**MODULE 4**

**Class Title**: Laziness

**Aim of the lesson**: To understand laziness, it’s consequences & get tips of how to overcome it.

**Category**: *Tazkiyah*

**Lesson Format**: Power point presentation and discussion

(Greeting to students*) Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

*(Taooz) 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)

**Slide 1:**

Aren’t there days you’d rather just not do anything, just “chill” and that’s it?

I can assure that there is no person on planet earth, who has not had their moments of laziness. It is one of the free tickets you get when you are born.

It does not matter how old you are, there is that one moment where you feel the laziest.

However, there is a difference between experiencing laziness in batches and being a lazy person.

We all have those days. But if those days happen well a lot, then we have a problem here. And that problem is called Laziness.

Sometimes people work so hard to avoid working that they put more time and effort into avoiding the work than it would have taken to complete the job itself!

So today we want to see why Laziness is an issue – after all if I sit around doing nothing, what’s the big deal? We want to see what the big deal is! What our deen says about Laziness and what we can do to get ourselves out of this state.

**Slide 2:**

The dictionary describes laziness or the lazy person in this way: "..one who does not like to work; one who finds activity or effort distasteful."

**Slide 3:**

According to a great scholar from among our predecessors – Imam Ragheb Isphahani - laziness is “lack of energy and enthusiasm of doing something that you should not lack energy/enthusiasm for”

**Slide 4:**

Just so you remember the definition.

Teacher: Laziness and Procrastination are different, does anyone know how?

Student: Procrastination is to delay something and being lazy is being lethargic?

Teacher: Basically, procrastination is the act of putting off essential tasks until a later time, most of the time non-essential tasks are done instead of the more essential ones.

In other words, procrastination is usually dealing with a situation of putting something off but with the intention of dealing/finishing said situation later at last minute.

Laziness is lack of energy and enthusiasm of doing something that you should not lack energy/enthusiasm for. For example, you should not lack energy/enthusiasm to perform your prayers, or to go to work, or to study and improve yourself, but if you do then that is laziness.

**Slide 5:**

There can be various reasons of laziness. It is compulsory for you to know the causes first. It will help you to overcome this serious problem because the only way to overcome any type of problem is to understand what are the reasons behind it.

**Slide 6:**

**Lack of motivation –**

Now, this is the very first and most common reason for laziness. You can never achieve anything in life without proper motivation.

This is the reason which will always prevent you to move forward in your life. Lack of motivation can be the biggest cause of laziness when you are unwilling to do any work because you don't want to feel bored when doing a mundane task, or you are trying to avoid feelings of frustration by dodging a tough challenge or you have no motivation because of the next reason …

**Slide 7:**

**No specific goal of life –**

This is the second most important cause of laziness because if we think practically, if a person has no goals to achieve in his life then what work will he do? How will he be motivated?

Ok so tell me, why do you guys go to school?

Students: various answers … because I have to, because my parents want me to, because that’s what the done thing is, because I want to study

Teacher: Are these reasons good enough or motivating enough for you to wan to get up every morning and go to school with a positive mind frame?

Think about it carefully. Having specific life goals is important at every stage of life. If you make a goal regarding school – I want to go to school because I want to learn, I want to achieve good grades, I want to get into a good college …. You can add on … then there is a fair chance you will try your best to be up and have breakfast and be charged in the morning. Right?

Your goals of life always motivate you to work further, get going, be energetic - and if you do not have your any specific goal then you’ll become lazy for sure. No rocket science here. Pretty straight forward and logical.

**Slide 8:**

The next reason for laziness is:

**Poor Lifestyle Choices –**

Most of the people live unplanned and totally careless lives. They keep on doing things that are not important at all such as chatting on social media, watching movies and texting. Most active people on social media can confess that hours pass by without even their noticing.

Social media tends to consume a lot of time for everybody. It keeps you occupied and prevents you from doing what really matters to you. If you are a victim of this, then you’ll feel your inability to get work done.

Your mind needs adequate rest and when it doesn’t get it, it dramatically affects your ability to perform tasks in an effective manner.

Do note that all the reasons we are discussing are inter-related and closely connected.

