

Until the Soul Stands Firm

— Volume Four —

**A Practical Programme
for Steadfast Living**



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Until the Soul Stands Firm

Volume Four

A Practical Programme for Steadfast Living

Patience, striving, and consistency in becoming a disciplined person

English edition

The Volumes in This Series

Volume One: Nurturing the Self

Patience, striving, consistency, family upbringing, and the changing responsibilities and capacities of different stages of life.

Volume Two: Worship and Lessons in Following Good Examples

The regular practice of worship, and what we learn from the Prophet's guidance, peace and blessings be upon him, and accounts of learning and action among the earliest generations.

Volume Three: Rights and the Building of Community

The rights of others in family life and work, shared responsibility, and what contemporary studies can contribute within their limits.

Volume Four: A Practical Programme for Steadfast Living

Choosing an area for practice, learning the required skill, following progress, and reviewing setbacks and continued effort.

You may read the volumes in order or turn to a subject you need. For practical work, choose a clear obligation and a defined area. The short introductory cycle and the twelve-week programme are two suggested pathways; their durations do not have to be added together.

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Dedication

To those who know the path but have grown weary of returning to it; to those whose days are so crowded with responsibilities that they postpone their own needs and the rights of those they love; and to those who begin with enthusiasm, then feel ashamed to try again because they did not finish the attempt before.

This book is for you, and we stand beside you in its pages. We all need to learn how to encourage ourselves towards good without treating ourselves unjustly, how to give work its due without neglecting another right, and how to remain steadfast when desire fades but duty remains.

To a father and mother teaching their child a first prayer; to a teacher who is patient with a pupil; and to anyone striving in a matter unseen by others, then rising on a new morning to try once more.

We ask Allah to guide us to the best deeds and grant us sincerity, gentleness, and steadfastness in them. Please remember us, our parents, and everyone who helped this book reach you in a good prayer.

Written and distributed by Madarej.

Chapter One: A Plan That Begins with One Obligation

Why begin in one place?

Understanding discipline is not enough unless it becomes an obligation fulfilled or a change in behaviour. Yet collecting everything we want to improve into one plan makes the beginning more than most people can manage. We therefore suggest a short cycle that starts with one clear commitment.

This cycle is an educational proposal, not a standardised programme. It has not been tested as a complete programme and does not measure piety or the soundness of the soul. It is independent of the extended twelve-week programme. Readers need neither combine their durations nor complete this cycle before starting the longer programme.

1. Identify the obligation before designing the plan

Write one sentence explaining what you want to put right. What is the action? Whom does it affect? When will it count as fulfilled? ‘I want to become organised’ gives you no specific place to work. ‘I want to deliver the complete report we agreed on by Thursday’ identifies an action, a deadline, and someone to whom it is owed.

If a duty or another person’s right is involved, do not use training as a reason to postpone it. Begin whatever fulfilment or repair is within reach, and seek the agreement of the person

concerned if you need a change you are not entitled to make alone. An optional project gives you more room to adjust its scale and timing.

2. Observe what actually happens for a suitable period

Observe the behaviour long enough to reveal its pattern. A week may suit a daily activity; something that happens monthly may need a different period. Record events as they occur. When did the opportunity arise? What preceded the difficulty? What was the real obstacle? What helped?

Do not turn the record into a trial of your character or fill it with what you wish you had done. If you accepted two tasks that could not fit the available time, write that down. If time was lost through your own choice, record that too. Worship and private matters do not need to be displayed to others; keeping the record somewhere secure is enough.

3. Define a clear beginning

One tool studied in behavioural science is the implementation intention: linking a specific situation to a specific action. A review by Sheeran and colleagues brought together many tests of these plans, with results differing according to motivation, context, and the behaviour involved. A plan cannot create a

capacity that is absent, but may turn a general intention into a recognisable starting point.¹

You might write, ‘When the morning meeting ends, I will check the commitments already due before accepting a new deadline.’ This timing is an organisational choice with no special religious merit attached to it. Make the first step a genuine part of the task: opening the data and identifying gaps, rather than decorating the filename or changing the tracking application.

4. Prepare an alternative for an obstacle you have actually observed

Choose one obstacle noticed during observation. If the task depends on information from a colleague, request it early. If interruptions recur at a known time, agree on arrangements that reduce them. If your day is especially crowded, give your optional project a shorter form that retains its benefit.

An alternative cannot cancel a right you have no authority to cancel. Someone who has promised a deadline cannot simply write, ‘If I become busy, I will postpone it.’ They need to communicate promptly, explain what is complete and what has stalled, and agree on a solution.

¹ Paschal Sheeran, Olivia Listrom, and Peter M. Gollwitzer, ‘The When and How of Planning: Meta-Analysis of the Scope and Components of Implementation Intentions in 642 Tests’, *European Review of Social Psychology* 36(1), 162–194 (2025); first published online 27 March 2024.

5. Follow only three things

At the beginning, these are enough:

1. Performance: Did the action take place at the specified opportunity?
2. Quality: Was it fit for its purpose?
3. Rights: Did your method burden someone else or neglect a more important commitment?

If you fulfilled four commitments out of five, that proportion describes only what you recorded. It does not mean that you have reached eighty per cent discipline, and it does not measure your piety or worth. The fifth commitment may matter more than the other four. Do not let the number hide its meaning.

Three short examples

At work, an employee notices that new requests are accepted before earlier promises are checked. The plan is to review the list of obligations first, request missing information when assigned a task, and report promptly if an obstacle emerges. The employee tracks not only how many items are sent, but also whether delivery is complete.

At home, a family wants a child to learn to prepare the things needed for the day. They explain what is required, keep the items within reach, and observe how much help the child needs. They do not compare the child with siblings or expect independence on the first attempt. The adult needs to review the clarity of their teaching as well as the child's performance.

In reading, someone chooses one text and an amount suited to the available time, ending each session with the question, ‘What idea have I understood?’ On noticing a tendency to switch books at the first difficulty, the reader begins writing a specific question, seeking an explanation, and returning to the text. Page count alone is no longer the sign of success.

A four-week cycle

In the first week, observe what happens and put right anything that must not be delayed. In the second, practise the chosen starting action. In the third, review quality and the rights of those affected by the plan. In the fourth, decide what to retain, what to change, and where help is needed.

These are four suggested points for review, not a promise that a habit will be established in a month. At the end, write an honest paragraph: ‘The difficulty tended to arise here; I tried this; this happened; and this remains.’ If there is little information, say so.

Keep the tracking sheet light: the date, the opportunity, the action, a brief observation, and one decision. If recording consumes more of the work than it supports, simplify it.

The purpose of this beginning is not a certificate that the soul has become steadfast. It is sound experience in one area: an obligation recognised, reality observed, an action begun, an obstacle addressed, and a result read without exaggeration. From this small beginning, readers can enter the domains of

worship, family, work, and money knowing that discipline is more than a general slogan. It is renewed fulfilment in the situations life brings.

Chapter Two: Testing an Approach Instead of Promising a Miracle

You may finish reading a useful idea convinced that you will act on it. Then the moment arrives, and all you have is the enthusiasm you felt earlier. What you need then is not another description of the beauty of discipline. You need to know what to do, how to recognise that you have done it, and how to repair an attempt that does not succeed. Practice begins when a general desire becomes a situation understood, an action within reach, and an honest review.

This volume is a place for practical work, not a test of personal worth. You will choose something that needs improvement, learn the relevant skill, try ways to support it, and notice what changes. Its examples, dialogues, and cases are hypothetical teaching material unless a historical source is stated. Numbers within those examples explain a way of thinking; they are not findings from experiments conducted on the people described. The twelve-week programme is a suggested structure for practice, not a standardised psychological measure, a treatment, or a promise that everyone will become disciplined in every area within one fixed period.

Lesson One: Separate judging yourself from assessing an attempt

Write two sentences about something you recently left unfinished. Make the first the sentence you usually say to

yourself. Rewrite the second so that someone who does not know you could understand what happened without being handed a judgement on your character. The first might be, ‘I never stick with anything.’ The second might be, ‘I arranged two sessions to learn a skill this week, began one, and cancelled the other when I could not find the material I needed to practise.’

The second sentence is less dramatic, but more useful. It reveals something that can be addressed: the material was not ready, and one session really did begin. The first swallows the entire event in a description that points to no next step. This is not an attempt to excuse every shortcoming. It identifies where our responsibility lies instead of spreading blame over our whole life.

Try this with three brief events: something postponed, a promise not kept, and a skill attempted but not mastered. Remove ‘always’ and ‘never’ unless you mean a claim that can be verified. State the action, the circumstances, and the outcome. Then underline something you can change. If nothing is clear, you may need to understand the event better before making a plan.

Here is a worked example:

A description that closes the matter	A description that opens a way to act
I respect nobody when I am angry.	I interrupted my colleague twice in a particular discussion and have not yet apologised.
I am a failure at learning.	I watched the explanation again but did not try solving the problem without referring to it.
My home has no order.	There is no clear agreement about who returns shared items to their place.

You are not being asked to turn every day into an investigation report. Choose an event that matters, describe it once, and act. Precision should reduce confusion, not provide another way to examine yourself endlessly without doing anything.

Lesson Two: Define what you want to test

‘I want to become better’ expresses a broad hope, but is not enough for practice. Ask where the improvement will appear, what action you hope to take, and whose benefit or right is involved. Suppose you want to take proper care of tools borrowed from a relative. Your goal is not ‘to raise my trustworthiness to ninety per cent’. It is ‘to return every tool at the agreed time in the condition in which I received it, or tell its owner promptly when something prevents this’.

The underlying right must remain intact. A chart does not give you extra time without the agreement of the person concerned, nor make delay permissible because it falls within an ‘allowed

percentage'. We are practising ways to fulfil rights, not redefining those rights to fit our results.²

With a permissible activity or a voluntary act of worship whose amount you choose, you may adjust your goal to your capacity while observing its rulings. Someone wanting to improve their handwriting can choose suitable practice, then increase or reduce it. Someone learning to prepare for prayer cannot turn obligatory prayers into levels from which they select a few until those become established. The choice concerns the means being practised, such as recognising the time or preparing what is needed. It does not make neglecting other duties permissible.

Before starting, complete this sentence: 'I will test whether this method helps me take this action in this situation, while preserving this right.' If you cannot fill the gaps in simple language, the goal is still broader than the attempt you are about to make.

Lesson Three: Separate an action from its effect

You may write a task list every morning while important requests remain unanswered. Study sessions may multiply without your being able to explain what you have read. Ask two distinct questions: Did I use the method? Did I move closer to the purpose? The number of times a notebook is opened measures opening it, not understanding. The number of

2 The Noble Qur'an, Al-Nisa' 4:58.

messages sent measures correspondence, not service to someone needing a complete answer.

In a scientific review of experiments on monitoring progress, researchers found an overall benefit for attaining goals, with differences between monitoring behaviour and monitoring its outcome, and limited evidence in some areas. This finding encourages thoughtful monitoring. It does not establish that every chart proposed here is effective, or that publicising personal records is better for every person or every act of worship.³

Give each attempt three questions: What is the action? What quality is required? What right must not be lost because of the attempt? In writing practice, the action might be completing a draft, the quality the clarity of its argument, and the right the need not to delay a binding commitment. Do not combine the answers into one score that lets one conceal another. A good draft may still have been produced at the expense of an established obligation.

Write the three questions on a small sheet. Beside each, identify the evidence: a completed file, an explanation that demonstrates understanding, or an agreed deadline. Do not substitute ‘I felt I

3 Benjamin Harkin and colleagues, ‘Does Monitoring Goal Progress Promote Goal Attainment? A Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence’, *Psychological Bulletin* 142(2), 198–229 (2016).

was excellent' for evidence. You may still describe a feeling when it helps explain an obstacle. A feeling is a different kind of information, not a final judgement on the quality of an action.

Lesson Four: Learn to read small numbers honestly

Consider this hypothetical case. A volunteer group agrees that materials should be delivered with a list of their contents.

During the first week there are six deliveries: four with a complete list, one with an incomplete list, and one without a list. There are six delivery attempts and four occasions meeting the requirement. The immediate result is four out of six, not five out of six on the grounds that an incomplete list resembles a complete one, and not four out of four after excluding the two unsuccessful occasions.

The following week brings only two deliveries, both with complete lists. You may say, 'The requirement was met on both recorded occasions.' You cannot jump to 'This proves that the team has permanently improved.' The number of opportunities changed, the task may have been easier, and the sample is small. A percentage alone cannot convey all these details.

If an occasion was not recorded, write 'unknown'. Do not automatically turn missing information into success or failure. If no opportunity arose, write 'no opportunity'. When an opportunity did arise but was missed through your choice or poor preparation, do not relabel it 'not applicable' to improve the result. What genuinely lies beyond someone's capacity must

be considered on its own terms, without passing judgement on faith or dignity.

Now write three lines: known opportunities, occasions meeting the requirement, and missing information. If you want a percentage, show the fraction from which it comes. ‘3 out of 4’ is easier to understand than an impressive-looking figure behind which one unsuccessful occasion disappears.

Lesson Five: Choose a response before seeing the result

Many records end with an account of what happened, and nothing follows. Before beginning, decide on an initial response: if the obstacle is forgetting the method, I will move the reminder; if I do not know how to perform the task, I will seek instruction; if the task exceeds my authority, I will discuss it with the person responsible; if harm appears, I will stop the harmful method and seek an alternative that preserves the purpose.

Do not make the response a punishment such as depriving yourself of sleep or food, publicly announcing your sin, or requiring a family member to make up for what you missed. Failure in a personal plan gives you no right to harm yourself or another person. Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

«آخى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بين سلمان، وأبي الدرداء، فزار سلمان أبا الدرداء، فرأى أم الدرداء متبذلة. فقال لها ما

شأنك قالت أخوك أبو الدرداء ليس له حاجة في الدنيا. فجاء أبو الدرداء، فصنع له طعاما. فقال كل. قال فإني صائم. قال ما أنا بآكل حتى تأكل. قال فأكل. فلما كان الليل ذهب أبو الدرداء يقوم. قال نم. فنام، ثم ذهب يقوم. فقال نم. فلما كان من آخر الليل قال سلمان قم الآن. فصليا، فقال له سلمان إن لربك عليك حقا، ولنفسك عليك حقا، ولأهلك عليك حقا، فأعط كل ذي حق حقه. فأتى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فذكر ذلك له، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم صدق سلمان»

Translation of the meaning: 'The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, established brotherhood between Salman and Abu al-Darda'. Salman visited Abu al-Darda' and saw Umm al-Darda' wearing ordinary, unadorned clothes. He asked her, "What is the matter with you?" She replied, "Your brother Abu al-Darda' has no need of this world." Abu al-Darda' came and prepared food for him. Salman said, "Eat." Abu al-Darda' replied, "I am fasting." Salman said, "I will not eat until you eat." So he ate. When night came, Abu al-Darda' went to stand in prayer. Salman said, "Sleep," and he slept. Then he went to stand in prayer again, and Salman said, "Sleep." When the latter part of the night came, Salman said, "Get up now," and they both prayed. Salman told him, "Your Lord has a right over you, your own self has a right over you, and your family has a right over you. Give everyone who has a right their due." Abu al-Darda' went to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him,

and told him what had happened. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Salman has spoken the truth.”⁴

Sound striving preserves these rights together. Choose an attempt you can carry out without making your household or your health pay for a successful chart.

Choose one response that can be put into practice within a reasonable time, then test it. If you change five methods at once, results may improve without your knowing which helped. Several changes are not forbidden when the situation calls for them. Simply record that the improvement cannot be attributed to one cause. Honesty with information prevents you from selling a short experience to yourself as a law of life.

A teaching exercise: the shared tool bag

Salma shares sewing tools with three female relatives. The problem is not that they are ‘undisciplined’, but that a tool is missing when someone needs it. She begins by trying to reform everyone, and disagreement follows. She then narrows the trial to tools she herself borrows. They agree on a small borrowing card showing the tool, the return date, and its location. She does not post borrowers’ names in a public group or make a younger participant’s age a reason for ridicule.

4 Narrated by Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on asking a brother under oath to break a voluntary fast when that is more suitable for him, without requiring him to make it up, hadith 1968.

The first result is misleading. She returns everything borrowed, but some sets are incomplete. She revises the definition of completion to include checking the parts when receiving and returning them. Another problem appears: the return time she selected does not suit the owner. She learns that organisation does not mean imposing a convenient deadline for the stronger party. Genuine agreement is necessary.

At the end, she does not write, 'I have become trustworthy.' She writes, 'The return dates and condition of the tools I borrowed are now clear; inconsistent storage locations remain a problem for two participants.' This modest description makes the next step possible. It serves people better than an attractive chart concealing the very problem the practice was meant to repair.

Ask four questions about this case: What is the right? What is the behaviour? What made the first result misleading? What change protected the right? Apply the questions to a small matter in your own life. Do not transfer the borrowing card mechanically to everything. Some matters need no card; others need agreement, instruction, or an apology before they need a record.

An honest trial record

Complete the following fields once for each new attempt, returning to them when something important changes. There is no need to copy them every morning:

Field	What to write
Need	A specific event, not a general judgement on yourself
Whose right is involved	Who is affected, and what must not be neglected
Required action	A description someone can observe
Complete performance	The quality requirement, not merely a beginning
Suggested method	What you will change to make performance easier
Information	What you know and what remains unknown
Review time	A suitable opportunity to reflect, not a new religiously prescribed deadline
Adjustment decision	A possible change, help, or a safe stop

Read the record before using it with another person. Remove information you do not need. Do not ask children to disclose private worship or thoughts, workers to reveal household secrets, or friends to hand over a file proving their righteousness. Voluntarily sharing some progress with a trusted person is different from surrendering privacy under the pressure of assessment.

A measurement workshop: from a small record to a clear decision

This workshop practises reading hypothetical information; it is not a report about a real organisation. A team delivers learning materials to a waiting recipient. Some deliveries arrive incomplete or late. The team agrees to try a short checklist, while seeking to understand events without attributing every improvement to the checklist alone.

Before looking at the results, they identify three separate questions: Did delivery arrive at the agreed time? Were all required materials included? Were both conditions met? Speed cannot make up for missing material, and completeness cannot conceal the harm of delay. Meeting both conditions produces what the recipient was expecting.

Here are twelve consecutive opportunities, each representing a genuinely required delivery. The new checklist was introduced at opportunity seven. During the same period, an additional person helped with some work. This will matter when interpreting the results:

Opportunity	Delivery status	Brief observation
1	On time; complete	Both conditions met
2	On time; incomplete	Required material missing
3	Late; complete	Arrived after the agreed time
4	On time; complete	Both conditions met

Opportunity	Delivery status	Brief observation
5	Not delivered	A required opportunity; do not exclude it
6	On time; incomplete	Required material missing
7	On time; complete	Checklist introduced
8	On time; complete	Additional support available
9	On time; complete	Both conditions met
10	Late; complete	Transport problem remains
11	On time; complete	Both conditions met
12	On time; incomplete	An error the checklist did not prevent

Task One: Count without selecting favourable cases. In the first six opportunities, four deliveries arrived on time, three were complete, and two met both conditions. In the next six, five arrived on time, five were complete, and four met both conditions. We do not exclude opportunity five because it ‘does not represent the team’. It belongs to the problem the exercise is intended to understand.

Task Two: Write an accurate description. A careful statement is, ‘Among the recorded opportunities after the checklist was introduced, deliveries meeting both conditions increased from two out of six to four out of six.’ A misleading statement is, ‘We have proved that the checklist doubles every worker’s discipline.’ The first describes this information. The second

jumps from small numbers and simultaneous changes to a sweeping conclusion about people and causation.

Task Three: Examine what the number does not tell you. Were materials similarly difficult to prepare in both periods? Did the additional person help with a consequential part of the work? Was the deadline defined in the same way? Did the recorder know all the events? The data alone do not answer these questions. You can continue a reasonable method while gathering better information, but cannot claim that uncertainty has disappeared.

Task Four: Choose an adjustment. Opportunity ten revealed a transport delay; opportunity twelve showed that the checklist did not prevent an omission. The transport process and the definition of required material may need review, rather than simply rewriting the checklist in larger letters. A useful indicator takes you back to the action needing repair, instead of making you repeat the same tool regardless of the cause.

Task Five: Ask the recipient. A delivery might arrive on time with every item yet be arranged in a way that makes it difficult to use. Request specific feedback: 'Can you begin without asking for further clarification?' If an important new condition emerges, name it and state when measurement begins. Do not change the definition of success retrospectively and then compare figures that mean different things.

A usable worksheet without sensitive information

You can use an opportunity number instead of a person's name. Where necessary, keep the requirements in a separate secure document, retaining only enough in the learning sheet to explain performance. This is one model to copy as needed, not dozens of empty pages to fill without purpose:

Record item	What to enter in your application
Opportunity code	A number or description that does not needlessly reveal identity
Requirement	The action agreed before implementation
Time, if required	The known deadline, not one revised after the delay
Implementation status	Complete, incomplete, not done, or unknown
Quality	The condition met and the condition still unmet
Support	Significant help present on this occasion
Obstacle	A brief description of what requires a decision
Adjustment	What you will change and who has authority to decide

After filling in one example, read it without relying on your memory of the event. If names and personal details are necessary to understand a simple technical point, the description may need improvement. If you removed so much detail that the event is no longer intelligible, restore what is necessary in a safe form.

In family use, the sheet need not become a dossier on each person. You can record only a shared task and the decision about it. At work, follow the permitted system. Do not move client or employee data into personal tools or unauthorised services for the sake of practice.

Test an indicator before using it

Take an indicator you are considering and apply four checks. First, could someone else understand it much as you do? ‘A message with the complete request and attachments’ is clearer than ‘excellent communication’. Second, could its number rise while its purpose deteriorates? If so, add a quality condition or a boundary against manipulation. Third, does it hold people responsible for something outside their capacity? Fourth, does it collect unnecessary information?

Try these checks on ‘number of replies’. It can rise through short replies that do not resolve requests, so completeness of the answer also needs attention. Try ‘hours of study’. They can increase through looking at material without understanding, so a suitable performance sample or recall task is needed. Try ‘fewer questions from the child’. Questions may decrease because the child is afraid, not because they understand. Silence alone is therefore not evidence of learning.

This does not require abandoning numbers. It requires giving them their proper place. A number describes one aspect and may need a quality description or a question about consequences alongside it. A description alone may be enough

for an infrequent task. Do not manufacture a percentage from a single event to make the review look more scientific.

Review an observation with someone else without making them a judge

If a task allows different interpretations, give two people an anonymised description of one output and ask each to apply the quality criterion. If they disagree, do not immediately favour the person who agrees with you. Ask which wording permits two meanings and whether an example is needed to clarify the threshold.

In a hypothetical example, one reviewer calls a summary good because it is short; another calls it incomplete because it omits a necessary conclusion. The word ‘good’ has hidden two criteria. The requirement is revised: preserve the main ideas in clear language without surplus detail. They then try the criterion on another summary. This does not establish a scientifically standardised measure, but it makes their tool clearer.

In education, do not punish learners for disagreement between reviewers. Improve the criterion and explain expectations before requesting another performance. In matters of rights, an ambiguous indicator must not alter an established obligation. Some rulings require a specialist, not two people agreeing on convenient wording.

