

MODULE: 4**Class title:** What Next?**Aim of lesson:** To reflect and analyse on what has been learned over the past academic year**Category:** Personal Development**Class Format:** Power Point Presentation & Discussion

(Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*
(*Ta'awwudh*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*
(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*
(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* (Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

(**Note to teacher:** This class should be taken at the end of an academic session with your students.)

Slide 1:

So, it's the last class today; some of you have been here since the beginning of the year, some of you might have joined this term. What is your general impression of 'Perceptions'?

Some of you were forced to come in the beginning and you then started enjoying the classes. Be very honest, how many of you came because you were forced to? I'm going to raise my hand first; seriously. That's true for all of us here, all the people who put this show together for you; because it's like show business, isn't it?

Before you guys come, the team here, all the admin people that you see hovering around all over the place; we all come here at two-thirty. You guys arrive at three-twenty. They come and lay out the carpets, make sure that the place is clean, all the utensils are clean and everything is laid out and everything including the A.C.s are working, etc. How do you think this happens? There are a lot of people who do a lot of behind-the-scenes work before holding one class. They come and quietly do their little business like the little elves. Do you think they all like to come every week at two-thirty?

There are days when I don't want to come. I have to drag my feet and I have to rush sometimes; it's *salah* time and I want to read *Surah Kahf* and the children are coming home from school and I have to leave at two-thirty because I have to be at Perceptions. So there are lots of times that it's not just you guys but it's the team members as well who have to make an effort to come here when they don't want to. The good news however, is that if you make that effort for the sake of Allah (swt), then every step that you take towards coming here or for that matter wherever else you might go to listen to what is being said about Allah (swt), then you get rewarded for it.

Slide 2:

And that's actually exactly what I want to talk about today. I want to see now what? Some of you been here since... the exact date was the fifth of Ramadan fourteen hundred and thirty two, or the sixth of August twenty eleven CE. Then we went through all of August; we had four sessions.

Slide 3:

And then came September of last year; we had two classes off for the *Eid* break.

Slide 4:

Then came October and October came and went and...

Slide 5:

We just had a few classes in November because you guys had your mid-terms. You had a break for a while and then...

Slide 6:

Some of you joined in January and some of you came back in January, after a holiday.

Slide 7:

In February *Alhamdulillah*, we had all four classes

Slide 8:

And now, we have come to the end of our session today. How do I remember all of that? Well, there is an amazing thing called a calendar which one marks in; so that's how I remember all of that. Like I said, you think all of this just happens by magic, but actually there are people who do a lot of scheduling.

Slide 9:

And like I said, some of you came very happily. Some of you came happily from day one, *Alhamdulillah*; particularly those of you who have been with us from before.

Slide 10:

Some of you were like, "Oh my God, another Friday afternoon down the drain." and like some of you say, you're still like that; another Friday after noon down the drain! Some of you have sort of graduated from that "down the drain" thing, to say, "You know, it's not that bad; after all we also get some yummy food to eat." I'm sure that everybody is not necessarily at one end of the spectrum or the other; some people may just not want to go one week in the middle – or perhaps one week you have to go to a friend's party from school and your mom is saying that you have to go to Perceptions. So that's what happens as well. That also happens to me, by the way; I have to decline

many invitations for Friday afternoons because I have to go to Perceptions. So I know exactly how you feel.

Slide 11:

We tried to give you information about Allah (swt), about your *deen*, about how *Rasul Allah* (saw) was in his practice of our *deen*. We tried to make it as interesting as we could for you to understand and appreciate and remember. I don't know if it worked or not, but you know if I could do a somersault to make you understand, I would. That's what we tried to do; we tried to make it as colourful as possible so that you would: a) keep coming back, and b) it gets somewhere in here and here (teacher points to head and heart).

Slide 12:

And do you know that you spent exactly forty-eight hours with us in this class last year? How do I know that? You come here from three-twenty to five-thirty and your class starts at three-thirty. So in the entire year you came to us for forty-eight hours. That's it. That is the amount of time those of you who actually came every week, have spent with us. We covered topics like *Surah Al-Fatihah*; how many of you remember *Suratul-Fatihah*? So we did that and in the beginning because it was Ramadan when you came, we did the importance of Ramadan. We did various short *surahs* with you, *halal/ haram* foods; *Bon appetit*, that was a very interesting class. Then we did the whole series with you on the reality of magic and then there was a segment about eating etiquettes and a whole series about '*ilm*. What is the difference between knowledge and '*ilm*. We had a class on music and then we did classes on gender relations and respect of parents and our tongue; do you remember all these topics? These are all the topics that we covered with you and I've not even read out all of them. We had a class on cell phones as well. So these are all the different topics that we tried to cover and the reason that we looked at a variety of topics, was so that you could get a holistic view of our *deen*; so that you know that some things we did purely from the Qur'an, some that we did purely from the *sunnah* of *RasulAllah* (saw), and some that are derived from the Qur'an and the *sunnah*. All of those things, all the etiquettes that you have, the way we should be, how we should behave with each other, whether it is gender relations, whether it is the reality behind magic, whether it is the seeking of knowledge, that is all based on what? It is all based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the teachings of *Rasul Allah* (saw).