**Slide 9:**

**Lack of willpower -**

The first daily test of one’s willpower begins with the loathsome tone of the alarm clock: to resist pressing the snooze button. Come on, how many times have you turned off that alarm? Be honest here.

So you had the best of intentions of getting up early for Fajr – but … what happened? No will power to get up and out of bed and into the bathroom to make wudu. That’s what happened. And you know you have to submit that paper tomorrow, you are researching on the net, then you say let me check out Netflix for a minute and before you know it, THAT show is on or your football team is in play offs and you simply do not have the will power to turn that off and go back to work.

Laziness needs just that little window of you slacking off and it creeps in, slithers in and takes over.

**Slide 10:**

**Self Indulgence –**

This is just a fancy tansy word for a selfish person. A person full of himself/herself. Oh by the way, does YOUR favourite person live in the mirror?

Physical and mental effort require the giving of self, and a lazy person is basically a selfish one. This is the real problem: a lazy person loves himself too much to give any of himself away in work or service.

The more wrapped up you are in your own self, the more likelihood of you being lazy.

**Slide 11:**

**Being OK with mediocrity –**

Sure shot reason for laziness. Settling for “this is good enough”. I can “just pass” by studying just a little. No need to aim higher. The definition of mediocrity is the quality or state of being just average. When you are in the middle of your class and don't really do anything to stand out or do better.

Do understand this, being in the middle of the class or like we say average is not a bad thing at all. But if our mind-set is such that there is no need for me to do any more, its good enough to be good enough – then that leads to laziness as we just don’t make any effort to improve or move forward.

**Slide 12:**

**Fear of failure –**

A lot of people are afraid of doing anything because of fear of failure. this can be a cause of laziness. These people are not ready to take any risk because they think what’s the point, I’m not going to succeed anyway, so why even try!

But the fact is without taking a risk we can’t try anything new. We have to try something and take the risk to achieve something in our life.

I want to share with you an awesome true story. This young girl in grade 5 really sucked at math – so do I even today, by the way. But what she did was sign up in school for a Math competition. Her mom was a bit skeptical but didn’t want to discourage her, so she signed the parent approval slip. After few months the girl came running to her parents, big smile and announced with gusto – I came 36th in school! Allahu Akbar. What a triumph.

Moral of the story is, fear of failure did not hold her back. Although she knew math was not her subject. When we think we are losers, and are bound to fail, we make that an excuse to be lazy.

**Slide 13:**

**Indecisiveness –**

Life is all about the decisions you make in it. The mind of some people just can’t be made up or they can’t decide what to do and this can lead them to laziness.

You just keep on wasting your day without deciding anything for the day. If you can’t make decisions in your life then this can be the biggest reason for your laziness. You end up dilly dallying, meh mehing and that’s it.

Can you think of or have experienced personally other reasons for being lazy?

(have a short discussion)

**Activity**

Before we move on to the Islamic Perspective on Laziness, I want you guys to fill out these forms. Let us find out our “Lazy Quotient”

(**note to teacher**: if time permits, give out the “Lazy Quotient form” to everyone in class, and have a short discussion after they fill it. If short on time, do this activity on a white board asking different students to answer the questions)

**Slide 14:**

**Islamic Perspective on Laziness**

Laziness loves idleness.

Lazy people love inactivity, sleep, lounging and entertainment more than work. Anything that requires effort or the pain of giving is negative in their experience. Their happiness comes from self-indulgence and easy diversion rather than the satisfaction of accomplishment, effort or service.

Some might say, "This is my life and I can be lazy if I choose to." But our *deen* paints another picture of laziness and the true character of the lazy person from God's perspective.

Laziness is a state of passivity and of letting things stay as they are. Islam is a religion that calls for activity and action and fights against laziness and procrastination.

**Slides 15 & 16:**

Laziness is a disease of the heart that can paralyze the potential of a person. Laziness is one of the diseases that Islam abhors, and the Prophet (pbuh) sought Allah (swt)'s protection and refuge against.

اللّهُمَّ إنِّي أعُوذُبِكَ مِن العَجزِ وَ الكَسلٍ

O Allah, I seek refuge in you from incapability/weakness and laziness

(Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmidhi)

It is an immensely powerful technique used by *Shaytan* to keep us away from practicing our *deen* the way Allah (swt) commands us.