What a personal trial allows you to conclude

Your experience may show that a method suits your time, reduces forgetting, or reveals a missing skill. That is useful even if it is not published research. Generalising to others requires more: their circumstances, capacities, and tasks may differ, and your method may have worked alongside support you failed to mention.

Write your conclusion on two levels: your personal decision and what you can tell others. Your decision might be, ‘I will continue this checklist because it costs little, recent results are encouraging, and I will review the transport process.’ What you tell others might be, ‘We tried it in this task, and these limitations remain.’ Do not market it as comprehensive training of the will or proof of a measured spiritual effect.

Research evaluation of a programme for a group requires an appropriate design, expertise, research ethics, valid consent, and data protection. This workshop gives you no licence to experiment on children or workers under your authority. You can improve teaching and service within your responsibilities, but the claims and duties of scientific research extend beyond a tracking notebook.

Reporting a result honestly

Write the result in five sentences: ‘What we observed...’, ‘The number of known opportunities...’, ‘What appeared...’, ‘What may affect interpretation...’, and ‘The next decision...’. Then remove every description of participants’ character that the task

does not support. State any missing information. If the measurement method changed, state that too.

Do not fear making the result less impressive. Improving a defined part of fulfilling a right while understanding your limits is more useful in practice than a broad promise readers cannot test. Discipline in the report itself belongs to the discipline you want to teach: do not select only the facts that preserve your image and leave out what needs repair.

When does an attempt end?

Not every exercise needs to remain open forever. An attempt ends when it becomes clear that you have learned a performance you can sustain, that a different design is needed, or that the approach is harmful. The underlying duty or right continues when the sheet ends. The sheet serves the work; the work does not exist only while a sheet is watching it.

End each trial with three sentences: ‘I learned that...’, ‘I still do not know...’, and ‘Next time I will...’. Keep the second sentence. Acknowledging what remains unknown prevents promises of miracles and leaves room for learning. The greatest result of a short attempt may be discovering that what you thought was weak willpower was actually a missing skill, an unfair burden, or a method unsuited to your capacity.

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«المؤمن القوي خير وأحب إلى الله من المؤمن الضعيف وفي كل خير احرص على ما ينفعك واستعن بالله ولا تعجز وإن أصابك شيء فلا تقل لو أني فعلت كان كذا وكذا. ولكن قل قدر الله وما شاء فعل فإن لو تفتح عمل الشيطان»

Translation of the meaning: ‘The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, and there is good in both. Be eager for what benefits you, seek Allah’s help, and do not give way to helplessness. If something befalls you, do not say, “If only I had done such and such, it would have been such and such.” Rather, say, “Allah decreed, and He did what He willed,” for “if only” opens the way for Satan’s work.’⁵

The following pages begin here: a person who recognises some of their needs, is sincere in putting matters right, seeks Allah’s help, and then uses the means within reach.

5 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Divine Decree, chapter commanding strength, rejecting helplessness, seeking Allah’s help, and entrusting the decrees to Allah, hadith 2664.

Chapter Three: Choosing Your Path and Establishing a Starting Point

What troubles you most about yourself is not always what most deserves attention first. You may worry about unfinished reading while delaying an obvious financial obligation or repeatedly apologising for hurtful speech without stopping it. You may pursue ten goals when what you need now is to learn one task you do not yet understand. Beginning well does not always mean choosing the easiest thing. It means recognising what needs priority, then choosing means you can honestly put into practice.

We will distinguish the order of rights from the choice of a training subject. Rights do not disappear because you select one subject, and an existing duty must not wait for the observation period to end. Practice, however, focuses on one skill or method so that attempts do not crowd out one another and obscure their effects. Such focus may help fulfil several rights, as when you learn to assess capacity before accepting a new commitment.

The opening session: what needs putting right now?

Take a sheet and write three recurring situations in which you want to improve your performance. Beside each, note who is affected, what may happen if it continues unchanged, and what lies within your capacity. Do not make a long list of faults; three

situations are enough to choose a beginning. Someone unable to write can dictate to a trustworthy person, record a private voice note, or choose an example close to their circumstances.

First ask whether any situation involves continuing injustice, danger, or an urgent right. If so, begin by stopping the harm and doing what is required, or seeking suitable help. Do not wait a week to collect ‘baseline data’. You may record recollections of earlier events to understand the problem, but measurement is no excuse for allowing wrongdoing to continue. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«من كانت له مظلمة لأحد من عرضه أو شيء فليتحلله منه اليوم، قبل أن لا يكون دينار ولا درهم، إن كان له عمل صالح أخذ منه بقدر مظلمته، وإن لم تكن له حسنات أخذ من سيئات صاحبه فحمل عليه»

Translation of the meaning: ‘Whoever has wronged another person in his honour or in anything else should seek his release from that wrong today, before there is neither dinar nor dirham. If he has righteous deeds, some will be taken from him in proportion to his wrongdoing. If he has no good deeds, some of the other person’s sins will be taken and placed upon him.’⁶

6 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Wrongs, chapter on seeking release from a wrong and whether it should be explained, hadith 2449.

Restoring a right comes before starting a record. How rights should be restored differs according to their nature; seek guidance when unsure about matters involving reputation or money.

Next ask which skill, learned now, would help you fulfil what is owed. It might be checking a commitment before agreeing, learning how an action should be performed, keeping entrusted items in a fixed place, or saying ‘I cannot answer yet’ instead of giving a hasty response. Choose a skill you can practise, not an enormous wish whose beginning you cannot identify.

An exercise in comparing possible beginnings

Consider three options for a hypothetical person who works and studies in the evenings:

Suggested beginning	What needs review
Two hours every day learning a new language	Is that time available? Would it compete with an existing obligation?
Stop accepting two simultaneous tasks without checking capacity	Can the person refuse or negotiate? What alternative is available if not?
Record every hour of the day in a chart	What question would all this recording answer?

The second beginning may be more useful for this person, but not because one order suits everyone. The language may be

urgently needed for work; the person may have no freedom to accept or refuse tasks. Facts determine the decision, not attractive wording. Beneath each goal, write one question still unanswered and seek its answer before committing.

Rephrase the selected goal in this form: ‘In this situation I will take this action so that this right or purpose is fulfilled.’ For example: ‘When I receive a family document, I will put it in the agreed folder and record its location, so that it can be found when needed.’ ‘I will become tidy’ and ‘I will never forget’ are insufficient.

Choose a path that describes your role, not your standing

On the individual path, you are usually the learner, the person acting, and the reviewer. You may change where you keep your tools, the timing of voluntary worship within its rulings, and the amount of permissible practice. You cannot change when another person’s right is due on your own authority. On the parent’s or teacher’s path, you are responsible for teaching a skill, not extracting a daily confession of failure. In family and workplace settings, authority, resources, and decisions are shared. What needs changing may be the distribution of work rather than the willpower of the person with least power.

State your role precisely: ‘I am responsible for documents I receive’; ‘I am the teacher responsible for explaining how to submit homework’; or ‘I am one member of a family sharing the care of a relative.’ Then state what is outside your role: ‘I do

not change another person's commitment without agreement'; 'I do not display observations about a child to classmates'; or 'I do not decide a relative's treatment instead of their doctor.' Clear limits to a role are part of discipline.

Someone living with illness, disability, or intensive caring responsibilities needs their actual capacity built into the plan from the start. We should not wait for a plan designed for someone else to fail, then call that failure weakness. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«دعوني ما تركتكم، إنما هلك من كان قبلكم بسؤالهم واختلافهم على أنبيائهم، فإذا نهيتكم عن شيء فاجتنبوه، وإذا أمرتكم بأمر فأتوا منه ما استطعتم»

Translation of the meaning: 'Leave me as long as I leave you. Those before you were destroyed by their questioning and their disagreement with their prophets. When I forbid you something, avoid it; and when I command you to do something, do as much of it as you can.'⁷

Account for your actual capacity in the means you choose. People differ in mobility, hearing, time, and money.

7 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Holding Fast to the Qur'an and Sunnah, chapter on following the practices of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, hadith 7288.

Turn the skill into a performance that can be taught

Take your goal and explain it to someone encountering it for the first time. What should they do first? What do they need? How will they know they have finished? Sometimes you will discover that the need was less for ‘discipline’ than for a clear definition of the task.

‘Organise the family files’ is not enough. A clearer instruction is, ‘Gather the documents for the next appointment, check their names and dates, put the required copies in one folder, and keep originals in their secure place.’ This is not a demand to organise the whole house. Limited boundaries protect the task from expanding until it is endlessly postponed.

Describe the steps in a few sentences. If there are twenty steps, group them into clear stages. If there is a step you do not understand, make learning it part of the beginning. Do not pressure yourself to perform what you have not learned, or use records to conceal a lack of instruction. Malik ibn al-Huwayrith, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

«أتينا إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ونحن شعبة متقاربون، فأقمنا عنده عشرين يوما وليلة، وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم رحيما رفيقا، فلما ظن أنا قد اشتهينا أهلنا أو قد اشتقنا سألنا عمن تركنا بعدنا فأخبرناه قال ارجعوا إلى أهليكم فأقيموا فيهم وعلموهم ومروهم — وذكر أشياء أحفظها أو لا

أحفظها — وصلوا كما رأيتُموني أصلي، فإذا حضرت الصلاة
فليؤذن لكم أحدكم وليؤمكم أكبركم»

Translation of the meaning: ‘We came to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, as young men of similar age, and stayed with him for twenty days and nights. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, was merciful and gentle.

When he thought that we longed for our families, or missed them, he asked us about those we had left behind, and we told him. He said, “Return to your families, stay among them, teach them, and instruct them”—and he mentioned things that I remember or do not remember—“and pray as you have seen me pray. When the time for prayer comes, let one of you give the call, and let the eldest among you lead you.”⁸

This teaching gives attention to an action the learner can see and to returning home to teach the family. In your own learning, bring together a sound example and an attempt that reveals what you have understood.

Observe the starting point without delaying repair

For permissible skills whose delay causes no harm, you can observe a few opportunities before changing the method. The

8 Narrated by Malik ibn al-Huwayrith, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Call to Prayer, chapter on the call and commencement of prayer for a group of travellers, and at ‘Arafah and Muzdalifah, hadith 631.

purpose is to know your starting point, not to wait for a perfectly settled life. Choose days or opportunities that reflect your circumstances and record their differences. Five quiet days do not represent a month of shifts, and one attempt at home does not represent the same task elsewhere.

If you begin putting things right immediately, record that observation began alongside the change. Do not later claim to have compared two separate periods. You can still learn from the observations, but your conclusion will be narrower: ‘After I began using the folder, this pattern appeared’, not ‘We proved that the folder alone caused the change.’

You do not need complete experimental certainty before doing good. Distinguish a reasonable practical decision in your own life from a general scientific claim. You can continue a simple, useful, inexpensive method while acknowledging that you have not scientifically established its causal effect. What you must not do is turn that practical confidence into a guarantee for everyone.

A worked example: documents for a recurring appointment

Nadir accompanies his mother to regular follow-up appointments. On one occasion he forgets a required document, then spends time blaming himself. He decides to test a way of preparing without collecting more medical information than necessary. His goal is, ‘Prepare the appointment folder from a

confirmed list of requirements before leaving, while protecting my mother's privacy.'

He separates what he knows into three categories: documents the service requires, papers that might help but are not confirmed as necessary, and information he does not need to copy. He asks about requirements instead of carrying everything. He prepares a folder and links a reminder to confirmation of an appointment, rather than an arbitrary hour on a day when no appointment may exist.

On the next three occasions, the folder is complete twice. On the third, he discovers a missing paper early enough to add it before leaving. He neither treats 'discovering the omission' as equivalent to forgetting the paper until arrival nor calls it complete preparation at the first attempt. He describes what happened: omissions are being found earlier, before they affect the appointment, but the list still needs adjustment.

This case does not teach treatment management. It teaches preparation for a defined administrative task. Medical needs should be referred to the patient's specialist, and the patient's choices about sharing information respected. An organised relative does not become the owner of the privacy of the person being helped.

Build indicators that do not mislead you

Begin with two or three indicators, not ten. The first concerns action: was the specified task performed? The second concerns

quality: did it meet the requirement? Where needed, the third concerns cost or other rights: did the method consume so much time that it defeated its purpose, or impose an unagreed burden on someone else?

You may need a description instead of a number. In learning to apologise, counting apologies alone is unhelpful. Ask whether you named the wrong, stopped repeating it, or turned the apology into a demand for immediate forgiveness. In serving a recipient, the indicator may be whether an understandable answer reached them, rather than whether a conversation was long or short as an absolute rule.

Do not assign a score to piety. You can record learning a point about prayer or preparing a means to wake up, but that record cannot weigh sincerity or acceptance of worship. Nor should different circumstances become a basis for ranking people’s righteousness. A record helps describe a limited action; it goes wrong when it claims knowledge beyond that.

A starting-point card

Question	Example of a brief answer
What is needed?	Borrowed books are returned late because return dates are not recorded.
Who is affected?	The owner and anyone waiting to use the book.
What is the behaviour?	Record the date when borrowing, then return the book on time.

Question	Example of a brief answer
What counts as completion?	The owner receives the complete book in its original condition.
What obstacle remains unclear?	I do not know whether the problem is remembering the date or reaching the owner.
What is the evidence?	Recorded dates, confirmed returns, and observations about obstacles.
What are the limits?	I do not request an extension after being late as though it were my entitlement.

This is one reusable model. Adapt it by removing unnecessary fields and adding what the right in question requires. Do not put financial or health information or family secrets into a shared file merely because the form allows another field.

When your wishes differ from those around you

A parent may want ‘a tidy room’ while a child wants ‘to find my toy’. A manager may want ‘more reports’ while an employee wants ‘clear instructions’. Look for a shared action that serves a real need. Before recording another person’s resistance, establish that they understand the task, have the tools, and are facing a fair and suitable request.

For family practice, sit with those concerned and say, ‘I would like us to agree on one thing that reduces the problem.’ Let each describe their difficulty without interruption. Then write a small agreement in which each knows their role. The sheet must not become an imposed contract, and objection must not be treated

as evidence of bad intent. Some objections reveal a burden overlooked by the person who designed the plan.

Someone without authority to change a work system can record the obstacle, inform the person responsible, and suggest an alternative within their role. We do not ask them to obey a personal plan that conflicts with legitimate instructions or workplace safety. They still need to distinguish what they can do now from what needs someone else's decision: neither hiding behind the system in everything nor taking responsibility for reforming the entire organisation.

A short check before starting

Read these statements and decide which need correction: 'I will raise my sincerity score every week.' 'I will spend several days observing an obligatory promise I can already fulfil, then decide when to start.' 'I will learn the method before measuring my speed.' 'I will ask the child to record what they want to learn without displaying their mistakes to the class.' 'I will exclude every occasion when I failed to prepare because it does not represent me.'

Suggested answers: the first claims to measure something this guide cannot measure; the second uses observation to postpone a right; the third gives instruction its proper place; the fourth protects privacy while allowing suitable follow-up; and the fifth improves appearances by excluding the cause of the problem. The aim is not memorising answers, but being able to explain them in a new situation.

End the opening session with a decision no longer than a paragraph: the skill, the situation, the first step, and when you will review what happened. Then take a real first step. If the whole decision remains on paper, you have described the road well but have not walked it. A sound beginning combines seeking Allah's help and pursuing what is beneficial with an action you can point to, however small it seems to someone watching from a distance.⁹

9 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Divine Decree, chapter commanding strength, rejecting helplessness, seeking Allah's help, and entrusting the decrees to Allah, hadith 2664.

Chapter Four: Establishing the Foundations

Some people say, ‘I know what to do, but I do not begin.’ Look more closely at their day and you may find that they know the name of the activity, not the form in which they will undertake it. They want to learn a language but have selected no material; fulfil a right but have not checked what is required; read something useful but spend the session searching for a text. Establishing the foundations means removing this uncertainty and attempting a real beginning, rather than building a large system to postpone a small action.

This chapter develops six skills: seeing what is required, preparing the means, identifying the beginning, learning the action, recognising completion, and leaving something that helps the next attempt. Applying them to your chosen task is enough. Do not turn each into a separate goal added to ten earlier goals.

Skill One: Describe the result before opening the tools

Choose a task you will undertake soon. What will exist when it is finished? It might be a clear message, a solved problem, returned tools, or a completed document. ‘I worked on it’ does not adequately describe a result. You can work for a long time and still not know whether the requirement has been met.

Practise writing one sentence that defines completion. For a digital skill: ‘I can create a file, name it, save it in the correct location, and reopen it.’ Do not write ‘I understand computers.’ For a family gathering: ‘Participants know the place, time, and what each needs to bring.’ Do not say ‘I arranged everything’ if those concerned have not received the information.

If the task is an act of worship, its completion must be learned from its rulings and correct form, not a standard invented by a trainer. You do not define the pillars of prayer on a card of your own making. You can note a question you need to ask or preparatory steps that help you pray. Training retains its proper place as a means of learning and acting, not a source of religious legislation.¹⁰

A worked example: Hana wants to learn to use a digital document folder. She moves between many videos, then feels she has accomplished nothing. She defines the session’s result: move three non-sensitive documents into a practice folder, give them intelligible names, and retrieve one through search. She now has an action that demonstrates learning and makes gaps easier to identify. She does not use confidential papers for the exercise or begin with a task for which she has no backup.

10 Narrated by Malik ibn al-Huwayrith, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Call to Prayer, chapter on the call and commencement of prayer for a group of travellers, and at ‘Arafah and Muzdalifah, hadith 631.

Write the result of your task. Remove every broad word whose meaning you cannot check. Replace ‘excellently’ with a necessary feature, such as ‘without an error in the recipient’s name’. Replace ‘quickly’ with a suitable deadline when timing is part of the requirement. Speed is not quality in every situation.

Skill Two: Examine the route, not only yourself

Before blaming weak resolve, walk through the task as though about to do it. Is the material available? Do you know where it is? Is permission needed? Does action depend on someone else’s answer? Is the tool suitable for your capacity? Beside each obstacle write one of three responses: remove it now, ask for help, or change the order of the task.

This check should not become a whole new project. Select a decisive obstacle. Reading one page does not require redesigning a library, but it does require an available book and suitable light. Learning a household repair does not mean starting dangerous work without knowledge; choose safe practice or seek someone knowledgeable. Not every barrier should be broken through determination. Some are safety limits that deserve respect.

A quiet walkthrough: begin the task without completing it and name each point where you stop. Open the file, bring the tools, or ask what is required. A password that does not work is a different problem from boredom. Shared tools needing agreement must not be taken secretly just to prove you have

begun. Resolve the first stopping point, then walk through again.

The exercise should yield a sentence, not a lengthy report: ‘The beginning used to stop here; this now makes it possible.’ That sentence helps identify what to address instead of labelling every obstacle ‘lack of discipline’.

Skill Three: Connect the beginning to an observable cue

A general intention matters, but does not always tell you when to act. Try a practical form: ‘When this specific situation occurs, I will take this specific step.’ In an early experiment on implementation intentions, specifying when and where participants would begin a particular task was associated with more timely completion under the study’s conditions. This does not show that the formula guarantees every goal. It supports testing a link between a clear opportunity and a clear action.¹¹

Avoid an unclear cue such as ‘when I find time’ or a sweeping action such as ‘I will organise my life’. Choose something observable: ‘When the list of required materials arrives, I will put it in the designated file before closing the message.’ The cue

¹¹ Peter M. Gollwitzer and Veronika Brandstätter, ‘Implementation Intentions and Effective Goal Pursuit’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73(1), 186–199 (1997); Study 2, pp. 191–192.

may be a time you choose for organisational purposes, but do not attribute that timing to religion or make it binding on others.

Rewrite these formulations:

Unclear formulation	A more workable formulation
I will take care of what I borrow.	When receiving an item, I will agree its return date with the owner.
I will learn when I feel energetic.	During the agreed available period, I will solve a defined example before opening new content.
I will stop being disorderly.	After using shared tools, I will return them to their known places.

If the cue does not occur, do not wait indefinitely. Where needed, plan an alternative: ‘If the time changes, I will agree another opportunity with those concerned that preserves their rights.’ The alternative is not a device for cancelling the underlying work. It does not change a religious ruling or the due date of a binding right without justification.

Skill Four: Learn, then try without looking

Watching can make you think you can perform an action because the steps look easy while visible. Test understanding with a small similar task without looking at the example. If you cannot do it, that is useful information: where did you lose the way? Return to that point and try again instead of restarting the entire lesson each time.

In two experiments involving prose passages, retrieval testing improved retention on delayed tests compared with restudying

under the conditions examined, while results differed on the immediate test. We make cautious use of the idea of recalling what we have learned. Those two experiments alone cannot be generalised to every physical skill, religious ruling, or training programme.¹²

Do not turn the test into an embarrassing examination. After learning instructions for a safe tool, explain the steps without looking, then compare them with the reference. When learning a religious matter, recall your understanding and check it against a reliable source or with a teacher. Memory does not have authority to correct the text. Where a skill requires special safety precautions, practise under suitable supervision instead of attempting an independent trial that may harm you.

A useful-error card: record what you attempted, where you stopped, and which information was missing. After correction, attempt it once more. Do not write ‘I understood nothing’ when one step was unclear. If the explanation is beyond your level, return to the prerequisite. Progress may begin one step back in the sequence of a skill, without diminishing anyone’s worth.

12 Henry L. Roediger III and Jeffrey D. Karpicke, ‘Test-Enhanced Learning: Taking Memory Tests Improves Long-Term Retention’, *Psychological Science* 17(3), 249–255 (2006). Two experiments with prose passages; retention tested after five minutes, two days, or one week.

Skill Five: Make the beginning small but real

A small beginning does not mean opening a file, closing it, and calling the task accomplished. Opening it may be a suitable preparatory step for someone struggling to start, but cannot replace producing something that serves the purpose. Choose the smallest meaningful unit: solve and check an example, prepare a required item, or make a call that supplies missing information.

Distinguish reducing the size of a task from reducing someone's right. You cannot reduce money you owe because you chose a 'small step'. You can reduce the administrative action that helps fulfil it, such as gathering information and then consulting a specialist when needed. Nor may you abbreviate worship contrary to its prescribed form in the name of gradual progress. There is room for gradual learning and means, but this guide has no authority to alter what is commanded.

The useful-unit exercise: take a task you are postponing and write three possible units within it. Remove any unit that merely creates a feeling of approaching the task. Choose one that removes an obstacle or produces a usable part, then identify its link to what follows. Once information has been gathered, arranging to use it is the next link. Otherwise, preparation becomes a comfortable place to settle permanently.

For example, Yusuf wants to learn to prepare a short presentation. Watching ten lessons is not a useful unit by itself. His unit could be stating the subject, audience, and one message

to convey, then preparing a slide that serves it and testing its clarity with a listener. A technical lesson may be needed along the way, but it serves the output rather than replacing it.

Skill Six: End the task in a way that makes returning possible

Some people begin well but leave work in a state that makes returning difficult. They cannot identify the latest version, the decision already made, or the next step. Make the end of a session part of the work: save the result in its proper place, write one line describing what comes next, return the shared tool, and inform anyone waiting if communication is part of the commitment.

This need not become a long ritual for every action. A clear filename and one sentence may suffice. Work involving safety, money, or another person's right may require more precise procedures. Follow the established procedure rather than substituting a personal shortcut.

