listing all these ideas you can go into the execution phase and do the things you have decided and make sure that everything is ready on time for the party.

Teacher: Alright, let's now draw up a plan for another goal.

Student: Plan for the O'Level exams.

Teacher: O levels. Alright, can you think of an end result for that?

Student: Good grades, Get A\*

Teacher: So what are steps that you need to do for it. First of all, the planning! What is the plan?

Student: Make a timetable to study at home.

Student: Do group studies.

Student: Put in more time than usual.

Student: Take help if needed

Student: Plan sometime for relaxation as well.

Teacher: Very good. *MashaAllah*. Now I want all of you to think of the end results you had talked about in the beginning. Like someone said that at the end of her life she wishes that she will be remembered as a good daughter. And let's analyze this now. What are the steps that you are going to take for it?

Student: Be Obedient.

Teacher: Obedience, yes.

Student: Respect parents. Love them.

Teacher: Absolutely.

Student: Doing things that would please them. Make them happy.

Teacher: Now if I ask you what is it that you can do right away, as soon as you get home?

Student: Bake them a cake. Sit with them

Student: Help them. Make them tea

Teacher: Make them tea. Absolutely.

Student: Ask them how their day was?

Teacher: Absolutely, ask them how their day was.

Student: Make them feel important.

Teacher: *Alhamdulillah*. Very nice!

Student: Not answer back when they are scolding.

Teacher: Absolutely. Very good *MashaAllah*! These are the things that you can do, but do you remember to do them? Some are saying 'yes' and some are saying 'no'. That is the whole idea!

When the situation comes, when your mum scolds you, think about the end result. Think about it. Think about when you are answering back, what is going to happen after that? Okay? So we need to think about all these things. So now, *alhumdulillah*, you have your plan for being a good daughter so just go home and put it into action.

What else? How is your relationship with your siblings?

Student: Hostile!

Teacher: Hostile, haha! How many of you have siblings, older or younger? How many of you have problems with the older ones? What about the younger ones? Okay, do you have more problems with the younger ones or the older ones?

Student: Younger ones.

Teacher: Younger ones! Raise your hands, so majority is for the younger ones. What are the things that you can do? First of all, what is the end result that you want to have with them?

Student: To sit with them for fifteen minutes without fighting.

Teacher: Her end result is to sit with them for fifteen minutes without fighting. You have a brother or a sister? So that's the end result she has in mind. Anyone else? You have a brother or a sister? What would you want the end result with them? Try to imagine that you are dying and your sibling is there.

Student: I would want him to cry because I am dying.

Teacher: Alright, so what are the things that you should be doing for him to cry... that you are dying?

Student: Defend him when my parents are scolding him.

Teacher: Okay now that's a very tricky one. If your parents are scolding him, there must be a reason behind it. Right?

Student: Maybe I can talk to them when he is not around.

Teacher: That sounds like a good idea.

Teacher: It depends on the situation. If you defend your brother just for the sake of defending him then it might not work. Alright. I think that was a very nice thing end in mind that you want to see your brother crying when you die. That really explains a lot. Then you have to have that kind of a relationship with him, that he misses you. Okay. So how will you develop this relationship? One thing was that you can defend him. What else can you do?

Student: Spend time with our siblings.

Teacher: Spending time with them, absolutely. And we have to find some common interests, don't you think so? Do you know what your brother's interests are?

Student: Sports.

Teacher: Do you have the same kind of interest in sports as your brother?

Student: No

Teacher: Then what do you do?

Student: Just pay attention to what he is interested in.

Teacher: What about grandparents? Do they live with you? How many of you have grandparents living in the house? Okay *MashaAllah*. What do you people do? You have a good relationship with them? What is the end result that you want to have with them?

Student: I want them to be proud of me.

Teacher: You want them to be proud of you. That's nice. So what would really make them proud?

Student: Small things.

Teacher: Small things. Like?

Student: Reading them the newspaper or doing errands for them.

Student: My grandfather always gives me a gift when I do well in exams.

Student: Spending time with them and telling them about our day.

Student: My grandparents like it when I am good to my parents.

Student: My grandmother likes it when I sit with her.

Teacher: Basically whatever relationship we have talked about, everyone needs love and affection. Whoever we give this to, the relationship starts developing. So basically its love and attention that is crucial for developing a good relationship.

We have talked about relationships, but have you thought about careers. How many of you have decided what you want to be?

Alright, so that is your end in mind? So what are the steps that you are going to take for it? Can you tell me what steps will you take, what do you want to be?

Student: Doctor.

Teacher: Have you decided what specialization do you want to do?

Student: Pediatrics.

Teacher: So you will have to handle kids. Have you decided where you will go to study? Maybe that's something you can look into? Find out how many colleges there are. Where can you go, what are your options?

What about you?

Student: I want to do marketing.

Teacher: That's interesting. So why do you want to go into marketing?

Student: I like the creative side. Like advertisements. I helped a lot of people.

Teacher: You have done some internship?

Student: Not internship but I've helped.

Teacher: If I ask you what is the end result of a marketing person?

Student: I don't know, a CEO of a marketing firm.

Teacher: Okay. CEO of some marketing firm, that could be the end result. So what steps do you need to take?

Student: I apply in specific colleges.

Teacher: That is something you can start exploring about.

Ok. Have you decided what you want to do? Who else raised their hands?

Student: Surgery.

Teacher: How many years of schooling is that? Five years of medicine and then...

Student: 4 years undergrad,  
4years medical school,  
4years general medical internship,  
4years surgical internship/specialization (2 years general surgery, 2+ years specialization)

Teacher: *Masha'Allah*, that's a lot of studying. Are you ready for it?

Student: Yes, *Insha'Allah*.

Teacher: Have you decided what kind of surgery you want to go into?

Student: No.

Teacher: May Allah (swt) make things easy for you, *aameen*.

Slides 43 - 45

Alright, *alhamdulillah*, that was a good discussion that we had. I hope it was beneficial for you. Just last two questions. What do you think should be the ultimate vision of a Muslim? What is it that one should always keep in mind no matter what you are doing?

Student: To gain the pleasure of Allah (swt).

Teacher: Yes, *MashaAllah*, the pleasure of Allah (swt). That covers everything. Whatever you put under this umbrella, it's alright. And what should be the final destination where we all would like to end up? *Jannah, InshaAllah*. So keep these two things in mind always and everything should fall under it. So that way we make sure that whatever field we chose, we can be a doctor, a housewife, an anthropologist or whatever but we need to end up in *jannah*. So we need to make sure whatever work we do, we need to do it very honestly and for the pleasure of Allah (swt), *InshaAllah*.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) <i>SubhanaRabbikaRabbulIzzati 'ammayasifunwasalamun 'alalmursaleen, walhamdulillahRabbil 'alameen</i> (Parting salutation to students) <i>AssalamalaikumwarahmatullahiwaBarakatuh</i>
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