Slide 13:

During all of that time, from August twenty-eleven to today, a lot has happened in the world. Many many things; I just picked up a few headlines from here and there. Steve Jobs died. There were violent riots in England in August last year, there were floods in Sindh. Mu'ammarr Qadhafi of Libya was deposed and killed. Helicopters attacked a military base in Pakistan, killing a lot of soldiers. Whitney Houston just died recently. So lots of different things happened around the world and during this period of time

from August twenty-eleven to today, many lives have changed and have been touched in various different ways around the world.

Slide 14:

But that's not what I want to talk about today. I want to know what happened with you. What is it that happened with you? Like I said, we try our level best to pour in.

Slide 15:

If I had my way, I would do that with my own kids as well. I would just take a saw and open up their brains and pour down the Qur'an and the *hadith of Rasul Allah* (saw). But I can't do that. Allah (swt) has not given me that prerogative. That's not my job. I can't do it to my own children. I can't do it to my own self; I can't cut up my skull and just shove the Qur'an down.

Slide 16:

If you want to put your point of view across to somebody what would you do? You would try to persuade them, by telling them the benefits of that thing and then if they don't agree at this level, let them be and pray for them. *Alhamdulillah* that's exactly what we should be doing.

But believe it or not we love you to death. It may sound crazy, but that's true; we do and we do want to shove everything down your throat as best as possible - and we have forty-eight hours to do that, so can you imagine the desperation on our end? All this time that you guys were sitting here what were you doing? Were you sitting there with blinders on your eyes and your ears completely locked up, and thinking about something else? Daydreaming or whatever? Throughout all these twenty four. I don't know if all of you even remember what 24 they were. So that's exactly what I want to know; we had 24 classes with you, what is it that you got out of them? That is the question that we need to ask ourselves today. I'm very interested in finding out.

Were these classes wasted or were they really productive or a somewhere-in-between? To understand it, I want you to think about that today. You don't even have to share it, but I want you to think about it now and think about it when you go home.

Those of you who came because mom forced you to and you really didn't want to come, *InshaAllah* He (swt) will give you a double reward, because you obeyed your mother even though you didn't want to. You know about the Qur'an, Allah (swt) says the person who reads the Qur'an fluently, gets amazing reward, but the one who reads the Qur'an and gets stuck because he doesn't know how to read it, will be rewarded more; Arabic is not our language, we have to put in an effort to learn the *tajweed* of the Qur'an, to learn how to read the letters properly. Sometimes we can't say "*dwaallean*" it's difficult. Sometimes we can't say *Alhamdulillah*; the "*haa*" just doesn't come out right; so we get stuck sometimes. A lot of people get stuck. So Allah

(swt) will give double reward to that person, because he is making that effort and trying.

Human beings are different from animals because they can think, analyze, are responsible for their actions and their actions are based on reasoning and intellect. If our actions are not based on something concrete then we are no different from animals; so if you are just walking in for the heck of it and walking out just for the heck of it then what are you gaining out of it? We want to rise above that level; we want to raise ourselves above that level.

Slide 17:

Let's understand how we learn; what is this learning process? One percent of our learning is through taste. So all the cookies and this juice or whatever you have, is just one percent of your learning.

Slide 18:

One point five percent through touch.

Slide 19:

Three point five percent through smell.

Slide 20:

Eleven percent through hearing; so whatever you are hearing, whatever I'm saying. You only absorbed or have learnt eleven percent of whatever your teachers said in those forty eight hours.

Slide 21:

We learn eighty three percent through our sight; that is the reason why we have these projectors all over the place; because when you actually see something, you learn.

Slide 22:

And we learn ninety-nine point nine percent through our heart. So if your heart is covered in cellophane paper and if your heart is involved in worrying about the lizard on the wall, then your learning will be absolutely zero. So if in these forty-eight hours your heart has truly been involved in the class, whatever topic it might be, then your learning *Alhamdulillah* would have been ninety-nine point nine percent.

Slide 23:

Since this is your last class of this year, the one thing I want you to take home with you is to learn to listen with your heart; whatever you listen to. There are lots of things that are happening around you. Some of you will be busy in your exams, then you'll have a summer break, perhaps you'll go away somewhere; keep yourself involved

with Allah (swt) in some way or the other. There are lots of amazing, beautiful lectures available online. Listen to those.