A practical example: Maryam finishes gathering notes for teaching a skill. Instead of leaving ten scattered images, she collects what she needs in a file and writes, 'Tomorrow: choose one example and try it.' On returning, she need not begin with the old question, 'What was I doing?' She has not acquired an extraordinary memory. She has left a small aid for the memory she has.

Try this ending with your last task today. Tomorrow, check whether you can resume without a long search. If not, ask what information is missing, rather than how many lines you wrote. You may have written a great deal without recording the decisive choice.

A complete teaching session: from watching steps to taking them

Choose a safe, simple skill, such as organising a non-sensitive file or summarising clear instructions. You need a sound model, the tool for carrying out the task, and a short completion criterion. Allow time suited to your capacity, with room to try. Explanation must not consume the whole session.

Begin by showing one model and explaining why a necessary step matters. Let the learner perform one or two steps with you, then attempt a similar case. Do not take the tool away at the first sign of slowness. Wait and notice whether a hint or an explanation is needed. If help is requested, ask where the learner stopped and give enough to move forward, rather than automatically providing the whole solution.

During review, identify one thing done correctly and one requiring adjustment. Say, ‘The filename is clear, but the location makes it hard to find’, rather than ‘You are disorganised.’ If able, let the learner correct the location and then try finding the file after closing it. Correction is thereby connected to performance instead of a personal label.

At the end, offer a slightly different case: a new name, another document type, or a different arrangement. If the learner cannot perform it, do not say everything has been forgotten. They may have memorised the example without understanding the rule. Return to the difference between the old and new cases. We will explore transfer of learning more fully later.

Foundation errors disguised as hard work

These include gathering tools before any need exists: many applications, many folders, no completed task. Another is making a timetable with no room for transitions, rest, or other people's needs. Another is choosing an unclear endpoint, leaving work open however much is done. Another is waiting for an ideal feeling, then treating its absence as proof that action is impossible.

The remedy is not to reject all planning. Return each tool to the question it answers: what problem does it solve? If no clear problem exists, leave it for now. You do not need an application merely because a friend likes it, or a fresh notebook for every beginning. A good tool reduces an obstacle without creating a greater burden.

Try a cost check: how much time does recording or organising take compared with the work itself? Is attention to the record competing with the task? If so, simplify it. One line, or a mark with a note when difficulty arises, is sufficient if it answers the question you need. Maintaining a complete notebook is not a separate goal.

Closing exercise: one complete attempt

Choose a real task involving neither danger nor unclear permission. Describe its result, prepare the tool, identify the cue, and complete a useful part. Check quality, correct one error, and close the work with a cue for returning. Then ask which link was weakest: knowledge, preparation, beginning, completion, or closure.

Do not add more improvements before identifying that link. If knowledge is missing, add instruction. If tools are absent, improve preparation. If beginning is possible but you abandon it for other activities, try a better cue or agreement. If you begin without finishing, review the size of the unit and the completion criterion. What is established can be maintained without endlessly increasing complexity.

It is enough to leave with useful work completed, a cause understood, and a next step that does not begin from emptiness.

Chapter Five: Learning to Bear the Right Kind of Difficulty

A moment will come when you know what is required and have the means, yet do not want to act. It may be boring, demand accuracy, cost an immediate pleasure, or require an apology you would rather avoid. Not every difficulty means the plan is wrong; nor is enduring every difficulty a virtue. You need to distinguish what deserves patience from what should be changed or left behind.

Abu Sa‘id al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

«أن ناسا من الأنصار سألوا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأعطاهم، ثم سألوه فأعطاهم، حتى نفذ ما عنده فقال ما يكون عندي من خير فلن أدخره عنكم، ومن يستعفف يعفه الله، ومن يستغن يغنه الله، ومن يتصبر يصبره الله، وما أعطي أحد عطاء خيرا وأوسع من الصبر»

Translation of the meaning: ‘Some people from the Ansar asked the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, and he gave to them. They asked again, and he gave to them, until what he had was exhausted. He said, “Whatever good I have, I will not withhold from you. Whoever seeks to refrain from asking, Allah will help him refrain. Whoever seeks sufficiency, Allah will make him sufficient. Whoever strives to be patient,

Allah will grant him patience. No one has been given a gift better or more ample than patience.””¹³

This principle opens the way to seeking help and striving. It gives no trainer authority to invent tests of pain, hunger, or thirst. What we practise here is bearing the cost of useful, permissible work while protecting rights and respecting capacity. We will not manufacture hardship for its own sake or award exhaustion a badge that makes one person better than another.

A check before practice

Choose a situation you call difficult and ask four questions. Is the action permissible and beneficial? Is the cost inherent in it, or created by a poor method? Do I have the capacity and tools? Would continuing cause harm or infringe a right? Do not begin before you have reasonable answers.

Difficulty reviewing a text may arise from the concentration the work requires. It may instead arise from print too small to see; the answer is larger print or a suitable aid, not proving willpower by reading something painful. Difficulty apologising may arise from disliking admission, calling for honesty. Being asked to confront an abusive person alone may be unsafe,

13 Narrated by Abu Sa‘id al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Zakat, chapter on refraining from asking others, hadith 1469.

calling for support and a protective approach, not a challenge called courage.

Describe the difficulty before rushing to judge it: ‘I become bored after a few minutes’; ‘I do not understand the term’; ‘I fear an aggressive response’; or ‘I have no transport.’ These are different situations needing different responses. Patient effort cannot supply missing understanding, erase incapacity, or turn danger into acceptable practice.

Exercise One: Stay with a useful part of boring work

Choose safe work whose method you know and which needs some persistence, such as checking names in a non-sensitive list, arranging learning materials, or revising a paragraph.

Define a small, meaningful unit rather than an arbitrarily long period. It might mean checking five items against a known criterion, not sitting before them until you exhaust yourself.

Before beginning, write a concrete reason the work helps: ‘This check prevents an error in handing over tools’, or ‘This revision makes the meaning clear to the reader.’ Remove one dispensable distraction without blocking essential communication. When boredom arises, do not immediately interpret it as an instruction to stop. Simply name it—‘This is a moment of boredom’—and return to the step you know.

When the unit is finished, pause to check quality. If haste has produced errors, the purpose has not yet been fulfilled. Correct

what is necessary, then decide whether to do another unit or end the session. Success is not staying as long as possible. It is learning to finish a useful unit without fleeing every discomfort or denying yourself a suitable stopping point.

Ask what you did when boredom appeared. Did recalling the purpose, dividing the unit, or removing a distraction help? If nothing helped, examine the task's difficulty and clarity and your circumstances. Do not automatically increase the amount. You may need explanation, rest, or another tool.

Exercise Two: Do not let a feeling direct your reply

Practise a mild, harmless situation with a willing participant, or write a response to a hypothetical one. For example, a message says your instructions are unclear. Your first impulse is, 'The problem is that you do not read.' Do not send that first response. Separate the feeling, the information needed, and the answer that serves what is right.

Privately write, 'The way this was said upset me.' Then write a useful question: 'Which step was unclear?' Once you know, revise the instructions or show where they appear. This does not require accepting insults. You may request respectful speech while addressing the underlying need. Silence about a right is not the goal, and abusive speech is not a condition of standing firm.

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فلا يؤذ جاره، ومن كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فليكرم ضيفه، ومن كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فليقل خيرا أو ليصمت»

Translation of the meaning: ‘Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day must not harm his neighbour. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should honour his guest. And whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent.’¹⁴

This guidance protects speech from harm without cancelling necessary explanation or the demand for a right. The suggested practice is to learn a pause that allows a response to be chosen, not a delay used to evade every difficult conversation. It may be brief, or an agreed postponement may be needed when discussion grows heated. Do not use withdrawal as a silent punishment that leaves the other person bewildered.

A practice dialogue: a colleague says, ‘You were late this time.’ A defensive reply is, ‘You are always late yourselves.’ A more precise answer is, ‘I was late with my part, and I will finish it at a time we agree now. Let us review the rest of the work

14 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Good Manners, chapter on the believer in Allah and the Last Day not harming his neighbour, hadith 6018.

separately.’ Practise distinguishing responsibility for a specific action from acceptance of a sweeping accusation.

Exercise Three: Postpone a desire, not a need

Not everything you want now is urgent, and not every need can be postponed. Choose a permissible, non-essential desire, such as opening entertainment while working on a short part of a task. Decide to complete the unit before reconsidering the desire. Essential food, water, sleep, or responding to dependants’ needs must not become material for this exercise.

Before postponing, make sure what you are prioritising is genuinely useful. Do not defer needed rest for cosmetic details that make no difference. Do not turn the exercise into open-ended deprivation: ‘I will not rest until I fix everything.’ Clear boundaries protect patient striving from becoming another name for harshness.

For example, Samer opens short videos whenever a language exercise becomes difficult. He chooses to attempt one question and identify what is unclear before switching. He does not prohibit entertainment for the whole day. He interrupts the automatic move from the first difficulty to the next video. Afterwards he may ask the teacher or rest, but now he knows what he needs instead of escaping an unnamed problem.

During review, ask more than ‘Did I overcome myself?’ Ask, ‘Did I complete something useful, and was the postponement suitable?’ You might avoid entertainment while spending the

time in worry that produces no learning. Outcome and quality therefore provide a better basis for assessment than an abstract sense of victory.

Exercise Four: Bear the cost of honesty

Some of the hardest statements are truths that do not improve our image: I did not understand; I forgot; I made a mistake; I cannot finish by then. Practise a brief explanation that neither endlessly excuses the error nor discloses unnecessary information.

Write a hypothetical situation in which an admission is needed to understand the problem. For example, you copied a number incorrectly and affected a request. Suitable wording is, ‘The number I entered was wrong. I have corrected it here; the effect on the request still needs checking.’ Saying ‘The system made an error’ when you know the cause does not protect dignity. It adds another wrong.

Add an act of repair. Admission without an available corrective action may become a verbal habit. If correction is outside your authority, give the responsible person the necessary information and follow up within your role. Do not repair one error with a larger one, such as deleting a record or concealing an event involving rights or safety.

This is not an invitation to expose concealed sins or other people’s secrets. The aim is to explain what is necessary to restore a right, correct a transaction, or discharge a

responsibility. What must be disclosed and what may remain private requires knowledge suited to the case. Honesty is not identical to saying everything you know.

Exercise Five: Ask for help without surrendering all responsibility

You may struggle because you are waiting to manage alone. Write a specific request for help: What have you tried? Where did you stop? How much help is needed? ‘Do the task for me’ differs from ‘Explain how to check this step, then let me try.’

In learning, show your attempt even when incomplete and identify one question. After the explanation, perform the action yourself if safe and appropriate. Help then need not become permanent dependence, nor independence a refusal to learn from others. Where an enduring limitation exists, support may properly remain part of sound performance. It need not disappear for a person to be responsible.

A hypothetical case: Layla needs a screen reader to access written material. She is not required to train her willpower by struggling with an inaccessible version. She requests a suitable format and learns to navigate it. Responsibility is shared: she uses what she has learned, and the provider supplies the means of access. Improvement cannot be explained by individual strength alone, but neither should her achievement be denied because an aid was involved.

Levels for the task, not grades for the person

Practice can progress from a familiar level to one slightly more demanding, then to a different situation. In reading, for instance, begin with a clear text, then a somewhat longer one, then explain its idea to another person. Do not move to greater difficulty merely because a week has passed. Consider understanding, completion, the preservation of rights, and whether continuing imposes an unsuitable cost.

If your circumstances change, reduce the amount of practice or change the method. Returning to an easier level does not erase learning. Responsibility does not mean following an identical plan in illness and health, travel and settled life. Established rulings on capacity and concessions must be learned from their sources. Amounts of permissible practice, however, are means that may be adjusted.¹⁵

Write three levels for your skill. Beside each, state evidence for progression, such as correct independent performance on more than one suitable occasion. Do not prescribe a magical number for everyone. If you choose a number of observations, call it an organisational decision, not a psychological law.

15 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Holding Fast to the Qur'an and Sunnah, chapter on following the practices of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, hadith 7288.

What should stop an exercise?

Stop a method if it causes clear harm, violates a right, reveals private information without need or valid consent, or requires unavailable supervision. If an attempt brings pain, concerning symptoms, or severe distress, do not diagnose yourself from this guide or increase pressure to prove seriousness. Seek appropriate help. In immediate danger, seek urgent assistance where you are.

If a situation involves threats or violence, do not use it as a role-play or ask someone harmed to repeat it until they ‘learn to endure’. Safety takes priority over completing an exercise we devised. Learning to hear respectful criticism differs from learning to tolerate humiliation. No partner, teacher, or manager may treat these pages as permission to cause harm.

These limits do not weaken patience. They direct it towards its proper object. The patience required may be to keep seeking your right through proper means, bear the cost of repairing a mistake, or abandon a harmful method despite attachment to it. Severity alone does not establish that a path is sound.

A useful-difficulty card

Area for reflection	What to record after the attempt
Work	The beneficial action practised
Difficulty	A specific description: boredom, uncertainty, the cost of admission, or something else
Response	What you did when difficulty appeared

Area for reflection	What to record after the attempt
Result	What was completed, what remains, and the quality achieved
Rights and capacity	What was protected and what needs adjustment
Decision	Retain the method, seek instruction or support, or stop

Do not use the card every minute. Choose one useful event and learn from it. Ultimately, you should be able to act without writing a long account of every discomfort. Keep patience close to life: finish what you began in a way that pleases Allah; withhold harm you could inflict; fulfil a right contrary to your preference; accept correction that reveals a shortcoming in your work.

A closing review through two situations

One learner does not know the next step and repeats an incorrect attempt for an hour. Another knows the step but leaves it at every slight feeling of boredom. Would you give both the same instructions? The first needs explanation and correction. The second may benefit from a shorter unit with a clear end and a commitment to stay with it. Both may need adjustments, but their difficulties do not have the same cause.

Write two situations from your life that seemed alike until their differences became clear. What did you call weakness when it was uncertainty? What did you call inability when it was reluctance to bear a manageable cost? Rush neither to harshness

nor to excuses. Seek an honest description, ask Allah's help, bear the difficulty that serves a right, and leave what adds only harm or appearances.

Chapter Six: Sustaining Progress and Transferring Learning

A person may succeed in one situation and then discover that a similar situation elsewhere defeats him. He knows how to wait his turn in a formal meeting, yet interrupts his family. He checks work before submitting it, yet forgets a promise to a relative. We should not conclude that his first success was entirely false. Equally, we should not assume that a skill has spread through the rest of his life simply because he has learned its name.

Continuity and transfer pose different questions. Continuity asks: can you return to the action in recurring circumstances? Transfer asks: can you use what you have learned when the situation changes? We will work on both while keeping faith in view without turning it into points. The purpose is to worship Allah and fulfil people's rights, not to preserve a successful image in a notebook.

First, Understand What Has Actually Become Stable

Choose a recent success and describe its parts. Did you succeed because you understood the task, someone reminded you, the tool was within reach, or time was plentiful? Do not dismiss the contribution of support; simply recognise it. Someone who works well with suitable help may indeed be disciplined. He

should not abruptly remove that help and then condemn himself when his performance weakens.

Make three columns: what I learned; what helped me; what I have not yet tested. For example: ‘I learned to summarise the requirements before starting; a short checklist helped; I have not tried this when the task is given orally.’ This account identifies the next trial precisely. ‘I have become organised’ tells you neither where your strength lies nor where it ends.

Research on habit formation has found that the time over which a repeated action becomes more automatic varies between people and actions. One duration cannot become a promise to everyone, nor does missing one opportunity erase everything that came before. Our concern is to keep observing the particular action, not to chase a date on which we can declare the self complete.¹⁶

Exercise: Retain One Useful Method

If a method helps at little cost, do not replace it every day in search of something better. Keep it long enough to understand its effect across several opportunities, unless clear harm or a defect appears. Record only significant changes: the place, the

¹⁶ Phillippa Lally, Cornelia H. M. van Jaarsveld, Henry W. W. Potts, and Jane Wardle, ‘How Are Habits Formed: Modelling Habit Formation in the Real World’, *European Journal of Social Psychology* 40(6), 998–1009 (2010); first published online in 2009.

kind of task, or the amount of support. Do not make ‘consistency’ an excuse for continuing with a method that has proved obstructive.

Application: Fahd began moving messages that required an answer to a short list instead of leaving them among messages already read. Before adding numerous categories and colours, he tested whether he noticed the request and gave a useful reply. He discovered that remembering was no longer the problem: he lacked the information needed to answer. Instead of adding alerts, he asked for that information. He moved from making requests visible to completing the service.

Ask about your own task: has the problem addressed by the tool ended, while a new problem has appeared? If so, do not automatically treat the new problem with the old tool. Much unhelpful repetition comes from applying a single solution to every difficulty.

Learn the Shared Principle without Erasing Differences

Transferring learning does not mean copying every detail. A shared principle might be: ‘I establish what is required before acting.’ In education, that may involve asking the teacher; at work, consulting a specification or procedure; in worship, learning the ruling from its proper source. The common need to check does not make these authorities interchangeable or permit you to derive a ruling about worship from a workplace experiment.

Research literature on learning transfer stresses understanding, context, and opportunities to practise what has been learned. Its use here concerns the design of skills training. It does not establish that a particular act of worship produces a behavioural effect of a specified size.¹⁷

Take your skill and write its principle in simple language. Then identify at least one difference between the old situation and the new one. If you find none, you may not have examined the new situation closely enough. Waiting your turn in conversation differs from delaying a warning about danger: silence may be courteous in the first case, while speaking may be urgent in the second. Sound understanding prevents a rule from being applied where it does not belong.

A Transfer Ladder: Similar, Different, Unfamiliar

Begin with a similar situation that differs in one small detail. If you learned to summarise written instructions, try written instructions for another task. Next, try a greater difference, such as oral instructions that you restate to check your understanding. Then consider an unfamiliar situation in which you need to ask a question before beginning.

17 National Research Council, *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School: Expanded Edition* (2000), chapter 3, ‘Learning and Transfer’, pp. 51–78, especially pp. 62–63 and 77–78.

This suggested ladder helps reduce large leaps and should be adapted to the skill. Some situations require separate learning; others are unsuitable for trials without supervision. Choose what fits the field and its safety requirements.

Planning for transfer:

Situation	What remains shared	What needs adjustment
Receiving a clear written assignment	Defining the result and its deadline	Checking the attachments
Receiving an oral request	Defining the result and its deadline	Restating the request before agreeing
Receiving assignments from two parties	Making the commitment clear	Asking the person with authority to set priorities

After the trial, do not merely say, ‘The skill transferred.’ Describe what worked in the new situation, what faltered, and what support remained necessary. You may find that asking the question transfers readily, while the whole performance does not. That is real progress when described within its limits.

Transfer Workshop: Taking Turns in Four Situations

Choose the skill of listening until the meaning is clear, rather than remaining silent in every circumstance. The first situation is a teacher's explanation; the second, a family conversation; the third, a disagreement over work; and the fourth, an urgent

warning about danger. Write what the skill means in each and when an intervention is appropriate.

During an explanation, you might note your question until a suitable pause. In a family conversation, you might restate what you understood before replying. In a disagreement, you might ask for the issue to be defined instead of moving between accusations. In danger, however, do not wait for a long conversation to finish when an immediate warning is necessary. The rule is not ‘Never interrupt’, but ‘Respect the right to speak, the meaning being conveyed, and safety as the situation requires.’

Act out two safe situations with a willing partner, then exchange roles. Each of you observes one action: did I answer before understanding the request? Do not record verdicts such as ‘You are selfish’ or ‘You are a poor listener.’ After the trial, give specific feedback and repeat the situation with one adjustment. Do not use painful events from the other person's life as material for role-play without their consent.

From the Influence of Worship to a Daily Decision

Give yourself a practical question, not a faith score: whose right do I need to fulfil today? Which virtue will be tested in a situation I can foresee? Do not attach a newly devised question to a time of worship as though it were a particular Sunnah, or bind yourself to a number that has no established basis. You may use suitable organisational reminders while keeping

prescribed forms of remembrance and worship as you have learned them from revelation.

After a prayer, you may remember an appointment you promised to keep and check your preparations. After a fast in which you refrained from food, you may remember that an argument calls for restraint from harmful speech. These are applications a learner draws to connect belief with action. They are not equations proving that worship has been accepted, nor do they make every later mistake evidence that the worship was invalid.

The quiet decision exercise: choose a clear Islamic value, such as truthfulness or fulfilling a trust. Do not write a general paragraph about it. Identify one situation that will soon test it and the action it requires: an answer without exaggeration, a trust returned, or a right you acknowledge for someone with whom you disagree.¹⁸

Afterwards, ask yourself privately: did I act on what I knew? If I erred, what repair is required or possible? Do not treat success in one matter as credit permitting failure in another. Nor should this question become a compulsive investigation of every passing thought. We learn a clear action, repair a known consequence, and move on.

18 The Noble Qur'an, al-Nisa' 4:58; al-Ma'idah 5:8.

Continuing When Circumstances Change

Travel, shift work, or caring for a relative may change the beginning of your day. Write down what remains of the purpose and which method no longer fits the circumstances. If you are learning a skill, you might replace a long session with suitable shorter opportunities. If the matter is worship, concessions and rulings come from their proper sources, not from the dimensions of your plan. The method adapts; personal convenience does not create the ruling.¹⁹

Set up your starting cue again in the new place. Do not rely on a reminder that is no longer present. If the task involves others, tell them early about changes that affect them. Negotiate where negotiation is permissible; do not habitually use surprise as a way to cancel commitments.

A plan for a change of circumstances has three entries: what I will not change because it is an established right; which means can be adjusted; and who needs to be informed. Set a point for review once circumstances settle. You need not return to every old detail. You may discover a simpler method, or need a gradual return to a permissible activity.

19 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Holding Fast to the Qur'an and Sunnah, chapter on following the practices of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, hadith 7288.

Practising Less Dependence on Alerts

If you perform a task with an external alert, do not remove every alert at once to test your ‘strength of character’. Choose one surplus reminder and retain what protects rights and safety. Observe whether the natural cue in the situation is enough. If consequential forgetting increases, restore support and then investigate the reason.

When teaching a child to return a borrowed book, you might move from reminding him of every step to asking one question about his plan, then to his checking the card himself. A professional safety checklist, however, should not be abolished because the employee has memorised it. Some permanent tools are signs of a good system, not deficiencies to eliminate.

Removing support is a useful aim when the support is unnecessary and the person can learn without it; it is not an absolute aim. A reminder or aid may remain because of the nature of the task, a person's capacity, or the protection of a right, while performance remains sound. Do not compare your independence with someone else's without knowing what each of you needs.

One Weekly Record Is Enough

At the end of a suitable set of opportunities, consider three lines: what continued; where the situation changed; and what adjustment comes next. If you keep writing the same thing every day, record only events that teach you something. If you

begin forgetting an important pattern, add one small piece of information, not a whole notebook.

Here is an example for a woman learning to follow through on returning shared belongings:

Observation	Practical reading
I returned things when their owner was present	A direct handover is easier than sending them
The return was delayed when I needed an intermediary	I need a clear agreement with the intermediary and confirmation of receipt
I remember the date but forget the item's condition	I should add a brief condition check, not another reminder about time

The example does not judge inward trustworthiness. It reveals a link in performance that needs improvement. The action may be small, but repeated care over people's rights is closer to the meaning of discipline than an impressive number of plans whose benefits never reach anyone.