**Slide 17:**

In Islamic terminology, laziness is called *Al Kasl*

*Kasl* means ‘to be lazy, idle, sluggish, negligent and inactive’.

Neither interest nor any willingness to pick yourself up. Feeling fatigued, sluggish, and physically drained. Your whole body may feel heavy, and even small tasks are exhausting or take longer to complete.

How will a person in this state fulfill any rights of Allah swt – just basic stuff like praying, fasting, reciting Quran etc?

Rasool Allah (pbuh) didn’t seek refuge from this *Kasl* just for no reason.

**Slide 18:**

You see *kasl* or laziness if left untreated – as it is declared a disease of the heart - has serious consequences for our spiritual self.

A wise person said: laziness may be tolerable, but it’s consequences are not at all tolerable.

**Slides 19, 20 & 21:**

Hypocrisy is rooted in the heart of a lazy believer.

These are the people that pray quickly (if at all) or recite little of Quran and remember Allah (swt) little. They are the last to enter to the mosque and the first to get out, no aspiration to improve their spirituality or get closer to Allah (swt). Night prayer is not even on their wish-list and fasting only takes place in Ramadan.

The term laziness or “Kasal” in Arabic only appeared twice in the Qur’an, describing the hypocrites and their state of prayer. Laziness is associated with salah because salah is the most difficult of the daily obligations that a Muslim must complete since it has to be done every day, 5 times a day, without fail. An interesting point to make here is that whoever is lazy in their salah will be lazy in other acts of worship and whoever is not lazy in their salah, he/she won’t be lazy in other aspects of his/her life

Describing one of the characteristics of a hypocrite; Allah (swt) says in the *Qur’an:*

”Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for As-Salat (the prayer), they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allah but little.

 [Surah Al-Nisa: verse 142]

”And nothing prevents their contributions from being accepted from them except that they disbelieved in Allah and in His Messenger and that they came not to As-Salat (the prayer) except in a lazy state, and that they offer not contributions but unwillingly.”

(Surah At Tauba: verse 54)

**Slide 22:**

All *Shaytan* tells us is to sleep just ten more minutes by pressing the snooze button and then ten more minutes …..till you miss your *Salah* and then he says “well, you missed *Fajr*, now what is the rush?”

He uses any and everything to mess our relationship with Allah swt.

During the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), an incident happened in which a man slept throughout the night and missed *fajr*. When another person narrated this incident to the Prophet (pbuh), he said:

“This is the person in whose ears the devil has urinated.” – [Bukhari]

So one of the serious consequences of being spiritually lazy is giving ourselves over to Shaytan.

**Slide 23:**

You know that one resource that Allah swt has given to all human beings equally is time. Some of us are more intelligent than others, some more rich in material stuff, some healthier than others – right? But we all have 24 hours at our disposal.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

“Rush to do good deeds. A *fitna* will occur that is like a portion of the dark night, morning will come upon a man as a believer, who will be a disbeliever in the evening, and evening will come upon a believer, who will be a disbeliever in the morning. One of them will sell his religion for goods of the world.” – [Tirmidhi]

The gist of which is: “Race to good deeds before a time and a *fitna* comes, (a test) that will sweep over you like the darkest of the darkest nights.”

We must fear the moment when this *fitna* comes. We know all of us will die, and just like we all will face trials in this life, are we ready for what is waiting for us in the Hereafter? Are we prepared? Have we done our best? Or have we been lazy?

**Slide 24:**

Our very *eeman* gets unhinged and weak if we continue to be lazy in our obligations. It is like a downward spiral.

Our eeman is like a living thing. It needs to be nourished with remembrance of God, worship, Quran, salah. If we are lazy and neglect this food for the soul, poor eeman suffers, gets malnourished, suffocates and gets weaker and weaker and weaker.

**Slide 25:**

For a true believer nothing can be worse than being in the bad books of Allah swt! Even the possibility of that happening is a big deal.

Allah swt gives us everything without us asking for it, doing anything for it. Right? But His pleasure, His love has to be earned. That closeness to Him swt, that special relationship with Him comes with some effort on our part.

Laziness robs us of this precious and special relationship with our Lord.