Slide 24:

We remember ten percent of what we read. Read stuff. Read the Qur'an every day; at least try to, even if it is one little *surah* or a few lines. And read it with meaning. We have a blog now which I have been talking about for a long time; a Perceptions blog. Get involved in that, write; contribute. We also have a face book page. You can get involved in that too.

But learn to listen with your heart; put your entire heart in whatever you do; don't do things half-heartedly. That's true for anything, even your exams; if you have been studying for your exams half-heartedly what's going to happen? You won't end up getting an A star. You might just pass, but that's about it.

Slide 25:

Listen to the recitation of the Qur'an, it's beautiful. We remember twenty percent of what we hear. You can find various different recitations online, of various different *qaris*; see who you like and listen to that. It really affects you.

Slide 26:

We remember fifty percent of what we see and hear, and like I said, that is the reason why we have all this multi-media arranged for you at Perceptions; because we do remember more when we see something and we hear it as well.

Slide 27:

We remember eighty percent of what we say.

Slide 28:

And we remember ninety percent of what we say AND what we do. If you share whatever you learn from here, with other people, you will learn more, because when you hear yourself saying it you remember more.

Slide 29:

Another thing; always, always, always speak the truth. Always. What is the ultimate truth? *La ila ha illallah Muhammadur rasul Allah.*

Slide 30:

And walk the talk. You've learned eating etiquettes at Perceptions, try to do what you've learnt; eat with your right hand, say *bismillah* before you begin, say *Alhamdulillah* after you finish. You had a whole class on gender relations, how to

interact with people of the opposite gender, try to apply what's right; when you do that, you learn more. Apply whatever you pick up, there and then.

Slide 31:

Gandhi said, "Be the change that you want to see in the world." You can't just say that you want everybody to be honest with you if you're dishonest yourself. You want people to behave politely with you, but you're rude yourself. Sometimes we see awful things happening around us, especially in today's day and age, people are generally rude - I don't know why - so if we think that our being polite won't change anything, we're wrong; each little change starts with a small step. Each individual makes a difference. So what you do **will** make a difference. You must remember that. My place is so important that whatever I do as an individual will make a difference.

Slide 32:

And changes are sometimes difficult, because our habits are fixed and of course, *Shaytan* is not on vacation. Sometimes you are so settled in the comfort zone that you just don't want to make that effort and then the change is difficult because it takes a lot more effort. If you happen to be a lazy bum like me then it is very difficult. "Who's going to wake up for Fajr!" It's difficult.

Slide 33:

However, until and unless you do that you won't become a little froggy, because you were a little tadpole. If you don't go through that evolution process it will be stumped growth and you will not become a frog.

Slide 34:

Or you will not become a butterfly. So you have to make that effort to become that butterfly. Do you know it takes a lot of effort on the butterfly's part to come out of the pupa? You all know that; you know basic science. You know that the caterpillar eats and eats and eats and eats and then what happens? It forms a little pupa around itself. And for you all that eating is like what? Like gaining knowledge. All that gaining of knowledge; eating and eating and eating and eating. And then what will you do? Spit it out in a way that it becomes a pupa around you and does something transformative to you, so that you become a butterfly *inshaAllah*. For that you have to make a lot of effort to push yourself out of that pupa. Otherwise what will happen? Stumped growth; and we don't want that happening.

Slide 35:

You are in control of things. We did our bit over here like I said, forty-eight hours. You control the way things happen in your life. Yes Allah (swt) has predestined certain things, you can't do anything about that, but generally the knowledge that you gain, the information that you receive from whichever channels, what you do with it,

is your business. Your parents or I can't force you to do anything. So it is in your hands. We hear that about climate control don't we? That we shouldn't use cfcs; those little cans, we are the ones who are responsible for that; if you don't throw trash on the road it will become better. We are the ones who are responsible for depleting the ozone layer and *inshaAllah* we will be the ones who are responsible for controlling it too. The same principal applies on ourselves as well. Whatever information we have, whatever knowledge we gain from which ever quarters, we are responsible for what we do with it.

Slide 36:

You have to be in this phase of getting information, gaining knowledge, preparing yourself to apply that knowledge, applying that knowledge, maintaining that knowledge.

Slide 37:

Spread it and then go back into the circle. It has to be a process. It can't just be that you come to Perceptions, listen for two hours, think about the lizard and go back. No it has to be a little more than that for you to get any meaningful results out of it.

Slide 38:

So basically the ball is now in your court. We have done our little bit and now you need to do your bit. I want you to tell me what you are planning to do.

(Note to teacher: have a discussion with students on what they will do with the knowledge they have gained with you. Prompt practical suggestions.)

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika RabbulIzzati 'amma yasifun wa salamun 'alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*