When Should I Add Another Goal?

No number of days suits everyone. Consider the action's stability, quality, and cost, the support still required, and the new need. If the first goal still consumes all your attention, adding another may be distracting. If it has become stable and

needs only light monitoring, you can choose a related skill or a more pressing need that you have not yet addressed.

Do not add a goal as a reward for a good week or to escape boredom with a useful method. Add it because life presents a need worth addressing. Write how it will affect your time and existing duties. Expansion that damages what you have built is not progress merely because the number of goals has grown.

Close this chapter with a small map: a skill whose foundation has become stable; a new situation in which you will try it; a difference between the situations; and evidence you will examine. This moves you from waiting for a vague, all-encompassing transformation to widening the circle of good action within reach: one step whose meaning you understand, followed by another, without claiming that your education is complete.

Chapter Seven: The Parent's and Teacher's Path

When you ask a child to be disciplined, does the child know which action you mean? Or have you supplied a large label and expected the child to fill it unaided? ‘Respect this place’ might mean putting tools away, keeping the voice down at a particular time, or taking turns. Unless we explain, we may punish a child for uncertainty of our own making.

On this path, the educator's work begins with teaching before monitoring, and agreement before holding someone accountable for details never made clear. We do not measure a child's faith or love for their parents. Nor do we use a progress chart to expose the child or rank their worth among siblings. We will choose a suitable action, show how to perform it, allow an attempt, and help the child bear a share of responsibility suited to their capacity.

The educator's first session: what are you asking for?

Write down the last three instructions you gave a child or learner. Did they describe understandable actions? ‘Be polite’ differs from ‘Wait until your classmate finishes, then ask for your turn.’ ‘Do not be careless’ differs from ‘Put the book you borrowed back in its place after using it.’ Rewording does more than soften the language: it makes the performance teachable.

Then ask about yourself: do I model what I request? Do I return what I borrow from the child? Do I acknowledge missing an appointment I promised to keep? You need not pretend to be faultless. The child needs to see an honest way of repairing a mistake, not hear a sermon demanding a perfection from which adults are exempt.

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«إن الرفق لا يكون في شيء إلا زانه ولا ينزع من شيء إلا شانه»

Translation of the meaning: ‘Gentleness is never present in anything without adorning it, and is never removed from anything without making it ugly.’²⁰

One educational application is to correct a specific action without humiliating the person. Gentleness does not mean having no boundaries. It means explaining the boundary and teaching while preserving dignity. Choosing a method of correction appropriate to a child's age and circumstances, however, cannot be settled entirely by a general phrase or a short table.

20 Narrated by ‘A’ishah, Mother of the Believers, may Allah be pleased with her. Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Maintaining Family Ties, and Good Manners, chapter on the merit of gentleness, hadith 2594a.

Choose a responsibility the learner can carry

Do not begin with a broad burden such as ‘managing the bedroom’ when the child does not know where things belong. Choose a particular action: returning materials after an activity, telling you which instruction was unclear, or looking after something borrowed. Consider understanding, movement, memory, and the availability of the tool. Age alone, compared with a sibling's age, does not tell you everything.

First write what you will provide: a known place for materials, an explanation of the steps, and suitable reminders during learning. Then identify what responsibility can pass to the learner later. Do not transfer it all at once because you are tired of helping, or permanently withhold it because doing things yourself is faster.

For example, a child is to return drawing materials after a safe activity. The educator places a box nearby, shows where each kind belongs, and helps collect them at first. Next time, the child arranges some materials, gradually doing more independently. The educator does not leave the child facing a crowded room, say ‘Tidy all of it’, and then interpret inability as a refusal of order.

A model lesson: demonstrate, explain, then let the learner try

You need an actual tool and a short example, not a long speech about discipline. Tell the child what they will do and why: ‘These materials are shared. Returning them means the next

person can find them.’ Demonstrate once, explaining any step the child might miss, such as checking that the lid is secure on a safe, age-appropriate material.

Then let the child perform part of the task. If a mistake occurs, do not rush to take over everything. Ask, ‘Which step remains?’ if that question is within the child's understanding. If the child does not know, explain again. The question is not a trap to prove inattention; it helps recall the way forward. If verbal help is ineffective, try a visual demonstration, smaller steps, or a more suitable tool.

End the attempt with something specific: ‘You returned the pencils to their box; you still need to check that the rubber is there.’ Avoid praise that imposes an ideal identity: ‘You never make mistakes.’ Avoid blame that erases what went well: ‘You always forget.’ The learner needs to understand the effect of the action and how to complete it.

Return to the full report of Malik ibn al-Huwayrith in ‘Choosing Your Path and Establishing a Starting Point’ to connect this application with learning through observation and teaching. Teach the correct form according to the child's needs, referring to knowledge of its rulings. Do not make this session a substitute for learning the rulings of prayer, test children on

things you have not taught, or turn their mistakes into entertainment for their siblings.²¹

Levels of help and when to reduce it

Support may take these forms: demonstrating to the learner, performing together, offering a hint when needed, allowing an independent attempt, and reviewing at wider intervals. People need not move through them at the same speed, nor must every form of support end. A child or learner may continue to need a visual aid and fulfil their responsibility through it.

Do not reduce support just when the place, task, and companions are all changing. Choose one observable change. If difficulty increases, restore some support and understand the reason. The aim is growing understanding and capacity, not silencing the educator's voice regardless of the outcome.

Learner's situation	A possible teaching response
Does not know the first steps	A brief demonstration with a clear explanation
Begins but forgets a stage	One cue or hint at that point

21 Narrated by Malik ibn al-Huwayrith, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Call to Prayer, chapter on the call and commencement of prayer for a group of travellers, and at ‘Arafah and Muzdalifah, hadith 631.

Learner's situation	A possible teaching response
Knows the steps but rushes	Review the completion criterion before moving on
Performs with you but not alone	A similar independent attempt with help available
Performs at home but not at school	Learn the differences between settings and practise appropriately

These are descriptions of performance, not psychological diagnoses. If serious difficulties persist or concerns arise about learning, behaviour, or health, seek a suitable assessment rather than attaching a medical or moral label on the basis of one observation.

A complete home example: the borrowed book

A girl borrowed a book from her cousin and was late returning it. The educator's first response was, 'I will never lend you anything again.' Before making that decision final, the educator asked what had happened. Had she known the return date? Was there a designated place for the book? Was she waiting for someone else to return it? It emerged that the date had never been clearly agreed and that everyone had moved the book between different places.

Repair began by returning the book with a suitable apology, without demanding that its owner stop feeling upset. Teaching followed: when borrowing, ask about the return date, keep the item in a known place, and, as the date approaches, check its

condition and how it will reach the owner. The educator also agreed not to move the book without telling the girl learning to take responsibility for it.

Next time, the girl remembered the date and needed help reaching the owner. The educator did not call the task a failure because she had not done everything alone. Her contribution was acknowledged, and the adult did the part outside her control. On a later occasion she forgot, so they reviewed the reminder's location instead of returning to a sweeping threat.

The example reveals three responsibilities: the book owner's right, the girl's learning, and the educator's fairness in describing events. If we restored the first while damaging the learner's dignity, the training would be poor. If we protected her feelings but abandoned the owner's right, we would not be teaching trustworthiness. We should preserve both as far as possible, not choose one and cancel the other.

A complete classroom example: submitting work the learner understands

In a class, some learners submitted work with incomplete names or missing pages. The teacher did not begin with a public ranking of the most careless pupils. Instead, the teacher displayed a complete submission and asked each group to identify two differences between it and an incomplete example prepared for the lesson. These were teaching examples, not a real pupil's work exposed to embarrassment.

The teacher set three requirements: a name identifying the learner, completion of the assigned portion, and a clear place for submission. Learners then checked their work before handing it in. At first, the teacher reviewed each step with them. After several suitable opportunities, they checked independently and the teacher examined a sample of results. Attractive handwriting was not added as a condition in a lesson aimed at understanding meaning when it was not among the stated objectives.

When some struggled, the teacher asked whether they had read and understood the instructions, whether materials were available, and whether the submission process itself was confusing. One instruction, it turned out, appeared only after they had begun working. The teacher corrected the instructions instead of demanding discipline to compensate for a faulty system.

A teacher may count submissions that meet the requirements to review teaching, but the proportion is not a moral grade for the class. If individual follow-up is needed, speak in a suitable setting and only to the extent necessary, respecting institutional policy and the rights of the learner and guardian.

Encouragement to record progress does not justify publishing a learner's information.

Teaching prayer: aids that encourage responsibility without becoming worship

Choose something the child actually needs: recognising when the time arrives, arranging the steps being learned about the

form of prayer, or asking about something unclear. First establish what the child knows, then teach a suitable amount without overload. Do not combine every ruling about purification, prayer, and related matters in one session when one small, clear foundation is needed.

Demonstrate the correct form or seek a trustworthy teacher's help. Let the child explain what they understood, and correct gently. Preparation may be supported by a suitable visual reminder or an agreed place, but the reminder's form must not become part of worship itself. Do not add an invented number or form of remembrance merely because it suits the lesson plan.

What you follow is teaching, preparation, and observable performance in its proper setting, not 'humility in prayer out of ten'. Do not require the child to display the state of their heart to earn your approval. If a step is missed, learn why and teach what is needed. For a particular question of Islamic law, ask people of knowledge rather than resolving it with a red mark.

Suggested activity: prepare three simple word cards about preparation, using sound sources for what the child needs to learn. Ask the child to arrange and explain them. The cards do not establish the ruling; they check understanding of an earlier explanation. If the child arranges them without understanding, teach again through demonstration. If the child understands them, move to suitable practice instead of repeating the test merely to collect points.

When the learner refuses

Do not reduce refusal to one explanation. Ask what happened before the request, whether it was clear, suited to capacity, and appropriately presented, and what the learner fears. These questions do not make every refusal acceptable; they recognise that a response requires understanding. The child may not understand the endpoint, may be unable to perform one part, may fear ridicule, or may prefer something else and need a clear boundary.

State what you know and what you require: ‘I see that you do not want to begin this step. We need to return the materials because they are not ours alone. Would it help if I showed you the beginning, or divided the work?’ Offer a real choice of method where one exists, not a false choice between obedience and humiliation. Do not present something as optional when it is not, then punish the answer.

If the situation becomes heated, preserve safety and reduce words that inflame it. Do not compete to prove who wins. Once things settle, review what needs teaching or adjustment. This guide is not a manual of punishments, permission for violence, or a substitute for specialist help when serious problems recur.

Reward and appreciation without buying the conscience

You can acknowledge effort and performance with an honest word or offer a suitable opportunity within a clear educational setting. Do not make every good act a transaction or attach

every act of worship to a material return until its meaning is lost. Speak about the action's benefit and people's rights, name what the learner has mastered, and allow the learner to experience their own capacity to do the work.

If you use an incentive, make it clear, harmless, and free from humiliation. Failure must not mean losing a basic need. Watch for a child hiding mistakes for fear of losing the incentive, or performing the outward step without its meaning. If this happens, reconsider the design instead of increasing the prize. Quick improvement does not always mean lasting learning.

Do not compare siblings publicly: 'Look at your brother.' Compare the child's performance with what has been taught and with the stated criterion appropriate to that child. Methods may differ according to need. Explain fairness at a level the children can understand without exposing anyone's private circumstances or insisting that everyone receive identical support.

A brief follow-up with the child

Begin with something the child can describe: 'What has become easier?' Then ask about one difficulty: 'Where did you need help?' Choose a next step together. Do not turn the conversation into an interrogation in which adults list every old mistake. Matters unrelated to the skill should not be brought in until the child feels besieged on every side.

You may use a private card that is not displayed to visitors or siblings: 'I did it alone'; 'I did it with help'; or 'I have not

learned it yet.’ These descriptions are better than labels that wound identity. For a child who cannot read, describe the experience together orally or use an understandable symbol, without inventing symbols for piety or inward obedience.

Follow-up question	Its purpose
What did you do this time?	Describe performance instead of making a general judgement
Where did you need me?	Identify necessary support
What should we change in the setting or explanation?	Reveal the responsibility of the environment and educator
Which step will you try yourself?	Transfer an appropriate responsibility

The educator's workshop: improve instructions before expanding them

Rewrite these instructions: ‘Do not embarrass me in front of people’; ‘Tidy everything’; ‘Be responsible for yourself’; and ‘You know what is required, so do not ask.’ Choose an appropriate, permissible action for each setting, with a defined beginning and end. The last might become: ‘Start with the two steps we practised. If you get stuck at the next one, show me where you need clarification.’

Review an occasion when you took over because you were in a hurry. Could you separate practice opportunities from times that

require immediate completion? A crowded morning is not always the right time to teach a new skill. Teach in a safe, suitable period, then use what was learned in the real situation with necessary support.

Finally, identify a mistake you made in the plan and how you will correct it in front of the learner without making the child responsible for your feelings. You might say, ‘I did not explain where the work should go. I will show you now.’ This does not undermine the educator's standing. It demonstrates that responsibility includes the person giving instructions, not only the person following them.

Practical session: learning to ask for clarification

Purpose: the learner recognises when a question is needed and how to ask about the unclear part without asking someone else to perform the entire task. Adapt the session to age and capacity; not every learner needs to use writing.

Materials: familiar paper or safe tools, and short instructions prepared by the educator. A clear example is ‘Put the blue sheet in the box.’ An unclear one is ‘Bring the sheet’ when several different sheets are present. An example requiring a check of rights is ‘Take your classmate's tool’ without stating whether permission exists. Do not carry out the infringement in that last example; use it only to learn to ask about permission.

Begin with the clear example. Ask the learner to explain what they understood and then act. Move to the ambiguous example

and ask, 'What information do you need?' If the answer is 'I do not know', help narrow the question: which sheet, where to, or for what purpose? Do not require the learner to guess your intention and then blame the guess.

In the example involving another person's right, explain that a clear action is not enough: permission or knowledge of a right may also be needed. Practise a courteous question such as 'Has the owner given permission?' Rapid obedience to an adult must not become an aim that removes thought about the limits of an action. For a young learner, use a simple example without burdensome discussions beyond their understanding.

Then reverse roles in a safe example: the learner gives instructions and you ask for clarification where needed. The learner will see that asking is not a sign of inferiority and that adults also need to understand what is meant. End with a different task and see whether the learner identifies the uncertainty independently.

The educator's observation: record the kind of help needed, not merely the number of questions. Did the learner identify which part needed explanation? Use the answer in performing the task? Stop at a right requiring permission? These describe learning. Do not prize speed above sound understanding or interpret a question as a challenge to your authority merely because it came before action.

The next assignment: in the first suitable task after the session, encourage the learner to restate the requirement or ask about an

unclear part. Do not secretly test the learner with incomplete instructions or multiply traps until trust is lost. We are teaching a useful skill, not manufacturing errors to prove dependence on us.

Practical session: correct the example, not only the person

Purpose: the learner practises reviewing work against a clear criterion, while the educator learns responsibility for making that criterion clear. Prepare two hypothetical examples, rather than displaying real work in a way that embarrasses its authors.

Choose a simple activity, such as a label identifying learning materials. It should state the material's name, location, and what is needed to use it. In the first example, omit necessary information. In the second, supply abundant information that still fails to make the requirement clear. Ask which one the learner could use and which question would remain necessary.

Do not begin by calling either example ‘bad’. Let the learner test its usefulness. Then derive two or three quality requirements together. Write them clearly and ask the learner to repair one example. If you choose ‘beauty’ as a criterion in an activity intended to identify materials, discuss whether it is necessary or a personal preference that should not obscure the purpose.

After the repair, offer a third example. Can the learner review it against the same criterion? If you disagree, ask which word in

the criterion allowed different meanings. The educator may need to correct the wording. Say so clearly: ‘The word “complete” was not defined. We will explain what it means.’ This teaches that review is not submission to an unexplained, changing judgement.

A dialogue to adapt: Educator: ‘What does someone using the label need?’ Learner: ‘To know where the material is.’

Educator: ‘Does this example tell them?’ Learner: ‘No.’

Educator: ‘Then add that information and ask someone who has not seen the work before to read it.’ The exchange turns attention from pleasing the educator to serving a clear purpose.

Independent practice: the learner makes a label or similar output, then reviews it before presenting it. The educator offers one consequential observation and allows a correction. Do not request ten improvements at once, losing the foundation among details. Any further criteria required later should be introduced through suitable teaching, not as a surprise at assessment.

Session review: what did the learner discover about quality, and what did the educator discover about the instructions? Keep a before-and-after example where appropriate and with privacy protected. There is no need to preserve every attempt forever; retain enough to explain progress and the next need.

Practical session: from reminders to responsibility

Purpose: the learner takes charge of a familiar step with appropriate support, while the educator learns not to take over at

every sign of slowness. Choose a safe, familiar activity with a visible endpoint, such as gathering and returning materials after use.

Begin by agreeing what the learner will do and what you will do. Do not reduce help without explanation and then interpret difficulty as refusal. You might say, 'This time you will collect these materials. I will be here if you need an explanation.' Make their places clear and ensure the task lies within the learner's capacity.

At the first pause, wait an appropriate amount of time instead of immediately doing the task. If help is requested, ask where it is needed. A hint may suffice, or another demonstration may be necessary. Minimum assistance must not become an inflexible rule denying actual need. Nor should your speed become a permanent reason to deprive the learner of an attempt.

After completion, review the result and ask what helped. The learner may say the box's location was clear, the task had become smaller, or your help was needed at one step. Do not demand an answer praising your parenting or teaching. We want information that helps transfer responsibility honestly.

Next trial: keep the task and setting similar, reducing only one hint if it is unnecessary. Restore the support required if a new difficulty appears. Once the foundation is stable, try a similar but different place while explaining the differences. Do not change every condition at once and attribute every difficulty to the learner.

What to avoid: do not record the attempt for public display without need and valid consent, make siblings an audience waiting for a mistake, or remove an aid suited to the learner's capacity. Independence means an appropriate measure of understanding, decision, and action, not forced deprivation of every form of help.

For the educator: the session succeeds when it clarifies what the learner can carry and where support is needed, and increases understanding of the right and the work involved. Progress may be only one step, but a real one. The outcome is not measured solely by the child's silence or speed of compliance.

The educator's record of their own practice

After a session, answer these questions instead of writing only about the child: was my request understandable? Did I demonstrate? Allow enough time to try? Provide suitable help? Change the criteria after the learner began? Correct in language that preserves dignity? What will I change in my teaching?

Choose one question to work on next time. If you constantly interrupt attempts, learn to wait appropriately. If you repeat an instruction without explaining it, demonstrate the step. If you praise only the result and conceal correction, name what was right and what remains. Teaching discipline includes the educator's own discipline in fairness, clarity, and fulfilling what is asked of the learner.

Do not use these questions to punish yourself after every encounter. An honest review leading to action is enough. You too are learning. Your teaching needs patience, correction, and help, not a pretence of being faultless or despair whenever a mistake appears.

When can we say learning has advanced?

When the learner understands the action, performs more of the task with suitable support, and knows how to request help and repair a mistake, progress has occurred. Success at every opportunity is not required, nor equal speed with a classmate, nor the disappearance of every aid.

Record one real example of this progress and one need for further teaching. Protect the learner's privacy and keep the record only as long as it serves learning. Then appropriately destroy or delete what is no longer needed. Do not make childhood mistakes a permanent archive summoned in every disagreement.

A disciplined educator asks more than ‘Did the child obey me?’ The educator also asks: ‘Did I explain the right? Teach the action? Distribute the burden fairly? Preserve dignity?’ These questions help create an environment where a child learns that order is a path towards goodness, capability, and trustworthiness, not another name for fear of mistakes.

Chapter Eight: The Path of Work and Family

A family is not a small company, nor is a workplace a large household. Each has rights, roles, and boundaries. Some decisions are shared; others belong to a particular person in charge. A method that organises a professional task cannot simply be transplanted into marriage or care for an elderly parent. We need tools that serve people, not tools that turn people into units in a table.

We begin with three words: right, capacity, and agreement. What right must be fulfilled? Who has the capacity to fulfil it? What requires clear agreement? Where rights conflict or an Islamic ruling is unclear, a planning sheet cannot decide the ruling. We need knowledge of the circumstances and the ruling; organisational means then assist sound performance.²²

The family meeting: begin with a task, not an accusation

Choose a recurring difficulty, such as buying shared necessities, storing documents, or arranging a necessary visit. Do not begin with ‘I do everything and you do nothing.’ Describe what

22 Narrated by Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on asking a brother under oath to break a voluntary fast when that is more suitable for him, without requiring him to make it up, hadith 1968.

recurs: ‘We buy some things twice and forget others; nobody knows who follows the list.’ Your feeling of injustice may be justified and need discussion, but describing the task helps the conversation reach a decision.

Ask each participant what they can do and what is difficult. Being at home does not prove someone has spare time; earning a salary does not mean someone needs no rest; being skilled is not a reason to receive every task. Some burdens are invisible to those awaiting the result: remembering, searching, coordinating, and following up. Name these in the discussion instead of leaving them unacknowledged with one person.

Define the result, responsibility for each link, and a time to review. Fair agreement does not require dividing every task into mathematically equal shares: capacity, circumstances, and rights differ. But differences in capacity must not become a phrase concealing one person's permanent benefit from another's exhaustion without agreement or review.

A limited household agreement card

What we agree	Teaching example
Task	Identify the week's necessary shared supplies
Information source	One list to which anyone aware of a need can add
Buyer	Someone who agrees and has suitable time and capacity

What we agree	Teaching example
Reviewer	The person receiving the supplies identifies omissions without general blame
If the task becomes impossible	Early notice and an agreed alternative, not a silent transfer of the burden
Review point	After enough opportunities to see whether duplication and forgetting have decreased

The card need not contain everyone's private income details or information irrelevant to the task. Naming someone responsible does not entitle the family to ignore an emergency affecting that person. Equally, ‘emergency’ must not become a permanent description of every abandoned agreement. Review events, adjust the distribution where necessary, and protect rights from manipulation and exaggeration.

A complete example: caring for a relative without exhausting one person

Siblings were helping an elderly father with daily matters. Every request reached one sister because she lived closest. The others assumed things were settled because she did not complain. After repeated exhaustion, she requested a short meeting. Instead of distributing blame, she listed the actual work: accompanying him to appointments, buying necessities, administrative calls, companionship visits, and following up specialists' decisions within the limits of his permission.

They distinguished care requiring expertise or medical guidance from work that could be shared. They did not devise treatment instructions or make their father a silent object of the plan. They asked about his preferences and what he wished to keep private, preserving decisions that were his to make. Tasks were then distributed according to capacity: one sibling handled calls, another accompanied him at feasible times, and another bought supplies.

In the first week, a problem emerged: someone accepted an appointment they could not actually manage, then gave late notice. They did not quietly add the duty to the same sister's load. They agreed to check capacity before accepting an appointment and to notify the coordinator in a specified way if unable to attend. Some tasks still needed different arrangements. Writing names in a timetable was not enough to declare success.

Their criterion was delivery of the necessary help while preserving their father's dignity and not overburdening anyone. Visit counts alone were insufficient: a long visit that exhausted him was not better than a suitable one. Nor did financial contribution entitle anyone to control the others. Useful organisation made work and capacity visible without cancelling the human relationship or Islamic rights.