**Slides 26 & 27:**

Even form a purely wordly perspective, being lazy is a lose lose state for anyone.

From simple chores to bigger tasks, from homework to projects at school, life becomes all about short cuts and easy ways out when we don’t muster the energy to pursue what is worth pursuing with zest and renewed vigor.

Ever heard promises to have the perfect body in a week or two? Fad diets, diet pills and other such ideas which lure people when they are too lazy to work out. They think having these diet pills will make them thin, and then they end up suffering from side effects.

Teacher: How about sharing an example that comes to your mind?

Student: When we are trying to eat healthy but feel too lazy to fix a meal for ourselves and end up ordering junk food.

Teacher: Yes.

Some other examples are feeling too lazy to brush your teeth before going to bed or when you wake up early but stay in bed till you run late for school!

Or what about when piles of clothes make a small mountain on your bed or chair only because you are lethargic and do not put them away?

Does anyone have sloth like siblings who continue to add wrappers of snacks to an ever-growing pile in their cars or their rooms?

Laziness squishes our potential to lead a productive and meaningful life.

**Slides 28 & 29:**

Allah swt assures us in the Quran: “And those who shall strive for Our Sake, We shall surely guide them to Our ways” (Surah Al-`Ankabut: Verse 69)

We’ve been guilty of saying “I can’t be bothered!”. We sometimes wake up feeling lazy. But the truth about laziness is that it is mostly in our mind.

Laziness is actually an action and we are almost always the culprits in letting that action take control of our minds.

So next time you decide to snooze your Fajr alarm or you decide to sit at home all day and binge watch on Netflix, think about these tips that the Quran and Sunnah has provided us and take action to stop your lazy nafs (soul) and get up and do something good for yourself and others insha’Allah…

So here are some tips to overcome laziness:

**Slide 30:**

First step to fixing a problem is acknowledging you have a problem. You are NOT “relaxed” or a “chill person” or “easy going” – no. Admit to yourself. I AM LAZY. Get rid of fancy titles that we love to hide behind so we don’t have to deal with the real issue of laziness.

And - Don’t Make Excuses

**“بَلِ الۡاِنۡسَانُ عَلٰى نَفۡسِهٖ بَصِيۡرَةٌ وَّلَوۡ اَلۡقٰى مَعَاذِيۡرَهٗؕ‏”**

Rather, man, against himself will be a witness, even if he presents his excuses.

([Surah Al Qiyamah 75:Verses 14 -15](https://quran.com/75/14?translations=20))

Don’t make up excuses as to why you didn’t perform a fard (obligatory religious duty), or for committing a sin but instead be truthful to Allah and yourself and make a proper repentance. And try not to repeat the same mistakes over and over again.

**Slide 31:**

Set a goal that makes you want to jump out of bed in the morning. Your major goal and smaller goals must scare you as well as excite you to motivate you to get up and get going in that direction.

And this is not just some fictional statement you will conjure up after say you are a bit motivated from this session and you think yeah I can do this. You CAN do this if your goals are SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.

Break down a bigger task into smaller tasks. We often avoid bigger tasks because we find them too daunting, too overwhelming, too tiring, or taking too much of our time. Breaking a task into several smaller tasks can solve this problem. Then, each one will not seem so difficult or intimidating. Instead of having one big task, we will have a series of small tasks, which do not require too much effort.

This approach can be applied to goals and everything else we have or need to do. This will tend to melt much of the laziness and inner resistance we often experience.

Simple example is studying for that final exam. Break up the syllabus in realistically doable chunks, assign time frame to finish each chapter and most important – DO IT.

Setting SMART spiritual goals will also benefit you in actually doing them. To be motivated, we have to have something solid to look forward to. Have high aspirations and noble intentions and think BIG. If you have high goals, you will be charged towards achieving them.

**Slide 32:**

Turn to Allah (swt) often and ask Him for protection from laziness and lethargy. Seek refuge in Allah (swt) from laziness just like you seek refuge from *Shaytan* and bad things happening to you because if Allah (swt) blesses you with an active lifestyle, you will achieve so much.

Seek help with patience and *salah*. Start your day with *Fajr* and stick to all five prayers. Manage your time around your *salah* times and not the other way around. Make *salah* your energy boosting pit stops of the day.