Your task: choose one link in the example that needs organisation in your family, rather than taking on the whole family. Who has authority to decide? Who needs information? What is the minimum information required? What risk follows

if the agreement is not carried out? Write a proposal and discuss it with those concerned. Do not put their names into a binding plan without their knowledge.

Worship on a crowded day: organise preparation, preserve the duty

The problem may be that work carries a person along until prayer time arrives without preparation, or that the person does not know how to manage a shift pattern. Begin by learning the necessary ruling from a trustworthy source and identifying feasible arrangements, then organise the means. This guide neither creates nor cancels religious concessions. Work pressure is not a general ruling permitting whatever someone wishes.

Write what you can do before the crowded moment: establish prayer times through a reliable means, identify a suitable place within what is available, prepare what is needed, and discuss staffing cover with the person responsible where necessary. These are means, not new pillars of worship. Where a real conflict or particular case arises, seeking suitable religious and professional guidance is part of responsibility, not proof that planning has failed.

Hypothetical example: a man belongs to a service team whose members cannot all leave at once. Instead of neglecting prayer or abruptly abandoning the service without arrangements, he discusses a way to preserve obligations with the person in charge and asks people of knowledge about the particular ruling. He does not impose a personal timetable on colleagues

or turn the matter into a competition in displaying worship. The training aims to prepare for a right before demands collide, not reshape it around convenience.

A personal portion of reading or voluntary worship should suit the circumstances without displacing obligatory worship or the family's rights. Praiseworthy consistency does not mean making the household pay for every increase you choose. The complete account of Salman and Abu al-Darda' appeared in 'Testing an Approach Instead of Promising a Miracle'. Return to it when considering how an increase affects rights.²³

The work path: define service from the recipient's side

A team may say, 'We complete many requests', while recipients must ask again because the answer was unclear. Begin with what they need: correct information, a complete delivery, a safely completed procedure, or a clear explanation of why something cannot be done. Activity alone does not establish service.

Choose one task within your authority. State what enters it, what should come out, and who receives the result. Identify errors that make unfinished work appear complete: a missing

23 Narrated by Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on asking a brother under oath to break a voluntary fast when that is more suitable for him, without requiring him to make it up, hadith 1968.

attachment, an incorrect address, a case closed before an answer, or unchecked information. Do not treat every difference between people as a breach; establish a suitable, stated criterion.

Where an approved organisational procedure exists, begin with it and discuss improvements through the proper route. Do not create a secret parallel system that hides information from those with authority. Professional discipline includes protecting data, respecting authority, and not attributing a decision to a body that never made it.

A complete example: a library shift handover

Two employees at an educational library alternate responsibility for lending and receiving books. Returned books repeatedly go unrecorded as to location, leaving the next employee searching and assuming they have not come back. Training begins with describing the handover between shifts, rather than accusing either employee of carelessness.

With their manager's approval, they agree on a short list of unfinished matters: a returned book not yet shelved, a request awaiting verification, and information the next employee needs. They do not leave readers' names and details on a sheet visible to everyone. They use the permitted system and only necessary information. Completion means the next employee can understand what remains without asking about everything again.

In the first six handovers, the description is clear four times and incomplete twice. The omissions involve phrases such as

‘Review the matter’ without saying what needs review. They replace these with a specific action: ‘Check the returned book's location on the designated shelf before closing the request.’ The report becomes clearer, not longer.

Later, crowding at the end of a shift causes delay. Instead of expecting permanent additional time from every employee without addressing the problem, they discuss the sequence and workload with the manager. Part of the difficulty lies in the timing of the handover, not willingness to work. Assessment now considers the quality of the transition and actual burden, not the number of completed boxes.

Your exercise: write a three-line handover—what is complete, what remains, and what needs a decision or attention. Show it to the person receiving the work and ask whether they can act on it. If they must ask what the entire thing means, the form has not served its purpose. Remove information they do not need to protect privacy.

Practising ‘I do not know’ and ‘I need to check’

Rushing an answer can cause more harm than a short verification delay. Practise four formulations: ‘I know this part and will check the rest’; ‘This lies outside my authority, and I will direct you to the appropriate body’; ‘I cannot confirm the deadline before checking capacity’; and ‘The earlier information needs correction.’

These phrases are not excuses to evade a request. Add a follow-up step within known limits: who will answer, and what will you do now? Do not promise a reply at a time you cannot control. If you cannot specify a time, be honest about what you know and explain the available route instead of offering false reassurance.

Hypothetical dialogue: a recipient asks about an unfamiliar procedure. A hasty reply is 'Yes, it will be finished today.' A disciplined reply is 'I cannot confirm that. I will check with the person responsible for this stage and explain what is needed once I know.' The second answer is good only if the speaker follows through or reports why they could not. Good words require fulfilment.

Financial trustworthiness: gather the facts before calculating

In zakat and financial rights, enthusiasm and convenient rounding are insufficient. This path is neither a zakat calculator nor an investment ruling. The proposed administrative practice is to gather the correct information needed, identify rulings you do not know, consult qualified people where necessary, and then perform what is required without confusing your money with someone else's.

Practise on a non-sensitive financial record or use hypothetical information. Divide items into what you know, what needs documentation, and what needs a ruling. Do not derive a financial ruling from a spreadsheet column's name. Treatment of

an asset or debt may differ with its circumstances; software convenience does not make all cases alike.

Example: a man gathers papers concerning different kinds of wealth and marks what requires a question. The first benefit is that he stops estimating everything from memory. The second is that he approaches the specialist with understandable facts. The exercise does not make him a financial expert. It makes him better able to fulfil the trust involved in asking and acting.²⁴

If he owes someone a debt, organising his finances must not become a refuge from repayment itself. A person in financial hardship has rulings specific to that condition and must not be treated like someone able to pay who deliberately delays; details belong in their proper place. The record helps describe capacity honestly. It does not authorise judging people's obligations from their outward lifestyle.²⁵

When two parties disagree about performance

One spouse may say an agreement was not carried out, while the other says they did more than requested. Begin with what was actually agreed, not what each secretly expected. Was the result clear? Did circumstances change? Was an unnamed burden hidden in the task? Discuss adjustments instead of putting the whole relationship on trial after every event.

24 The Noble Qur'an, al-Nisa' 4:58.

25 The Noble Qur'an, al-Baqarah 2:280.

At work, criteria may conflict: speed may be demanded alongside quality without adequate resources. Record the conflict and ask the decision-maker to set priorities. Do not falsify figures to make the impossible appear complete, or sacrifice safety or a right because one indicator rewards speed. Discipline includes making relevant constraints visible to those deciding.

If a family or professional disagreement intensifies, or involves threats or abuse, seek suitable help. Do not let the review meeting become a setting for escalating harm. Forms cannot resolve every dispute or remove the need for specialist advice where the circumstances require it.

A review meeting that does not become a court

Choose a suitable short period and begin with benefits that reached the people concerned. Then discuss one consequential obstacle, not a catalogue of every mistake. Ask: what do we know, what are we assuming, who can decide on an adjustment, and what comes next?

End with each person repeating what they have undertaken, leaving unagreed matters clearly identified. Do not write ‘We will cooperate more’ and return to uncertainty. A modest result may be that one person will confirm information, another will prepare a tool, and the distribution will be reviewed after suitable opportunities. That is something people can act on.

Do not make an audio recording of a sensitive family conversation without appropriate consent or circulate minutes containing information participants do not need. Privacy is part of good organisation. Solving a forgotten task by creating an archive of secrets that later harms the relationship is a mistake.

Tracking service and rights

Indicator	The question it serves
Completion	Did the result reach the person who needs it?
Quality	Did it meet the stated requirement without a consequential omission?
Clarity	Did the next person understand their part?
Burden	Did we move the problem to someone else without agreement?
Correction	Was the discovered error addressed or concealed?

Choose the indicators your task requires. Do not combine them into an average that allows numerous achievements to compensate for violating a right. Meeting five indicators while compromising safety does not make performance good ‘on average’. Some boundaries must remain boundaries, not tradable numbers.

Practical workshops in worship and fulfilling rights

The following workshops add no acts of worship or forms of remembrance, and do not replace knowledge of prayer, fasting, zakat, and Hajj. They practise skills that support obedience: identifying what needs learning, preparing, observing limits, protecting rights, and correcting methods. Choose what suits your circumstances. Completing every workshop must not become a new religious commitment.

In each workshop, separate the ruling learned from its proper source from the method you choose. A trainer cannot revise the former to suit a programme. The latter can change with need. Confusing them may turn a personal reminder into legislation or a desire for comfort into a concession without religious basis.

Prayer workshop: where does preparation falter?

Choose a known preparation problem rather than making a general judgement about your humility in prayer. Perhaps you know the time but continue an optional activity until little time remains, need to learn a point about purification, or do not know a feasible arrangement at work. Identify the difficulty before buying another alarm. An alert cannot teach a ruling, negotiate with an employer, or correct a decision to delay when you already remember the time.

Write a short sequence: knowing the time, preparing in a prescribed way, and reaching performance. Under each link, state what is needed. If it is a religious question, describe the

facts and ask a trustworthy source of knowledge. If it is an organisational matter, identify what you can do and what needs agreement. Prayer is worship whose form is learned from sound prophetic guidance, not an exercise whose pillars we design or alter to fit a chosen duration.²⁶

Hypothetical application: someone wants to improve preparation and assumes every movement must be timed. On reflection, the difficulty begins with accepting a lengthy optional activity during a period needed for preparation. The person chooses a suitable point to stop that activity before being carried along, while retaining a reliable means of knowing the time. Minutes do not become a measure of faith, nor does the first minute of each prayer time become a personally invented mandatory standard imposed on others.

After the attempt, ask: did I identify the difficulty, learn what was unknown, use the preparatory method, and notice what changed in reaching performance? Do not write ‘My humility reached this level.’ If a particular ruling remains unclear, accumulating ticks cannot replace asking and learning.

A distinction exercise: consider three cards—‘The ruling on prayer during illness’, ‘Where to store what I need’, and ‘A

26 Narrated by Malik ibn al-Huwayrith, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Call to Prayer, chapter on the call and commencement of prayer for a group of travellers, and at ‘Arafah and Muzdalifah, hadith 631.

personal phone alert’. The first requires knowledge of the ruling and the circumstances; the others describe means. Flexibility in means does not allow the ruling to be reinvented. An established ruling does not make every chosen means unchangeable.²⁷

Purification workshop: learn the form, then recognise completion

Choose something you need to understand about the form of purification and learn it from a trustworthy source. Do not make the workshop a compulsive review of every movement or an inventory of every imaginable possibility. The aim is to know and perform what is required, then move on, without anxiety alone creating a renewed obligation.

Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, reported:

«توضأ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مرة مرة»

Translation of the meaning: ‘The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, performed ablution, washing once each.’²⁸

27 Narrated by ‘Imran ibn Husayn, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Shortening Prayer, chapter on praying on one’s side when unable to sit, hadith 1117.

28 Narrated by ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Ablution, chapter on washing once in ablution, hadith 157.

Humran, the freedman of ‘Uthman, narrated:

«أن عثمان بن عفان - رضى الله عنه - دعا بوضوء فتوضأ فغسل كفيه ثلاث مرات ثم مضمض واستنثر ثم غسل وجهه ثلاث مرات ثم غسل يده اليمنى إلى المرفق ثلاث مرات ثم غسل يده اليسرى مثل ذلك ثم مسح رأسه ثم غسل رجله اليمنى إلى الكعبين ثلاث مرات ثم غسل اليسرى مثل ذلك ثم قال رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم توضأ نحو وضوئي هذا ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من توضأ نحو وضوئي هذا ثم قام فركع ركعتين لا يحدث فيهما نفسه غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه. قال ابن شهاب وكان علماًؤنا يقولون هذا الوضوء أسبغ ما يتوضأ به أحد للصلاة»

Translation of the meaning: ‘ ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan, may Allah be pleased with him, called for water for ablution and performed it. He washed his hands three times, rinsed his mouth and expelled water from his nose, then washed his face three times. He washed his right arm up to the elbow three times, and his left likewise. Then he wiped his head, washed his right foot up to the ankles three times, and his left likewise. He said, “I saw the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, perform ablution like this ablution of mine. Then the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: Whoever performs ablution like this ablution of mine, then stands and prays two units without engaging in inner distraction during

them, will have his previous sins forgiven.” Ibn Shihab said, “Our scholars used to say: this is the most complete ablution a person can perform for prayer.””²⁹

‘Abbad ibn Tamim narrated from his uncle:

«أنه شكّا إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الرجل الذي يخيّل إليه أنه يجد الشيء في الصلاة. فقال لا ينفثل — أو لا ينصرف — حتى يسمع صوتاً أو يجد ريحاً»

Translation of the meaning: ‘He complained to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, about a man who imagines that he senses something during prayer. He said, “He should not turn away—or leave—until he hears a sound or detects a smell.”’³⁰

Learn the form of performance from these texts. Do not make the feeling that repetition is safer a source of renewed obligation. Learn any unclear case, but do not endlessly repeat the same question without new information.

29 Narrated from ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Purification, chapter on the form and completeness of ablution, hadith 226a.

30 Narrated from ‘Abd Allah ibn Zayd ibn ‘Asim, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Ablution, chapter on not repeating ablution on doubt until certainty, hadith 137.

Teaching activity: a teacher explains a correct form suited to the learner, then asks the learner to explain when the task is complete. If the learner adds something beyond what was taught because ‘it feels necessary’, let that become a question, not a self-invented addition. If a real requirement is omitted, correct the teaching without dismissing the omission. The aim is sound completion, neither anxious excess nor deliberate deficiency.

Do not make reducing water or time a competition. Needs and capacities differ; the aim is sound performance without waste or harm. Do not turn the training record into constant bodily surveillance. If repetitions and doubts consume time and cause distress or disruption, appropriate help takes priority over a personal programme of severity or a diagnosis you give yourself.

Closing question: do you need to learn a specific matter, or do you know the answer but repeatedly seek the same certainty without a new event? The answer can help you choose learning or support, but cannot by itself establish a diagnosis. Respect the limits of your knowledge as you respect the limits of worship.

Remembrance and recitation workshop: preserve meaning without making worship out of a timetable

Choose one matter: learning an established form of remembrance in its proper setting, improving the correctness of recitation, or organising a personal portion of Qur'an recitation suited to capacity. Before planning, state whether the time or number is established by a text or chosen for organisation. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«من سبح الله في دبر كل صلاة ثلاثا وثلاثين وحمد الله ثلاثا وثلاثين وكبر الله ثلاثا وثلاثين فتلك تسعة وتسعون وقال تمام المائة لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له له الملك وله الحمد وهو على كل شيء قدير غفرت خطاياهم وإن كانت مثل زبد البحر»

Translation of the meaning: 'Whoever glorifies Allah thirty-three times after every prayer, praises Allah thirty-three times, and declares Allah's greatness thirty-three times—that is ninety-nine—and completes the hundred by saying, "None has the right to be worshipped except Allah alone, without partner. His is the dominion and His is the praise, and He has power over all

things,” will have his sins forgiven even if they are like the foam of the sea.’³¹

This number is followed in its proper setting. A quantity of reading you choose to organise your day, however, should not be attributed to the Sunnah or imposed on others.

Hypothetical example: a woman chooses an amount of recitation she can review with a teacher. Page count becomes more important than correcting errors, and she rushes to reach the number. She adjusts the method: recitation remains worship, while the teaching session addresses one particular difficulty. She does not turn every page into a performance test or abandon recitation because teaching takes time.

Practice: choose a short passage requiring correction, listen to sound instruction or recite to a capable teacher, then repeat it with the correction in mind. Record the point being learned if necessary, not judgements about the acceptance of your recitation. A personal portion should be suitable and should not crowd out a binding family right or required work. What you choose for yourself does not justify requiring others to bear its cost without consideration.³²

Number exercise: distinguish a form of remembrance with a specified number from someone saying, ‘I will review this

31 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Mosques and Places of Prayer, chapter on recommended remembrance after prayer and its form, hadith 597a.

material twice a week.’ The former is attributed to its text in its proper setting; the latter is an organisational decision with no special merit arising from the number itself. Do not use a tracking sheet to change the first or sanctify the second.

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«من نام عن حظه أو عن شيء منه فقرأه فيما بين صلاة الفجر وصلاة الظهر كتب له كأنما قرأه من الليل»

Translation of the meaning: ‘Whoever sleeps through his regular portion, or any part of it, and recites it between the dawn prayer and the noon prayer will have it recorded as though he had recited it at night.’³³

This text teaches one way of making up what was missed. When a regular portion or deed is missed, learn its particular ruling from its source. Do not invent a remedy that exhausts you or displaces a duty, or make every omission a reason to abandon the good that remains.

32 Narrated by Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on asking a brother under oath to break a voluntary fast when that is more suitable for him, without requiring him to make it up, hadith 1968.

33 Narrated by ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Travellers’ Prayer and Its Shortening, chapter on night prayer and someone who sleeps through it or falls ill, hadith 747.

Fasting workshop: discipline in permission as in restraint

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«لا يزال الناس بخير ما عجلوا الفطر»

Translation of the meaning: ‘People will remain in goodness as long as they hasten to break the fast.’³⁴

‘Abd Allah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

«أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم واصل فواصل الناس فشق عليهم، فنهاهم. قالوا إنك تواصل. قال لست كهئلتكم، إني أظل أطعم وأسقى»

Translation of the meaning: ‘The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, continued fasting without breaking between days, and the people did likewise. It became difficult for them, so he forbade them. They said, “You continue fasting.” He said, “I am not like you; I continue to be given food and drink.”’³⁵

34 Narrated by Sahl ibn Sa‘d, may Allah be pleased with him.

Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on hastening to break the fast, hadith 1957.

35 Narrated by ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on the blessing of the pre-dawn meal without making it obligatory, hadith 1922.

One lesson of fasting is that obedience follows what has been prescribed at both beginning and end. The limits of fasting and the complete Qur’anic verse were discussed in Volume Two, ‘Fasting—Obedience at the Beginning and the End’. A learner should therefore not delay breaking the fast beyond its proper time to test toughness, or make extra thirst and hunger a measure of piety.³⁶

Decision exercise: write two hypothetical plans. The first organises reliable knowledge of time, suitable preparation, and protected rights. The second increases deprivation, removes necessary rest, and counts greater hardship as success. Underline where the second moves from serving worship to inventing a personal test.

In actual practice, choose a useful skill that does not manipulate the ruling of fasting: learn a needed matter, prepare what helps fulfil rights, or restrain a harmful response in a dispute. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«قال الله كل عمل ابن آدم له إلا الصيام، فإنه لي، وأنا أجزي به. والصيام جنة، وإذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم، فلا يرفث ولا يصخب، فإن سابه أحد، أو قاتله فليقل إني امرؤ صائم. والذي نفس محمد بيده لخلوف فم الصائم أطيب عند الله من ريح

36 The Noble Qur’an, al-Baqarah 2:187: eating and drinking until dawn, completing the fast until night, and Allah’s limits.

المسك، للصائم فرحتان يفرحهما إذا أفطر فرح، وإذا لقي ربه فرح بصومه»

Translation of the meaning: ‘Allah said: Every deed of the son of Adam is for him except fasting; it is for Me, and I reward it. Fasting is a shield. On a day when one of you is fasting, he should neither speak obscenely nor shout. If someone insults him or fights him, let him say, “I am a fasting man.” By the One in whose hand is Muhammad's soul, the smell from the fasting person's mouth is more pleasant to Allah than the scent of musk. The fasting person has two joys: when he breaks his fast, he rejoices; and when he meets his Lord, he rejoices in his fasting.’³⁷

In this guidance, refraining from food is connected with guarding speech and responding to aggression without returning harm in kind. If you err, do not use fasting as an excuse, and do not grant anyone a right to harm you on the grounds that you are practising patience.

Religious concessions take illness and travel into account in their proper circumstances. Questions about particular cases belong with people of knowledge and the necessary understanding of the facts. Bodies should not all receive one

37 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on saying “I am fasting” when insulted, hadith 1904.

plan, and nobody should change treatment for an exercise here. This volume sets no fasting challenges and prescribes no health programme.³⁸

Review: what did following the prescribed limit teach you? Did you protect a right you tend to neglect when tired? Which daily method needs adjustment? Do not turn your answer into a judgement about acceptance of the fast or one person's superiority over another. We observe a known action, repair what is needed, and hope for Allah's favour.

Zakat workshop: from scattered papers to a sound question

Begin with administrative practice before calculation: gather the facts needed to fulfil the right. List the kinds of information available, what requires documentation, and what requires a ruling. Do not publish your figures in a group workshop. Learn with hypothetical data, keeping actual information securely in its proper place.

Training case: someone has different kinds of wealth, debts owed to them and by them, and items whose rulings they do not understand. Instead of applying one percentage indiscriminately, they gather the facts and identify questions. The workshop supplies no ruling on these cases. It teaches that a

38 The Noble Qur'an, al-Baqarah 2:185: fasting Ramadan, illness and travel, making up missed days, ease, and completing the prescribed period.

sound question requires the nature, circumstances, and timing of the wealth, and that the duty is not determined by software column names.

Write a question card: what are the circumstances, what information is documented, what remains unknown, and who is qualified to answer? After learning, state what must be done and how to verify that performance reaches its proper destination. Zakat has recipients prescribed by Islamic law; good intentions do not make every kind of expenditure eligible.³⁹

Dates or events may fall beyond the twelve weeks. Do not wait until the programme ends if a right becomes due sooner, or invent a religious deadline merely to create a trial. If no opportunity for actual performance arises during the programme, the result can be preparation or a well-defined question. Record that implementation has not yet been tested. The distinction between readiness and performance matters for trustworthiness as well as measurement.

An error to uncover: someone marks completion because money was transferred without checking what their case requires concerning the recipient, agency, or arrival at the intended destination. A technical transaction alone cannot establish that worship is complete. Learn what your case requires and let the means serve that knowledge instead of replacing it.

39 The Noble Qur'an, al-Tawbah 9:60.

Hajj workshop: learn the limits before testing organisation

This is a preparation workshop, not a manual of pilgrimage rites. Begin with the rulings you need from trustworthy sources and the competent authorities' instructions at the time of travel. Do not memorise an old map and treat it as a permanent system, or collect details that distract from learning the foundations of your rites. Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

«رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَرْمِي عَلَى رَاحِلَتِهِ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ وَيَقُولُ لَتَأْخُذُوا مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَإِنِّي لَا أَدْرِي لَعَلِّي لَا أَحْجُ بَعْدَ حَجَّتِي هَذِهِ»

Translation of the meaning: ‘I saw the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, throwing the pebbles from his mount on the Day of Sacrifice, saying, “Learn your rites, for I do not know: perhaps I will not perform Hajj after this pilgrimage of mine.”’⁴⁰

Learn the rites from the Prophet's guidance, peace and blessings be upon him, then organise travel arrangements to serve them.

Sorting exercise: put questions into three groups—a ruling about a rite, travel organisation, and health needs or capacity.

40 Narrated by Jabir ibn ‘Abd Allah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Hajj, chapter on the recommendation to stone Jamrat al-‘Aqabah while mounted on the Day of Sacrifice and the meaning of “Learn your rites”, hadith 1297.

Ask people of religious knowledge about the rite, verify travel arrangements with the relevant authority, and take health needs to the appropriate specialist. The groups may connect, but none replaces another. An organiser saying a route is easier does not create a religious ruling, and knowing a ruling does not remove the need for crowd safety.

Hypothetical case: a companion wants the whole family to move at the same speed, including an older person whose capacity varies. He reconsiders the method and seeks appropriate instruction about the rulings and arrangements they need. Slowness is not treated as weak resolve. The rite remains as prescribed, while preparation and support change within sound limits.

Before travel, practise a simple communication agreement: who is responsible for particular information, what should someone do if contact is lost according to reliable guidance, and what information must be carried or kept private? Do not invent safety procedures from a household exercise. Use competent authorities' guidance current at the time and check that companions understand it.

Review: do you know where to ask when you do not know? Have you distinguished a religious limit from an organisational means? Considered your companions? Prevented enthusiasm from becoming harmful crowding or disregard for capacity? Here discipline serves worship and the group, rather than speed alone.

An integrated workshop: choosing rightly when demands compete

Write a hypothetical situation in which a voluntary act you chose competes with a request whose claim needs consideration, or personal training competes with an earlier commitment. Do not rush to a general ruling. Establish the nature and timing of each action, the person's right, and your capacity. Ask about what requires Islamic legal knowledge; clarify with those concerned what requires agreement; and adjust deferrable optional means without exaggeration.

Application: someone increases permissible training, then discovers that the time promised to the family is no longer available. Calling the training 'self-development' does not cancel the promise, nor must all learning be abandoned forever. Repair what needs repair, agree where agreement is valid, and redesign the chosen amount. What benefits a life should not become an excuse to diminish the lives around it.

Use this workshop with a teacher or facilitator for general cases, without revealing private family events to the group. Everyone can discuss the same hypothetical situation, then apply the questioning method privately. The desired result is better discernment, not collective religious rulings issued by trainees to one another.

At the end, ask more than how many workshops you completed. Identify something learned, a method improved, a right delivered, and a boundary respected instead of crossed in the

name of diligence. These outcomes are closer to the purpose than making worship a production list or training a separate religious observance.

Closing trial: a week without vague promises

Choose shared commitments that need clarification. Whenever asked to do something, understand the result, deadline, capacity, and authority before agreeing. Request any adjustment in its proper place. At handover, explain what is complete and what remains without lengthy excuses or concealed omissions.

Do not make extra promises merely to create more practice opportunities. Work with what actually arises and record two or three events that taught you something. At the end, ask someone affected a specific question: ‘Has what I deliver become clearer? Which part still confuses you?’ Listen without demanding praise or requiring them to follow the whole programme.

When organisation becomes more closely connected with serving others, its meaning changes. It is no longer a notebook proving how busy you are. It becomes a clear promise, a protected right, truthful information, and work whose effect reaches someone else. This leaves ample room for patience, striving, and consistency to appear without noise about a person's name or number of achievements.

Chapter Nine: Responding to Setbacks and Revising the Plan

After a setback, the question is not, ‘Must I start my life all over again?’ It is: what exactly went wrong, what remains intact, and what is the right next step? If you measure every advance by an unbroken streak, one difficult day can seem to destroy months of effort. If you dismiss every mistake, the plan can become a cover for repeating it. We need a third response: acknowledge what happened clearly, put right what needs repair, and make a considered adjustment.

Returning does not erase what happened. If another person’s right is involved, it must be fulfilled or addressed appropriately. If you missed an optional, permissible exercise, that missed opportunity can inform the next attempt. An interruption does not excuse abandoning other duties, and regret does not justify punishing yourself in harmful ways.

The immediate question: is someone’s right or safety at stake?

Before analysing your plan, consider the consequences. Does someone urgently need information? Is there an error you must stop? Is an overdue obligation something you can fulfil now? Begin there. Do not leave harm unaddressed while writing an excellent report about it. The discussion in ‘Choosing Your Path and Establishing a Starting Point’, including the hadith about

seeking release from wrongs done to others, explains why restoring a right comes first.⁴¹

Then distinguish repairing the consequences from understanding the cause. You can apologise and correct an error before investigating why it keeps happening. Do not make that investigation a condition of your apology: 'I will not admit it until you agree that circumstances caused it.' Equally, acknowledging your fault need not prevent you from identifying a real constraint that must be addressed to stop the problem recurring.

If nothing needs urgent attention, step back and consider the matter calmly. Avoid deciding, at the height of anger, to cancel everything or double your training as punishment. Write down what happened, separating what you know from what you are imagining. Precise descriptions are fairer to you and more useful for putting things right.

41 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Wrongs, chapter on seeking release from a wrong and whether it should be explained, hadith 2449.

A map of causes: eight different questions

Consider each of the following without assuming that one explains every setback:

Area	Question to ask
Knowledge	Do I know how to perform the action and what comes next?
Capacity	Do my condition and available tools allow the required action?
Clarity	Do I know what counts as completion?
Opportunity	Did the situation actually arise, or was there no opportunity?
Starting	Did I notice the cue and begin, or miss it?
Workload	Did I accept more than my time or resources allow?
Environment	Does the system, place or division of work create an obstacle?
Choice	Did I leave something I could do in pursuit of immediate ease or desire?

Several causes may operate together. You need not select one and clear all the others of responsibility. Begin with what seems most influential and try a change suited to it. Someone who lacks a skill needs teaching; someone who lacks an essential tool needs access to it; someone who chooses delay despite being able to act needs to acknowledge that choice and practise

a different response. Calling all these situations ‘weak willpower’ prevents a precise remedy.

This table cannot diagnose a physical or psychological condition. Persistent inability, distress or disruption that causes concern calls for appropriate help, not a diagnosis attached to a training sheet. The plan itself may also be larger than necessary; reducing it can be a correction rather than a retreat.

Examine one event instead of spending a week blaming yourself

Choose the most recent clear event. Record what happened immediately before it, what you did, and what followed. You do not need to explain your entire history. For example: ‘A request arrived as I was leaving. I agreed without checking, then found I had no time for it. I did not tell the person until after the deadline.’ This sequence identifies three points: agreeing, assessing capacity and communicating.

Which point should you address first? Stopping automatic agreement may help more than adding another reminder, because the problem began before anything was forgotten. Perhaps, however, the request is a duty within your job and you cannot decline it. The question then becomes how to report competing priorities to someone authorised to arrange them. A solution must respect the role you actually have, rather than one you wish you had.

An example analysis:

Before the event	During it	After it
An unclear request at a busy time	Quick agreement without questions	Delay, embarrassment and attempted justification
Learning material beyond the learner's current level	Repeated viewing without attempting a solution	Feeling unsuccessful and abandoning the session
Shared tools with no agreed storage places	Returning them to the nearest surface	A long search on the next attempt

Beside each row, write one action that addresses the likely cause: ask before agreeing, revisit a prerequisite skill, or agree on a known storage place. Do not prescribe the same solution for all three simply because it is easy to write down.

Worked example: a high score that conceals weak learning

A learner recorded 'training completed' every day he opened the lesson. The figures looked good, but he could not perform the skill without the explanation. On reviewing his definition, he realised that he was measuring attendance rather than learning. More days of attendance were not the answer. He needed to define completion in a way that served the purpose: an appropriate attempt at the skill, followed by review and correction.

He kept the old record as an attendance record instead of retrospectively turning it into evidence of learning. He introduced the new definition on a recorded date and noted that the two figures could not be compared as though they measured the same thing. He then collected examples of actual performance to assess progress.

This example shows why a lower percentage after improving a standard may reveal the truth rather than indicate deterioration. Do not cling to an easy standard because it produces a comforting number. Equally, do not make the standard so severe and vague that nobody can meet it. Define necessary quality that can be learned, and distinguish it from an endless demand for perfection.

Worked example: returning after an unplanned interruption

A woman began learning a useful skill, then needed to care for a relative for several days. When she returned, she found that some learning remained and some needed review. Her first impulse was to restart every lesson. Instead, she tried a short task to establish what she retained, then reviewed two points where she struggled.

She moved practice to a realistic opportunity in her changed circumstances and dropped an additional goal she had set herself. She did not neglect anyone's rights to restore the old appearance of her chart. After several opportunities, she realised that she needed an explanation of something that had been

unclear even before the interruption. This helped her distinguish the effects of the break from an earlier gap in learning.

Returning to a permissible exercise need not mean erasing everything or making up for the interruption harshly. Check what remains and resume from a clear point. Obligatory worship and people's rights have their own rules for performance and making up what was missed; they cannot simply be treated like optional skills lessons.

Worked example: when tracking becomes the problem

A young man used a detailed chart for every small task. He began spending a long time adjusting its cells, then worrying about leaving them incomplete. He noticed that recording his work was now competing with doing it. He reduced the record to one line for the important task, a note when an obstacle arose, and a review at a suitable time instead of constant logging.

He did not treat simplification as a betrayal of discipline. The question was whether it improved his ability to act while reducing unhelpful demands. If anxiety remained severe or disrupted wider areas of life, professional help would be more appropriate than endlessly redesigning charts. We should neither label every conscientious habit a disorder nor ask someone to address a possible health problem through greater willpower alone.

In your own practice, ask: am I tracking what I need to know, or tracking to feel that everything is under control? If the information no longer changes a decision, it may be time to reduce it. Where a task carries significant risk and requires formal documentation, follow those requirements. Personal simplification is not a reason to omit necessary records.

A small, clear procedure for changing the plan

Write down the problem, the proposed change, why you expect it to help, what you will keep constant, and what evidence you will examine. You do not need statistical language. You need to avoid confusing different attempts. For example: ‘I will move the tool because it is out of sight when needed. I will keep the task unchanged and use three suitable opportunities to see whether the tool is easier to reach.’

That number is a choice for organising observation, not a scientific threshold proving success. One opportunity may reveal a danger or an obvious fault; do not wait to complete your chosen number. You may need more opportunities if the situation is rare or varies widely. Do not let a timetable overrule reality.

If you improve several things together, record that. You can keep a helpful combination without attributing its effect to one element in the absence of evidence. If performance does not improve, check whether you actually implemented the change. Judging a tool you did not use is different from judging one you tried and found unsuitable.

A decision card for setbacks

What you observed	A possible first response
I do not know how to perform the step	Learn, ask or study a correct demonstration
I know how, but the tool is unavailable	Obtain it, find a suitable alternative or make a permissible change to the task
The task exceeds the time available	Reassess the workload or negotiate within your authority
I forget in one particular setting	Use a cue connected to that setting
I start but do not finish	Choose a smaller useful unit and a clear completion standard
Harm or a violation has occurred	Stop it, put it right and seek appropriate help
The method works, but recording has become burdensome	Reduce tracking while keeping what is required

Choose the response that fits reality, rather than the one you want to hear. Adding a reminder may be easiest when what you need is an apology. Blaming yourself may be easiest when what is needed is a fair request for equipment the organisation has not supplied. Honest responsibility neither excuses what you can do nor requires what lies beyond your control.

A plan to return at the next suitable opportunity

Once you understand the obstacle, identify the first action you can take. Do not say, ‘I will come back strongly next week,’ if you can now send necessary information, prepare a tool or ask for instruction. The next suitable opportunity may genuinely come later because of the task’s nature. Write down what will make it recognisable instead of waiting for a new mood.

Make returning manageable rather than turning it into a campaign of compensation. For voluntary worship and permissible activities, choose an appropriate amount that helps you continue. Where obligations or making up missed duties are concerned, ask what is required; a personal assessment of how you feel cannot replace the ruling. Consistency is a sound principle, but it does not prescribe an identical amount for every situation.⁴²

If you need support, ask for something specific: an answer from a teacher, an arrangement with your family, or clarification from a supervisor. Do not ask a friend to watch you all day or make your success entirely their responsibility. If they agree to follow up, decide what you will share, what stays private, and when the arrangement ends or changes.

42 Narrated by ‘A’ishah, Mother of the Believers, may Allah be pleased with her. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Softening the Hearts, chapter on moderation and consistency in deeds, hadith 6464.

When the same cause keeps returning

If the obstacle returns after several adjustments, stop repeating the solution automatically. Your first explanation may have been wrong, the goal may not suit this stage, or the problem may belong to a wider system. Gather specific facts instead of becoming harsher. Consult a trustworthy person who understands the area. Explain what you tried and what happened, rather than presenting only your judgement of yourself.

In learning, the difficulty may be a prerequisite you have not mastered. At work, it may be conflicting instructions. In the family, it may be an agreement that overlooks one person's workload. For health concerns or disabling distress, specialist help may be needed. One guide cannot replace every kind of knowledge.

If you discover that you no longer want a permissible goal you chose, reconsider its value honestly. You may leave an optional goal without declaring your life a failure. An obligatory right, however, does not disappear because your desire changes. This distinction protects you both from clinging to an unnecessary project and from using flexibility to excuse abandoning a duty.

Test your judgement, not your ability to memorise

Consider three situations. One person's score rises because they exclude unsuccessful attempts. Another's falls because they tighten the quality definition after discovering a real deficiency. A third person's score stays unchanged, but the task places less

strain on their family. Who has progressed? The numbers alone cannot tell you. The first needs more honest recording; the second needs to account for a changed standard; the third may have achieved something important that the original measure could not capture.

Choose an event in your own practice that resembles one of these. Write two possible explanations and identify what would reduce the uncertainty. Do not request information you do not need or burden others with long questionnaires about your personal plan. One question or one completed piece of work may be enough.

End your review with a practical statement: 'I have not returned to zero. I have returned to the step that needs repair.' Name that step and take the necessary action. Progress is preserved neither by denying a setback nor by magnifying it until it fills the whole path. It is preserved through honest description, fulfilment of rights, patience with a useful adjustment, and continued reliance on Allah.

Chapter Ten: A Twelve-Week Review

The weeks that follow offer a suggested sequence for learning, practice and review. They are not twelve new goals or twelve habits you must acquire. This extended programme is independent of the short introductory cycle in Chapter One. You do not have to complete four weeks before beginning it, and the two periods do not form a compulsory sixteen-week course. You may spend the whole programme improving one consequential skill and then trying it in a related situation. You may need longer at one stage or less time at another because you have already learned it. Do not let the calendar outweigh your actual need.

Each week includes a learning session, practice in everyday life and a brief review. A session cannot replace practice, and repeated incorrect practice cannot replace instruction. Choose a time when you can understand and apply what you learn; split the session if necessary. Suggested durations and numbers of opportunities are adjustable personal arrangements, not a scientifically validated prescription or a religious merit attached to a particular number.

You will find worked examples and questions requiring a decision. Do not copy an example's goal if it is not yours. Apply its way of thinking to an appropriate need. Throughout every stage, protect obligatory duties and people's rights.

Neglecting an obligation or allowing harm to continue is not an experiment for gathering data. Where an individual ruling, health support or protection is needed, seek the appropriate source of help. This programme cannot replace it.

Week One: Turn a need into an action

What you are learning: how to choose a clear need and distinguish an existing duty from the method you use to practise fulfilling it. By the end of the week, aim for a short paragraph describing what you are working on and the first action you took, rather than a long list of everything you hope to become.

Begin with a recent occasion when you were dissatisfied with your performance. Describe the event without broad character labels, then ask who was affected. If you can repair a consequence now, start there. Next, identify a skill behind the event: preparing equipment, checking before sharing news, understanding a request before agreeing, or learning a point of worship that needs clarification.

Worked example: Reem said she ‘forgot everything’, but the actual event was failing to return borrowed learning material. She returned it first, then agreed on a clear return date for the next loan. Her practice goal was to record what she received and establish how to return it, not to prove she was someone who never forgot. She discovered that some delay came from not knowing where to find the owner, so the agreement also covered how the item would be handed back.

During the learning session, write three possible goals and compare them. Which involves a more pressing right? Which lies within your capacity? Which requires knowledge you lack? Do not choose whichever excites you most without asking these questions. Then write one goal specifying an action, a situation and a purpose. If necessary, show it to someone who understands the field and ask whether its meaning is clear without a long explanation.

This week's practice: find the first suitable real opportunity and carry out one step towards the goal. Do not create new commitments to fill a record. Note what you did and any uncertainty that emerged. If no opportunity arises, make preparations or learn what you need, and record that you have not yet tested the action in real life.

A likely mistake is trying to improve every aspect of worship, work and relationships at once. The correction is to continue respecting all rights while choosing one skill to study closely. Focusing your practice does not reduce your obligations or remove responsibility for anything outside the chart.

Decision question: someone wants to prepare better for prayer and writes, 'I will observe one prayer first and leave the others for later weeks.' What needs correction? The practice goal should address a specific means, such as knowing the prayer time or preparing what is needed, while maintaining all obligatory prayers according to their rulings. The programme

has no authority to redistribute duties according to a learner's preferences.

At the end of the week, complete these sentences: 'The need I chose is... The first action I took was... Before expanding the plan, I need to know...' Do not move on merely because the week is over. Move on when you can describe the need and the action without significant ambiguity.

Week Two: Gather enough information to make a decision

What you are learning: how to distinguish an opportunity that occurred, one that did not, and information that was not recorded; and how to define completion clearly. The intended result is a small record that can be understood without extensive explanation.

Review Week One's goal. What will count as complete performance? Write one or two necessary conditions, then test them against examples. A borrowed item has not been returned merely because it has left your home; it must reach its owner. Learning to explain an idea involves more than reproducing a source's words without understanding them. Keep the criterion close to the intended benefit.

Worked example: a learner counted a practice session as complete whenever he opened the lesson. He changed the definition to a short attempt at the skill followed by correction. Across four opportunities, he recorded a completed attempt, an

attempt needing explanation, an opportunity he chose to miss, and an opportunity about which he had no record. He did not flatten all four into ‘success or failure’. He could now see which information indicated learning, which revealed a gap and which was simply missing.

This week’s practice: record a few relevant opportunities in your actual circumstances. Use clear descriptions: ‘met the criterion’, ‘completed with a gap’, ‘did not act’, ‘unknown’, or ‘no opportunity arose’. These are different states. Do not track a minor matter so extensively that recording costs more than it contributes.

Try reading the record two days later without relying on memory. Can you understand why you marked it that way? If not, add a word about the obstacle rather than a full account of your day. If the completion definition changes, record when it changed, and do not compare the two figures as though they measured the same thing.

Worked calculation: seven known opportunities arose. The criterion was met in four, two attempts had deficiencies, and one opportunity was missed. Completion was therefore four out of seven. It does not become four out of four by deleting deficient and missed attempts. If an eighth opportunity has an unknown outcome, report it separately; do not turn it into either zero or success. Honest information matters more than an attractive percentage.

Decision question: completion rose from half of all opportunities to every opportunity, but the second period contained only one. Does this establish lasting improvement? No. It describes a limited result from one opportunity. More suitable opportunities are needed before drawing a broader conclusion. You can learn from it without asking it to prove more than it can.

End the week with one decision informed by the record. If it has changed nothing about your decisions, ask whether you are measuring the right thing. The purpose is not to accumulate numbers; it is to see what helps you perform the task.

Week Three: Prepare the setting and the starting cue

What you are learning: how to remove an obstacle you can change and link the start of an action to a clear situation. The intended result is a simple method you have actually tried, not a new shopping list.

Walk through the task as though you were about to do it now. Identify the first point where you stop: a missing tool, an unclear file, an unknown time or an unanswered question. Choose the obstacle preventing a start and address it using available means, without harm or infringement of rights. Do not reorganise the entire house because one pen has no known place.

Next, write your starting sentence: ‘When... I will...’ Avoid ‘When I feel motivated’, because motivation alone is not a dependable cue. Choose an observable event or a practical scheduled time that suits your circumstances. Make the action small but useful to the outcome, rather than a token movement counted as achievement.

Worked example: Adnan wanted to follow up a document for a family matter. He kept opening the message and leaving it among many others. He linked the starting action to receiving a document request: save it in the agreed place and identify what information needed checking. He did not copy every family detail into a shared location, only what was necessary. The request became easier to find, while verifying the information still required an enquiry to the appropriate organisation.

This week’s practice: test the cue in a real opportunity. Did you notice it? Was the tool available? Was the action clear? If you saw the cue but could not act, ask whether time, capacity or instruction was the problem. A louder alert will not solve an obstacle that is not forgetfulness.

Arrange a permissible alternative for changed circumstances: ‘If the tool is unavailable, I will request it or use a suitable alternative before the obligation is due.’ The alternative cannot be silently cancelling the commitment. Shared rights may require notification or agreement where that is permissible. In worship, follow the correct ruling rather than a personal cue card.

Distinction exercise: which wording is more workable—‘I will become precise in everything I do’, or ‘Before submitting this kind of work, I will check the two stated requirements’? The second is easier to act on, but it does not establish precision in every area. Write a third formulation for your own goal and test it against a busy day, not only an ideal one.

A likely mistake is acquiring many apps and then becoming absorbed in arranging them. First try the simplest method that serves the purpose. If you need another tool, let that need arise from a specific unsolved problem, rather than a desire to feel you are starting afresh.

In your review, complete: ‘The obstacle I removed... The cue I noticed... What still needs clarification...’ Once starting becomes possible, the next week is not about making the start look better. It is about learning a sound performance worth starting for.

Week Four: Learn the performance, then test it

What you are learning: how to distinguish understanding an explanation while it is present from being able to use it. The intended result is an appropriate independent attempt and a clear correction of what went wrong.

Choose a part of the skill that requires instruction. Obtain a sound demonstration from an appropriate source, and watch or read an amount you can try. For religious matters, learn from a trustworthy source. For professional skills involving safety or

authorisation, follow the approved training. Independence is not a justification for a dangerous experiment.

After the explanation, close the model and attempt a related task. Do not deliberately select the hardest example to prove your ability. Then reopen the reference and compare. What was correct? Where did you miss a step? What reason did you not understand? Identify one point to correct, then try again after correcting it. If the uncertainty is extensive, return to the prerequisite rather than repeating at random.

Worked example: Nawal was learning to write a clear administrative message. Copying a good example made her message look competent, but she did not know how to adapt it to a different request. She tried a three-sentence message: the request, the necessary information and the next step. Comparing it with the model revealed that she included many details but omitted what she wanted. She revised the message and tested its clarity with a reader unfamiliar with the background.

This week's practice: make two or more attempts as the skill and your capacity allow, correcting between them. The number organises learning opportunities; it is not a fixed requirement for everyone. If supervision is necessary, do not work independently before the required checks. If the task is simple and safe, do not let a demand for perfection prevent you from trying.

For parents and teachers: demonstrate, let the learner perform part of the task, then try withdrawing one unnecessary form of

help. If an explanation is needed, explain instead of labelling the learner's character. Notice whether the learner is acquiring the skill or learning to wait for you to do it. Equally, do not withhold genuinely necessary support in the name of independence.

Decision question: a learner makes an error after seeing the explanation once. Does that show a lack of seriousness? This alone is insufficient. The learner may need practice, a step clarified or a more suitable example. Seriousness appears in attempts and correction within a person's capacity, not in a first attempt free from every deficiency.

End the week with a sample you can revisit: a completed product, a short explanation or a clear observation from a teacher. It need not be published. Compare it with your starting point and identify what you have learned and what remains. This offers better evidence of learning than the number of minutes spent looking at a screen.