As we discussed earlier, laziness is like *Shaytan* urinating in a person’s ear. One of the ways in which *Shaytan* does this is mentioned in the *hadith* in Bukhari from Abu Hurayrah (ra), who said that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“*Shaytan* puts three knots at the back of the head of any of you if he is asleep. On every knot he reads and exhales the following words, ‘The night is long, so stay asleep…When one wakes up and remembers Allah, one knot is undone; and when one performs ablution, the second knot is undone, and when one prays the third knot is undone and one gets up energetic with a good heart in the morning; otherwise one gets up lazy and with a mischievous heart.’ [Bukhari]

**Note to Teacher**: Show Three Knots Video (attached file)

**Slide 33:**

One of the unhealthiest things we all get sucked into today is messed up sleeping patterns. An irregular sleep schedule, such as going to bed too late and sleeping in, can lead to inadequate sleep and chronic tiredness which makes us super lazy.

If you think you're getting poor sleep, consider these tell-tale signs: You take more than 30 minutes to fall asleep after you get into bed. You regularly wake up more than once per night. You lie awake for more than 20 minutes when you wake up in the middle of the night.

Sleep Tips:

Maintain a consistent sleep schedule based on when you need to wake up each day. Experts suggest aiming for at least **7 to 8 hours** of sleep each night.

We must work on avoiding bad sleeping habits - Eating and drinking too close to bedtime, technology in the bedroom. We can go on and on about this! You binge watch whatever show or movies at night with a bag of chips, some cola, something to eat … disaster area.

Pulling all-nighters and oversleeping on weekends is also a big problem. As students you might be doing that. Thinking I have to study all night because of tests or assignment. Hello! Remember SMART goal setting? Managing your sleep pattern is part of it.

**Slide 34:**

You gotta move it to lose it – it being laziness. Physical exercise is a tried and tested and proven way of keeping ourselves energized.

Regular exercise takes off years of laziness, a study in the US finds that a two-year exercise program helped middle-aged couch potatoes get fit and reversed the effects of years of sitting around.

Physical exercise helps in getting rid of mental laziness too!

Believers must take care of their spiritual, emotional and physical health.  Our bodies, the most complex of machines, are given to us by God as a trust.  They should not be abused or neglected but maintained in good order.

 Prophet (pbuh) said ”Teach your children swimming, archery and horse riding”. (Muslim). He (pbuh) himself was a super fit person and encouraged others to be active, agile and strong physically and mentally.

We can all fit in some form of exercise in our schedules. Housework is better than sitting all day with a laptop! Taking the stairs as often as possible. You guys are young, at the peak of your physical fitness – so walk, run, swim, gym, cycle – whatever works for you. Just do it.

**Slide 35:**

Overeating leads to laziness and sleepiness, therefore, we should try and follow the Prophet ﷺ’s advice: ‘The human does not fill any container that is worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat what will support his back. If this is not possible, then a third for food, a third for drink, and third for his breath.” ([Al-Tirmidhi](https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi/36/77))

Umar ibn al-Khattab, (ra), said, “O people, beware of gluttony in eating. Verily, it causes laziness in prayer, it harms the body, it contracts disease, and Allah Almighty detests the fatness of a cleric. Rather, you must be moderate in your provisions, for it is closer to righteousness, further from extravagance, and stronger for the worship of Allah. Verily, a servant is not destroyed unless he prefers his desires over his religion.” (al-Jū’ li-Ibn Abī Dunyā)

There is a reason that eating and drinking halal and tayyab is very much part of our deen. Science tells us today the negative effects of junk food and careless eating not only on our bodies but also our brains.

**Slide 36:**

Spend time with those who have high aspirations and not with time wasters who want you to be like them. Be careful of who you befriend and choose your friends wisely.

Surround yourself by Righteous, Productive people

Allah swt has commanded us in Surah Kahf:

**“وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ…”**

“And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance.” ([Surah Al Kahf 18: Verse 28](https://quran.com/18))

To sum up – let us not laziness get the better of us and rob us of leading a productive, healthy and beneficial life in the world and of earning our Jannah for the aakhirah.

(Du’a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati ‘amma yasifun wa salamun ‘alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil ‘alameen*

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