Week Five: Complete something useful through manageable difficulty

What you are learning: how to remain with an appropriate amount of work when boredom or the effort of correction appears, without turning self-harm into training. The intended result is a completed, useful unit meeting a clear standard, alongside an honest account of what helped or hindered you.

Review the test for worthwhile difficulty. Is the action beneficial and permissible? Do you know how to do it? Do you have the means? Would continuing cause harm or neglect a right?

Choose an ordinary, safe situation rather than something extreme to prove your courage. Practising patience concerns doing possible good; it does not mean imposing thirst, hunger, sleep deprivation or humiliation on a learner.⁴³

Define a meaningful unit: review part of a text against a standard, repair a paragraph, or complete a familiar permissible procedure. Before starting, state its benefit in one sentence.

When you want to switch to something easier, return once to the next step and reassess whether you can finish the unit. Do not deny necessary rest or use ‘I will be patient’ to ignore a warning of harm.

Worked example: Hassan stopped reviewing a text whenever he found a third error. He chose one paragraph and clear requirements: understandable meaning, correct names and a complete idea. He corrected the errors, reread the paragraph to

43 Narrated by Abu Sa‘id al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Zakat, chapter on refraining from asking others, hadith 1469. Narrated by Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on asking a brother under oath to break a voluntary fast when that is more suitable for him, without requiring him to make it up, hadith 1968.

check it, and then stopped. He did not endlessly change words that made no difference to the purpose. He learned patience with correction, together with a stopping point that prevented going in circles.

This week's practice: choose a few opportunities appropriate to the task. After each, describe your response to difficulty: 'returned to the next step', 'needed an explanation', 'the unit exceeded the available time', or 'stopped an unsuitable method'. Do not reduce these descriptions to victory and defeat. Some represent a sound decision to adjust.

Decision exercise: if boredom is the obstacle, dividing the unit or recalling its purpose may help. If lack of understanding is the obstacle, patiently repeating the same error is not the first answer. If exhaustion comes from excessive demands, adding another training duty may worsen the problem. Choose a response for each case and explain why they differ.

At the end of the week, ask: can I now complete something useful despite some effort, or am I merely enduring more without a result? The latter calls for review, because prolonged suffering is not the purpose. If you have chosen an area you do not need, reconsider the priority of that optional goal rather than persisting with what does not benefit you.

Week Six: Practise honesty, measured responses and repair

What you are learning: how to distinguish disliking a difficult situation from refusing the right action within it. The intended result is a clear response, an acknowledgement or appropriate repair, not the suppression of every feeling.

Choose a mild situation in which you can practise safely: feedback on work, a request you cannot answer, or a small administrative error needing correction. Do not turn a harmful conflict or traumatic experience into material for role-play. Where protection or specialist help is needed, do not make it a personal challenge.

Write the first response that came to mind, then the necessary information and the right that must be protected. Rephrase your response to distinguish acknowledging a specific mistake from accepting a blanket insult, and saying ‘I do not know’ from evading responsibility. Recall the hadith on guarding one’s speech quoted in full in ‘Learning to Bear the Right Kind of Difficulty’, while still giving any explanation that is required.⁴⁴

Worked example: a colleague told Safaa that a file she had sent was incomplete. Safaa’s first impulse was to mention the colleague’s past mistakes. Instead, she checked the file and

44 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Good Manners, chapter on the believer in Allah and the Last Day not harming his neighbour, hadith 6018.

replied: ‘The second attachment is indeed missing. I have sent it now; please confirm it has arrived.’ If the manner of speaking had been hurtful, she could still address that, but she did not make doing so a condition of correcting the omission.

This week’s practice: choose one real situation in which to use your wording, or first rehearse with someone who agrees to help. Do not seek a quarrel to test yourself. Afterwards ask: did I state the necessary truth? Did I repair what I could? Did I add harm to defend my image? These are questions about actions, not scores for the conscience.

Two short exercises: first, answer a request you cannot fulfil within the proposed time, without a false promise or a hurtful refusal. Second, correct inaccurate information you gave, addressing those who need the correction. In each case, state the next action and the limits of your capacity. Do not write, ‘I will solve everything,’ if you cannot.

Decision question: does an apology remove the other person’s right to ask about repair? No. An apology is an appropriate beginning, but the right may still require an action or procedure. Equally, an error does not justify humiliating the person who made it or demanding unrelated disclosures. Undertake appropriate repair and seek knowledge or help if the situation becomes complex.

End the week with an occasion when you learned that seriousness may take the form of an honest sentence that is difficult to say, rather than extra hours of work. Keep it private

unless there is a reason to share it. Then look for a way to reduce recurrence, not merely to improve the apology.

Week Seven: Try the skill in a related setting

What you are learning: how to apply an understood principle to another situation while recognising the differences. The intended result is one described attempt at transfer, not an announcement that discipline now governs your entire life.

Review a skill that has become somewhat established. State its principle: ‘I clarify what is required’, ‘I check the result before handing it over’, or ‘When asking for help, I explain where I got stuck’. Choose a related situation differing in one respect. Do not move from an easy individual task to a sensitive group situation and expect the same result immediately.

Worked example: Rami learned to check written instructions before acting. Trying the principle with a spoken request showed him that he needed to restate what he had heard to confirm it. He did not transfer the checklist word for word; he transferred the purpose of checking and added what a spoken exchange required. On the first attempt, he forgot the deadline, so he began asking about both the intended result and its due date.

This week’s practice: try the related situation and record what stayed the same and what needed to change. Needing additional support does not cancel your earlier learning. Revisit ‘Sustaining Progress and Transferring Learning’ if you need

help distinguishing the settings. Understanding and context are part of learning to transfer a skill.⁴⁵

Examine the differences: compare delaying a non-urgent answer until you have checked it with delaying a warning about an obvious danger. Both involve thinking before speaking, but one allows time while the other may require immediate communication. Find an example from your own skill where literal transfer would be wrong. This guards against turning a useful principle into a rigid slogan.

In worship, you may reflect on trustworthiness or honesty and then identify an action in your dealings with others, but an experiment's result does not measure the acceptance of worship. Nor can success in an administrative exercise establish a religious ruling. What comes from revelation retains its source; the methods we design remain open to revision.

Decision question: you succeeded at work but not at home. Must you relearn the skill from the beginning? Not always. Home may require a different agreement, or the difficulty may concern the division of responsibilities or how people speak to one another. Examine the difference instead of generalising either success or failure.

45 National Research Council, *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School: Expanded Edition* (2000), chapter 3, 'Learning and Transfer', pp. 51–78, especially pp. 62–63 and 77–78.

End the week with: ‘I could use the skill in... The following difference still needs practice...’ If the shared principle is unclear, return to understanding it before widening the application. Informed expansion may sometimes be slower, but it is less likely to mislead you.

Week Eight: Make support clear and respectful

What you are learning: how to request or offer specific assistance without taking over someone’s decisions or privacy. The intended result is a small agreement specifying the support, its limits and when to review it.

Decide whether you need a teacher, a practice partner, coordination with your family or a supervisor’s decision. Do not ask one person to fill every role. State the question or help you need: a step explained, one reminder, feedback on a result or access to a tool. Ask whether the other person can provide it. Their affection for you does not mean they are always available.

Worked example: a mother wanted to help her child organise materials for an activity. She asked the teacher to explain the steps, rather than requesting a daily report on the child’s ‘disciplined character’. They agreed on a specific skill and shared only the necessary information. As the child improved, they reduced reminders rather than increasing surveillance because the child had become responsive.

For an adult, the agreement might involve showing a friend one completed result and asking a clear question at a mutually

suitable time. The friend need not know about private worship or family mistakes. You may also choose private review without a partner. Sharing a record is not a condition of sincere effort.

This week's practice: make a specific request for help and then assess whether it met your need. If the other person ends up doing the whole task, ask whether your capacity makes that necessary or whether it prevents learning. Where ongoing assistance is genuinely needed, respect it. Do not invent absolute independence as a goal.

A support agreement might say: we are working on one skill; I share only necessary information; this is the help being offered; decisions remain with the appropriate person; we review the arrangement when needed; we can change it without humiliation or threats. Put this in your own words, not in a complicated contract that damages the relationship.

Decision question: a supporter says, 'I will help only if you post every setback in the group.' Should you automatically agree because sharing might motivate you? No. Consider need, privacy, consent and consequences. General findings about monitoring do not justify disclosing what should remain private or humiliating a learner.⁴⁶

46 Benjamin Harkin and colleagues, 'Does Monitoring Goal Progress Promote Goal Attainment? A Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence', *Psychological Bulletin* 142(2), 198–229 (2016).

At the end of the week, ask the other person one question: ‘Is the agreed help clear and manageable?’ The best adjustment may be to ask for less, seek someone better suited to the area, or use a tool instead of requiring constant human reminders. Good support builds capacity while protecting the relationship.

Week Nine: Prepare for a changed day without manufacturing a crisis

What you are learning: how to distinguish a purpose that remains from a method that can change. The intended result is a reasonable alternative plan for a plausible situation, with any safely testable part tried in practice.

Choose a likely change: visitors, travel, shift work, equipment failure or added responsibility. Do not manufacture deprivation, sleeplessness or conflict to test yourself. Identify which part of your plan depends on circumstances that may change, then look for an alternative that respects both rights and capacity.

Worked example: a learner depended on a computer to review a short text. When the device was unavailable, practice stopped completely, although part could be done using suitably stored, non-sensitive notes. He prepared a related alternative exercise. He did not claim to have performed exactly the original task; he recorded that the learning method had changed and that some aspects still required the computer later.

This week’s practice: try the alternative safely and assess whether it genuinely serves the purpose. Sometimes an

alternative resembles the task in name alone. Where an obligation requires particular equipment or an approved procedure, do not assume your personal substitute is equivalent without checking. Raise the constraint with someone authorised to address it or ask about the correct course.

Family exercise: choose a shared task its assigned person might be unable to perform. Who needs to know? Who can approve an alternative? What information is necessary? Do not assume the nearest person will automatically take over. Establish an early notification method and check that the message is understood without waiting for the difficulty to occur.

Worship exercise: identify a matter you need to learn before travelling or experiencing a change in capacity. Write the question you will ask qualified scholars. Do not select a religious concession from a training sheet or make postponed learning a permanent feature of the plan. Preparation may mean learning the ruling before you need it, rather than inventing a convenient arrangement and looking for someone to approve it.

Decision question: if circumstances change for a day, must the whole goal change? No. Adjusting the method may suffice. If the change reveals that a permissible goal is no longer suitable, or that the burden is lasting, a wider review may be needed. Do not preserve the old form at the expense of benefit or discard everything because of a limited change.

End the week with three lines: ‘What I will preserve... What I will adjust... Whom I will inform or ask for help...’ Keep them

accessible, then leave them alone. Do not live in an endless rehearsal of crises. Planning should reduce confusion when change occurs, not increase anxiety before it does.

Week Ten: Read the results without embellishment or harshness

What you are learning: how to turn gathered information into a limited, honest decision. The intended result is a review explaining what improved and what remains uncertain, without turning a personal trial into general proof.

Gather your starting description, completion standard and opportunity records. Did the definition stay the same? Did task difficulty, the number of opportunities or the level of support change? Note these differences before comparing. One percentage cannot represent every change in circumstances.

Worked example: performance met the criterion in three of six opportunities before the method changed and five of seven afterwards. You may say that completion was more frequent in the later recorded opportunities. You cannot establish that the adjustment alone caused this. The opportunities may have been easier, experience may have increased, or support may have changed. A practical decision may be to continue using the method and observe further, rather than announce a universal law.

Also consider quality and rights. Did the result improve because you omitted a necessary requirement? Did your work improve

because someone else took on an unagreed share? Did errors fall while recording become excessively demanding? These questions prevent merely apparent success.

This week's practice: choose an earlier and a later sample and, where possible, compare them against the same standard. In learning, these may be two answers or products; in shared work, two handovers; in preparation, occasions when you arrived ready and points where something was still missing. Do not select only examples that confirm what you want to believe.

Missing-information exercise: you discover three opportunities were not recorded. Describe what you know about the others and acknowledge that the picture is incomplete. Do not fill the gaps with optimistic memory or pessimistic estimates. You can improve future recording to reduce omissions, but you cannot create past data you never collected.

Decision question: someone reports less fatigue while output and quality remain unchanged. Is this improvement? It may be, provided the burden has not quietly shifted to another person and no right has been neglected. Improvement is not only greater quantity; it may mean achieving benefit at a cost more suited to your capacity and life.

End the week with one of four decisions: continue the method, adjust one element, seek help, or leave an optional goal that no longer fits. An obligatory duty still needs to be fulfilled properly. Abandoning it is not an option under the heading of cancelling a personal experiment.

Week Eleven: Reduce what is no longer needed

What you are learning: how to make continuation workable in daily life, rather than dependent on intensive supervision you cannot sustain. The intended result is a simpler method that protects quality and rights, or an honest recognition that support is still necessary.

Review your reminders, charts and support. Which serve a necessary purpose? Which were added but are no longer needed? Choose one unnecessary element to reduce, not all of them. Do not independently remove a safety procedure or official record requirement. Personal simplification does not cancel an approved requirement.

Worked example: a teacher reminded learners of three steps whenever they submitted an activity. Once they had learned them, she kept the standard visible and asked learners to check their own work, offering help when needed. She did not reduce instruction for those still struggling merely because others had progressed, or treat a question about a step as a character flaw.

Individually, you might move from logging every opportunity to reviewing after a meaningful change or at a suitable interval, provided performance is stable and the information remains sufficient. If consequential forgetting emerges, restore the necessary reminders and investigate why. A successful plan does not require you to need no tools afterwards.

This week's practice: try the lighter arrangement during a few suitable opportunities. Does the action still occur? Is quality

maintained? Do others working with you know what changed? Was the removed support genuinely unnecessary, or did you simply wish to do without it? Testing independence must not neglect the rights of someone who never agreed to become part of an experiment.

Closing exercise: design a personal card containing only what you need: what is the action, what cues its start, what counts as completion, and when should I seek help? If the task inherently requires extensive detail, retain it in the appropriate procedure instead of squeezing it into an ambiguous card. Simplicity does not mean deleting necessary information.

Decision question: you succeed with an aid but not without it. Does this make the learning unreal? No. The aid may be an appropriate part of performance. Understand its role and use it responsibly rather than concealing your need to resemble an idealised image.

End the week with one of two honest statements: ‘I removed this amount of support without an apparent decline in the opportunities observed’, or ‘This support remains helpful, and I will keep it.’ Either gives you something sound to build on.

Week Twelve: Carry the plan into everyday life

What you are learning: how to leave the programme with a clear way to continue, rather than a closed file and the feeling that personal formation is finished. The intended result is a concluding review and a next step you can live with.

Return to the original need. Is it still the priority? What skill have you learned? Which right has become clearer to fulfil? What has not changed as you hoped? Give an example for each answer instead of relying on a general impression created by approaching the programme's end.

Worked example: Rana began by learning to track something she borrowed. She discovered that the deeper skill was clarifying an agreement before accepting an item or task. That question became familiar in some situations but remained difficult in hurried conversation. She did not write, 'I am now disciplined in every part of life.' She wrote, 'I clarify requirements better when I slow down; I need practice asking a short question during a quick conversation.' This identified her next direction.

This week's practice: perform a task representing your skill under suitable conditions, without adding artificial challenges. Review the result against the standard. If you need your usual support, use and record it. Do not create a heroic final test unlike your everyday life. The aim is to discover what you can actually maintain.

Write a personal report of one page or less: the starting point, what you tried, what you learned, the limits of your knowledge and the next step. Keep it private unless sharing is necessary. In family or professional work, share only what those concerned need, not every feeling or other people's details.

Your leaving card:

What I will keep	What I will change or leave
A helpful method with little burden	Recording that changes no decision
A clear quality standard	A broad goal that cannot be observed
Appropriate support	Unnecessary dependence that can be reduced
A review when needed	A promise of perfection beyond my power

Decision question: Week Twelve has ended, and the skill still needs practice. Has the whole programme failed? Not necessarily. The duration is a suggested arrangement, not a guarantee. Assess what you learned and what remains, and reconsider the suitability of the methods. A teacher or another kind of assistance may be needed. Do not reject an honest result because it does not resemble a quick advertisement for transformation.

Conclude with supplication and seeking Allah’s help, then identify one action you will retain after the worksheets end. The purpose is sound action in life, not simply finishing a guide. What you learn of patience, striving and consistency continues to require renewed intention, fulfilment of rights and return after mistakes, rather than a certificate you award yourself.

A practical review: twelve situations requiring a decision

Read each situation and write your decision before looking at the suggested discussion. Your wording need not match it. What matters is recognising the relevant right, the person's capacity and the missing information, then choosing a possible action. These situations do not score your character or replace specialist assessment. They reveal your understanding of skills that can be learned and corrected.

A facilitator may use one situation per meeting and ask the learner to explain the decision rather than select a memorised answer. When answers differ, explore differences in understanding the facts or the criterion. Do not assume that every disagreement with your answer demonstrates poor discipline.

Situation One: a task that succeeds on paper

A team member marks 'done' when sending a file, although the task requires a usable copy to reach a colleague. All four files were sent, but two could not be opened by the recipient. The sender reports full completion and says that opening the files is solely the recipient's responsibility.

Your task: identify what is missing from the completion definition. Propose a correction without requiring the employee to control everyone else's devices. Explain how to retain the earlier records without inventing data for them.

Suggested discussion: sending is one part of the task. Delivery may require an agreed format and appropriate confirmation of receipt and usability. The employee cannot guarantee every circumstance but can specify the format, check through the approved method and address problems within their responsibility. Keep the earlier record as a record of sending and introduce a clearer delivery standard. Do not retrospectively classify every occasion as success or failure without information.

Further application: identify something in your own life where initiating an effect differs from its arrival, such as communicating an appointment or returning something entrusted to you. Name a verification step that stays within your authority and gathers no unnecessary information.

Situation Two: different numbers of opportunities

Someone practises checking requests before submission. In the first period, ten opportunities arise and eight meet the criterion. In the second, both of two opportunities meet it. The person announces complete, stable performance and says no further review is needed.

Your task: describe the result accurately, then choose a practical response that is neither excessively cautious nor overconfident.

Suggested discussion: the criterion was met in both later opportunities. That is a correct, limited description. A small number of opportunities does not establish general stability or

rule out different levels of difficulty. The person may continue using the method and gradually reduce unnecessary recording while retaining appropriate review, rather than declare checking permanently unnecessary. Complex statistics are not needed to understand that two opportunities do not represent every circumstance.

Further application: change the situation so that the second period is more difficult but produces the same result. What should your description add? Report the difference you know about, while remaining cautious about attributing the result to one untested cause.

Situation Three: missing information is not zero

A learner loses a week's record. She remembers completing some tasks but not how many. She wants either to mark every entry successful because she was 'usually consistent', or to mark every entry unsuccessful so she does not flatter herself.

Your task: choose a way to remain honest and continue learning without repeating the week or punishing yourself.

Suggested discussion: record that the period's information is incomplete, retain only what can be verified and resume simpler or more secure recording. Unknown does not mean either success or failure. Existing evidence, such as a saved product or confirmed handover, may help, provided the source of the information is stated. There is no need to repeat completed tasks

to restore the chart's appearance or invent a replacement week that erases the gap.

Further application: identify the minimum information you need to retain to prevent this happening again, without doubling the recordkeeping or placing private data in an unnecessary service.

Situation Four: when the incentive overtakes the purpose

In a learning activity, an educator awards a mark for every day without questions. Questions decline, and the educator welcomes this as independence. It later emerges that some learners conceal uncertainty and exchange answers they do not understand to avoid losing the mark.

Your task: explain the measure's flaw and design follow-up that encourages understanding without rewarding questions merely for their quantity.

Suggested discussion: fewer questions alone do not demonstrate independence; they may reflect fear or hidden confusion.

Observe whether learners can begin an appropriate task, identify where they need help and apply an explanation in a new attempt. Neither automatically reward every question nor penalise the need to learn. The educator demonstrates a clear question, makes clarification safe to request and examines subsequent performance.

Further application: write two pieces of feedback—one for a learner who asks before reading the instructions, and another for

someone who tried but became stuck at a step. Do not use the same sentence for both. One needs to learn how to start independently; the other needs an answer about a specific point.

Situation Five: a missing resource, not missing willpower

An employee is asked to complete a task requiring system access they do not have. While awaiting approval, the supervisor criticises a lack of initiative. The employee considers using a colleague's account to make the task appear complete.

Your task: identify what the employee can do now, what requires someone else's decision, and what pressure to deliver cannot justify.

Suggested discussion: the employee can document the need, inform the supervisor, follow the authorised process and perhaps prepare work that requires no additional access. They cannot bypass access controls or use another person's identity without valid authorisation merely to improve a score. The supervisor must address the resource and decision rather than turning every constraint into a personal defect. Discipline includes honesty in the means as well as completing the task.

Further application: write a brief message explaining the obstacle, its effect and the proposed next step, without threats, sweeping accusations or promising a deadline beyond your control.

Situation Six: success whose burden shifted to the family

Someone increases time spent on personal training and completes more work. Meanwhile, his wife or sister automatically takes over tasks he had agreed to do, without any new agreement. He describes himself as successful in discipline and dismisses family objections as resistance to development.

Your task: add what the numbers conceal to the evaluation. Propose a corrective step that respects rights without treating the example as sufficient to judge every family detail.

Suggested discussion: increased output did not arise from nowhere; some burden moved to another person. A fair discussion is needed about the previous agreement and what changed, followed by necessary repair and reconsideration of the optional goal's size. This example cannot settle every religious duty among family members, but it shows that a personal programme does not cancel a right or valid agreement. The answer may be reducing or reorganising practice rather than abandoning all learning.

Further application: name hidden work within a shared task, such as remembering, coordinating or checking arrival. Explain how to acknowledge it before allocating roles.

Situation Seven: understanding that did not transfer

A group learns to check written instructions. Omissions recur in a new spoken task. The facilitator decides to repeat the written lesson word for word, assuming learners did not memorise it well enough.

Your task: identify the difference between the settings and design a short learning attempt that examines it.

Suggested discussion: a spoken request may provide no text to revisit. The learner may need to restate the requirement and confirm the deadline. Offer an appropriate spoken example and ask the learner to explain what was understood before acting. Then try a related but different case. Some learners may also need the first lesson reviewed, but repeating it alone will not necessarily address the contextual difference.

Further application: write a shared principle and one detail that does not transfer between the situations. Do not merely say, ‘We apply what we learned’; explain what stays and what changes.

Situation Eight: a personal method treated as a religious rule

A participant chooses an amount of reading at a convenient time, then tells the group that this number and time are conditions of a sound Islamic approach to discipline. Someone

who cannot keep the same time feels distressed and interprets the difference as a deficiency in religion.

Your task: distinguish the religious foundation from the organisational choice. Respond without dismissing the benefit of a personal reading routine or attributing it to revelation without evidence.

Suggested discussion: reading may be organised in an appropriate amount and at a suitable time, but a personal choice does not become a particular Sunnah or a condition of people's righteousness. A time or number established by a religious text is followed in its proper context. A chosen method remains adjustable according to capacity and rights. The facilitator explains this distinction and allows alternatives, rather than turning the group into a source of religious legislation. Maintaining obligatory duties remains beyond negotiation within the training.

Further application: give an example of a helpful method that every learner need not use, then explain why it can be adjusted.

Situation Nine: testing capacity through a harmful method

A participant wants to prove his patience by deliberately reducing sleep and extending work to exhaustion. He claims that abandoning rest will reveal his seriousness and that anyone who objects does not understand striving against the self.

Your task: stop the faulty training design and propose an alternative that practises patience with useful work without making medical claims.

Suggested discussion: manufactured difficulty does not become virtuous merely because it is severe. Protect the rights of the self and all other rights. Choose an appropriate, useful unit of familiar work and practise completing it through manageable effort without harm. If sleep problems or concerning fatigue are present, professional help is more appropriate than an experiment in deprivation. This guide does not prescribe a medical sleep requirement or treat exhaustion as a target.⁴⁷

Further application: distinguish boredom during a safe review task from pain or severe distress requiring a pause or assistance. Do not treat both as one condition answered by the slogan ‘Be patient’.

Situation Ten: repairing the measure instead of the consequences

A team gives inaccurate information that affects a service user. Members start discussing changes to the reporting standard so the error will not count as a poor result, while the corrected information has still not reached the person affected.

47 Narrated by Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on asking a brother under oath to break a voluntary fast when that is more suitable for him, without requiring him to make it up, hadith 1968.

Your task: order the first two actions, then explain where reviewing the measure belongs.

Suggested discussion: begin by stopping the error's consequences and communicating the correction appropriately. Then document the event and the responsibilities involved. Afterwards, examine the cause and standard to improve the service, not erase the error from view. The measure itself may be deficient, but correcting it does not permit rewriting the past or leaving an affected person waiting. Fulfilling a right comes before a good-looking report.

Further application: describe the error briefly without minimising or exaggerating it. Then propose a step to reduce recurrence without promising that error will become impossible.

Situation Eleven: the programme ends before the skill is established

Twelve weeks have ended, but a learner still needs assistance with part of a skill. The learner wants either to declare completion because the programme's time is up, or to call everything a failure because complete independence has not been reached.

Your task: formulate a third conclusion and a limited follow-up plan.

Suggested discussion: describe what the learner can do independently, what can be done with support and what is not yet learned. Keep useful assistance, choose the next part to

teach and arrange a review after suitable opportunities. The programme's duration is neither a guarantee nor a moral standard. Lasting support may suit the task or the person's capacity; removing it is not a condition for acknowledging progress.

Further application: write a descriptive skill statement in no more than two lines, such as 'Performs these steps with this review', without words claiming to measure character or religion.

Situation Twelve: not every duty is an optional goal

Someone chooses one personal improvement goal, then uses that focus to postpone other rights they can fulfil. They claim to be following the principle of starting with one thing to avoid distraction.

Your task: show where focus is useful and where it is being misused. Rewrite the plan so it preserves the intended purpose.

Suggested discussion: choosing one skill for practice does not cancel other obligations and rights. Focus on a method or an area needing instruction while continuing to fulfil other duties.

Optional goals may be reduced or postponed; rights must be ordered according to sound knowledge and the circumstances, not the programme's preferences. If rulings or commitments conflict in ways the person does not understand, they should ask

someone qualified rather than turn focus into a universal religious ruling.

Further application: write one practice goal that does not make abandoning other duties part of the experiment. Identify two rights the plan must continue to protect.

How should you review your answers?

Instead of adding up character points, look for five reasoning actions: did you describe the event without generalising?

Identify the right or purpose? Notice capacity and authority?

Acknowledge missing information? Propose an action that can be taken? You may be strong in some and need instruction in others.

Choose two situations where your answers were weaker and reconsider them after revisiting the relevant chapter. Write a new situation of the same kind using hypothetical names and events, then try to resolve it. Explaining the difference between two cases shows more understanding than memorising the previous discussion. Do not attribute the validity of a standardised scientific test to this review. It is a learning tool for identifying what you need to practise.

Working with a small group

A shared session can benefit learners provided the group does not become a means of monitoring private life. Everyone learns the general skill; each chooses an appropriate application without being required to disclose its details. Use hypothetical

examples or materials whose owners have agreed to share them. Do not turn a participant's setback into a teaching story without their consent.

At the start of a meeting, the facilitator identifies one skill, demonstrates it, allows time to try it and closes with a decision about applying it. Do not fill the session with motivational talk and then expect learners to work out the method alone. If most participants do not understand, review the explanation, materials and time rather than accuse the group of lacking seriousness.

A facilitator's role is not to issue religious rulings for individual cases or diagnose psychological difficulties. The facilitator can help formulate a question, identify an appropriate source of help and respect the limits of their own knowledge. If someone faces harm or severe pressure, merely sending them back to the practice chart is insufficient; direct them towards help suited to the situation.

Do not issue a 'discipline' certificate representing a person's worth or righteousness. If participation needs to be documented, describe attendance or completion of particular activities only. If assessing a skill, state the task, the criterion and the limits of observation. An unvalidated programme has no right to reduce a person's character to a final score.

A brief map of the weeks

Stage	Focus	What you retain
Weeks One and Two	Choose the need and define performance	A specific goal and an honest starting record
Weeks Three and Four	Preparation and instruction	A tested method and a corrected performance sample
Weeks Five and Six	Practising patience and honesty	A useful completed unit and appropriate repair
Weeks Seven and Eight	Transfer and support	An attempt in a new setting and a limited support agreement
Weeks Nine and Ten	Changed circumstances and interpreting results	A reasonable alternative and an informed decision
Weeks Eleven and Twelve	Lighter monitoring and continuation	A personal plan that fits everyday life

This map shows how the parts connect without erasing differences in pace or need. You may return to instruction in Week Nine, reduce tracking earlier for a simple skill, or repeat a part after circumstances change. What matters is understanding the reason for your decision and keeping rights, capacity and purpose in view, rather than moving through boxes merely because the date has advanced.

Chapter Eleven: Continuing after the Programme

Perhaps the greatest danger at the end of a useful programme is imagining that something has finished within us simply because the pages have ended. You have learned tools, tried actions and seen some strengths and difficulties. Yet life will change, new rights will claim your attention, and you may need to return or learn differently. What lasts is not the notebook's form, but your ability to recognise a right, seek Allah's help, act and review without arrogance or despair.

Continuing does not mean living inside the programme forever. It means keeping what genuinely helps, leaving what is no longer needed and knowing when to review. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

«سددوا وقاربوا، واعلموا أن لن يدخل أحدكم عمله الجنة، وأن أحب الأعمال أدومها إلى الله، وإن قل»

Translation of meaning: 'Aim for what is right and come as close as you can. Know that none of you will enter Paradise by his deeds, and that the deeds most beloved to Allah are those maintained most consistently, even if they are few.'⁴⁸

48 Narrated by 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers, may Allah be pleased with her. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Softening the Hearts, chapter on moderation and consistency in deeds, hadith 6464.

Choose work you can sustain while aiming to do it rightly, and protect the rights you owe. Continuing a training exercise must not become an excuse for neglecting a greater duty.

Make a lighter version of your system

Gather the tools you used during practice and divide them into three groups: what directly supports performance, what you need during a setback, and what no longer helps. Keep the first close, store the second where you can retrieve it and leave the third. A large pile of papers is not evidence of seriousness.

Your lighter arrangement might be one consistent action when receiving a task, a short checklist for a repeated procedure, an appropriate weekly review or a question before agreeing. You do not have to carry every tool in this volume with you. Mature use of a method means knowing what is enough, not using everything you know.

Write your personal card: ‘The right I want to protect is... The method I will use is... This condition will show the quality of performance... I will review when this change occurs...’ If the card becomes too long to read, ask which parts are necessary in the daily moment and which need only remain available for reference.

Do not value an unbroken streak more than the work

Noticing consistent action may help, but the number of consecutive days must not outrank the purpose. Lying in the

record to preserve a streak undermines discipline itself. Harmfully punishing yourself for one difficult day leaves the path the practice was meant to serve. Abandoning all work because a streak ended gives the marker more power than the good action.

When an opportunity is missed, record what happened if that information is useful, put right what needs repair and return at an appropriate opportunity. In worship, the rules for missed duties and making them up come from the relevant religious knowledge, not from a game or app. A permissible practice routine may be rearranged according to capacity and purpose without treating all earlier progress as erased.

If tracking days encourages anxiety, excess or embellished reporting, replace it with lighter monitoring more closely connected to the result. This alone is not grounds for self-diagnosis. Seek help if disabling distress persists or another problem requires assistance. Measurement should serve the person and the work, not consume them.

A time for review, not a trial of your character

You may choose a review interval suited to your skill or connect review to a significant change. This guide prescribes no universal number of days. After an appropriate period, ask: does the need remain? Is the method useful? Have capacity or rights changed? What small action might prevent a larger problem?

Alongside periodic review, review after events such as moving, changing work, illness, family responsibilities or a new person joining the task. These can alter cues and resources, making adjustments necessary. Do not wait for complete breakdown before acknowledging that life has changed.

An example after a job change: your former study time is no longer suitable. Instead of announcing the end of learning, identify what is still possible, what must be reduced and what it must not displace. If circumstances leave no room for an optional goal, postpone it through a clear decision without confusing that with abandoning a duty. Life is not obliged to accommodate every goal you once began.

Broaden your practice without multiplying struggles

Once performance becomes established in one area, you may select another with a real need. Ask what you have learned that could help here and what differences require new instruction. Do not announce that you are ‘a disciplined person’ and expect to succeed everywhere without practice.

Someone who has learned to clarify agreements at work may benefit from that when coordinating family matters, but needs the language of relationship rather than commands. Patience in study may require different training before it helps someone restrain anger. An organisational habit cannot yield a ruling about worship. Each area has its rights and sources of knowledge.

Choose one addition and observe its effect on what was already established. If it burdens you or others, reduce it or reorder priorities. Expansion is not always progress. Some people need to consolidate what they do; others need to leave many activities so they can perform necessary ones well. The criteria are permissible benefit, capacity and rights, not a crowded image of success.

Share what you learned honestly

When a method helps, you may want to recommend it. Say, ‘This helped me in this situation,’ rather than, ‘This changes the life of everyone who uses it.’ Explain the support it required and its limitations, and let the other person choose what fits. Difference from your approach does not prove a lack of seriousness.

If you teach a skill, demonstrate it and allow practice and correction rather than merely telling your success story. A mistake in designing your plan, followed by its correction, may be especially useful to share, provided you do not expose what should remain concealed, violate privacy or claim an experience you never had. Hypothetical stories can teach when identified as such. Advice does not need a fabricated biography to be effective.

Do not turn a helpful method into a religious or social obligation for those who have not undertaken it. Remembrances specified by revelation remain governed by their texts. Personally chosen amounts do not become Sunnah because they

are popular among participants. At work, respect decision-making authority; in the family, rely on dialogue and rights rather than imposing your model.

Remember that work is wider than the notebook records

A day may contain good that never entered the plan: patience with someone ill, an honest answer, protecting confidential information, or stepping back from a wrong you had the power to commit. Do not see only what is easily counted. Equally, broad meanings must not excuse neglecting a clear action you can fulfil.

Part of discipline is accepting that some good needs no announcement and that some effects remain unknown to you. You can practise outward actions and review shortcomings, but acceptance of deeds, sincerity and what lies within hearts are not in a chart's hands. Renew your intention, seek Allah's help and preserve the meaning of worship that performance indicators cannot encompass.⁴⁹

When appropriate, ask someone who benefits from your work a specific question: did the right reach you? Was the answer clear? Was the burden reduced? Do not ask for a certificate of

49 Narrated by 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Beginning of Revelation, chapter on how revelation began for the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, hadith 1.

righteousness. Their observation may hurt and still be useful. Listen to descriptions of actions and distinguish them from injurious judgements you need not accept.

A return plan that preserves dignity

Keep a short plan for the next interruption, because finishing the book does not end the possibility of setbacks. Begin by stopping any harm, then describe the event, examine capacity, knowledge and circumstances, choose an adjustment and return to a useful action. Each occasion does not require a long speech about disappointment.

Identify someone you can ask about the skill, the ruling or support, without obliging them to monitor you. Depending on the need, this may be a qualified service rather than a friend. Decide what to do if help is not immediately available: protect safety and rights as far as you can, avoid decisions whose consequences you do not understand, and seek an appropriate route.

Returning does not mean overlooking repeated wrongdoing. If your setbacks affect others' rights, repair requires seriousness beyond feeling regret. Stop what you can stop, restore what must be restored through the correct means, and seek

knowledge where matters are unclear. Do not use kindness to yourself as a cover for letting others pay the price.⁵⁰

After the programme: three adaptable reviews

You may benefit from review after about a month, after another interval, and when life settles or changes. These are suggested organisational arrangements, not times with a special religious virtue or proven optimal intervals for every learner. Bring them closer together or space them further apart according to how often the skill is used, the consequences of error and the support you need. An urgent right must never wait for a review date.

Follow-up asks whether the action remains after attention to the programme fades. Do not return to every introductory sheet or require yourself to prove all your learning again. Choose a suitable sample, examine quality, rights and effort, then make a limited decision.

First review: what remained when enthusiasm faded?

Choose three recent opportunities with known outcomes, or another number appropriate to your task. Do not select only the best ones. Ask whether the action remains possible with the lighter method, whether you know how to begin and whether

50 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Wrongs, chapter on seeking release from a wrong and whether it should be explained, hadith 2449.

results need repeated repair. Then consider the burden of monitoring: is the work calmer, or does guarding many details still demand considerable effort?

Hypothetical example: a learner completes a programme on checking educational materials before sending them. Later, the information remains accurate, but attachments are again overlooked when sending from a phone rather than a computer. The whole programme need not be repeated. The checking standard needs to be applied to a different sending tool and tried in relevant opportunities.

Record the review in three lines: what remained, what changed and what you will adjust. If the task is going well with little burden, do not add an improvement merely because a review seems to require a new decision. Continuing unchanged may be right. If a consequential omission appears, 'I will pay more attention' is insufficient; identify where it occurs and the method that may help correct it.

In worship, review the rulings you learned and the preparations you used, not whether your worship was accepted. You may need to relearn a matter, correct a timing method or reorganise permissible commitments. A month passing is not an appointment to measure your heart. Do not introduce a particular devotional practice simply because the plan contains a box for it.

Second review: is the plan still fair to those around you?

A method may work initially and later impose a different cost on family or colleagues. Ask affected people about a specific aspect, not for an assessment of your character: ‘Are my handovers clearer?’ ‘Does this division of work still fit?’ ‘What do you have to redo because I left it incomplete?’ Allow room for an answer that differs from your own picture of improvement.

Hypothetical example: a teacher organises preparation time, then over-refines presentation details until preparation again displaces family rights and rest. The plan improved lesson clarity, but its scale has become unsuitable. The teacher distinguishes what learners need from additions made for personal satisfaction, retains necessary quality and leaves some inconsequential embellishment.

Others’ comments alone should not determine everything you do; expectations may differ or exceed their rights. Yet do not automatically dismiss them because they disturb your sense of success. Bring together facts, rights and capacity, and seek appropriate advice when unsure. Fair review does not mean satisfying everyone’s wishes. It means recognising what is required, what is possible and what needs agreement.

Write one adjustment that preserves benefit while reducing an unnecessary burden. If it affects another person’s work, discuss it before acting. If it needs a higher-level workplace decision,

present it to the authorised person instead of quietly creating a private system. Do not interpret a legitimate objection as proof that people oppose your discipline.

Third review: what deserves to enter the next stage?

After an appropriate period of continuation, revisit the skill's meaning. Have you learned only a narrow procedure, or understood a principle you can apply in a related setting? Describe one new situation and name the difference requiring learning. Finishing one goal is not a reason to begin ten.

Hypothetical example: a woman learns to clarify a question before seeking help with study. She wants to apply this to an administrative enquiry. Both require clear facts and a clear account of what is unknown, but the relevant authority and source of the answer differ. She prepares the necessary documents, formulates the question and removes private information the official does not need. She does not treat academic knowledge as expertise in every procedure.

Choose among three decisions: continue the same skill with lighter review; try transferring it to a related setting; or leave an optional goal whose purpose has ended and learn something more useful. The third is not failure when it arises from understanding rather than repeatedly fleeing the first difficulty. Obligations and rights retain their rulings and are not optional development goals to discard.

Describe the next stage as you described the first: situation, action, purpose and limits. You will probably need less detail because you have learned how to choose. Still, do not skip questions of rights and capacity. Experience does not exempt you from checking; it helps you check more usefully and with less effort.

A worked example of follow-up after training

This teaching example concerns someone who learned to organise team handovers. It does not report the results of an actual programme:

Review point	What appeared	Decision
After a short interval	Handovers remained clear, but a different tool exposed an omission	Apply the standard in the new tool
After a further interval	Questions decreased, but unnecessary documentation took more time	Remove details the recipient does not need
When the role changed	The person began supervising others instead of only performing the task	Learn to explain the standard and give fair feedback

The decision changes because the need changes. More alerts or more work are not always the answer. Moving into supervision brings a new responsibility: do not judge others against an

unexplained standard or demand an exact copy of your method where other sound methods exist.

Adapt the example to your circumstances using minimal information: an event or period, an observation and a decision. Do not force three completed rows before reviews have happened. The future is recorded as a plan, not a result. Honesty includes distinguishing intended actions from completed ones.

Handing follow-up from the facilitator to the learner

If you worked with a facilitator or teacher, agree on the limits of support after the programme. What can you review alone? What needs a question? When should you meet again? Necessary support does not end merely because a course ends, and beginning with training does not entitle a facilitator to continuing control over someone's life.

During the handover session, the learner performs a suitable task, explains the steps and identifies where help will be sought. The facilitator observes and gives specific corrections. Any remaining gap should be named with a way to teach it, rather than labelled 'incomplete discipline'. Where the skill is established, acknowledge that without promising it will never falter under future circumstances.

For a child, handover does not mean withdrawing supervision suited to age and need. Some responsibility moves to the child while the educator continues teaching, protecting and setting an

example. For someone who needs an assistive tool, the programme's end is not a date for withdrawing it. At work, approved procedures and authority remain in place even as the worker gains experience.

What should happen to the records?

Keep what helps you understand the skill and the next decision. Safely delete or dispose of material no longer needed. You do not need a permanent archive of every personal setback. Records governed by professional requirements or people's rights have their own retention rules; do not remove them without authority in the name of lighter monitoring.

One page may be enough: what you learned, the helpful method, the recurring obstacle, the return plan and whom to ask when necessary. Keep it separate from papers containing other people's data. When sharing a result, send what is needed rather than the whole file merely because that is easier.

Anyone reading an old record should remember that its subject was learning in particular circumstances. Do not use a child's, spouse's or colleague's old mistakes as weapons in a new disagreement. Retaining information should serve rights and learning, not create permanent power over someone whose difficulties you have seen.

Benefit that needs no grand celebration

You may notice that you acknowledge uncertainty sooner, make fewer promises beyond your capacity or return more readily

without discarding what you learned. These changes deserve gratitude and continued effort, but they do not entitle you to judge people whose circumstances you do not know. Let success deepen your understanding of people's need for explanation and support rather than make you harsher with them.

Choose one result to protect in the coming stage: a right fulfilled on time, truthful speech, worship whose proper form you learn and maintain, or teaching that preserves a child's dignity. Keep the method in service of that result. When the programme's noise fades and useful work remains, you have taken from it what it was meant to serve.

A final review without a final score

Answer privately, in writing or speech: which action do I understand better? What support have I learned to request? Which mistake have I stopped justifying? What method did I leave because it burdened me without benefit? Which right now figures more clearly in my decisions? Where do I still need instruction?

Do not combine your answers into a number called a discipline score. Keep a few honest examples. If every answer praises you, revisit what is still uncertain. If every answer blames you, look for what you actually learned or preserved. Honesty requires neither declaring yourself righteous nor erasing every good within you.

Choose one action now that joins the end of reading to a new beginning in life. It may fulfil a right, arrange help, correct information, return to a useful lesson or reduce a plan that harmed someone else. Do not postpone it until you have collected more tools. Learning becomes visible when you use it in its proper place.

Closing supplication

O Allah, help us to remember You, thank You and worship You well. Grant us truthfulness in speech and action, patience in what You love, and return to You when we err. Do not let our good image before people conceal our faults from us, or let awareness of those faults lead us to despair of Your mercy. Help us fulfil rights and redress wrongs, be gentle with those in our care, and use what we have learned for benefit rather than harm.

O Allah, forgive us, our parents and those who taught and helped us. Grant us knowledge that we put into practice and deeds whose good effects remain after us. Whoever finds benefit in these pages, please remember us and those who contributed to the good in a sincere supplication. All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all worlds.

Sources and References

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Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah. Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Mosques and Places of Prayer, chapter on recommended remembrance after prayer and its form, hadith 597a. A specified remembrance whose number is established in the text. A personal reading target or programme review schedule does not acquire that status.

Hadith narrated by ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab. Narrated by ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of

Travellers' Prayer and Its Shortening, chapter on night prayer and someone who sleeps through it or falls ill, hadith 747. Reciting a regular portion missed through sleep during the stated period. The text must not be extended to every ruling on making up missed worship without evidence.

Hadith narrated by Sahl ibn Sa'd. Narrated by Sahl ibn Sa'd, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on hastening to break the fast, hadith 1957. Breaking the fast promptly as prescribed. Extending deprivation is not a training objective.

Hadith narrated by 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar. Narrated by 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on the blessing of the pre-dawn meal without making it obligatory, hadith 1922. Avoiding continuous fasting without breaking the fast, in the context of its hardship. The programme does not use harmful deprivation of food or water.

The Qur'an. Surat al-Baqarah, 2:187: eating and drinking until dawn, completing the fast until night and Allah's boundaries. The boundaries of the fast's beginning and end. Reminder tools serve the prescribed times; they do not create alternatives.

Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah. Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting, chapter on saying "I am fasting" when insulted, hadith 1904. Fasting and refraining from obscene speech and clamour. Worship is not reduced to a behavioural exercise or numerical result.

The Qur'an. Surat al-Baqarah, 2:185: Ramadan fasting, illness, travel, making up missed days, ease and completing the prescribed number. The concessions for illness and travel and the principle of

ease in fasting. The programme does not issue individual rulings for health conditions.

The Qur'an. Surat al-Tawbah, 9:60. The recipients of zakat specified in the verse. A facts worksheet is not a fatwa or a specialist zakat calculation.

Hadith narrated by Jabir ibn ‘Abd Allah. Narrated by Jabir ibn ‘Abd Allah, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih Muslim, Book of Hajj, chapter on the recommendation to stone Jamrat al-‘Aqabah while mounted on the Day of Sacrifice and the meaning of “Learn your rites”, hadith 1297. Learning the rites from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. Organising preparation is neither a comprehensive legal guide nor a substitute for instructions from the responsible authorities.

Hadith narrated by ‘A’ishah, Mother of the Believers. Narrated by ‘A’ishah, Mother of the Believers, may Allah be pleased with her. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Softening the Hearts, chapter on moderation and consistency in deeds, hadith 6464. The foundation of moderation and consistency. The hadith specifies neither a twelve-week duration nor a numerical success rate.

Hadith narrated by ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab. Narrated by ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Beginning of Revelation, chapter on how revelation began for the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, hadith 1. The foundation of considering intention. A training goal or follow-up form is a proposed method from the author, not a test of sincerity.