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a**K**hirah

**I**slam

**N**afs

**D**unya

Jan **N**ah

**B**E lief

**S**oul

**S**urrender

***“Love for your brothers, what you love for yourself.”***

Are you one who finds it easier to be kind to others than you are to your self? Or do you think that being kind to others means *you are* kind to yourself? The act of kindness is three fold; to be truly sincere in your kindness to others is to also be truly kind to yourself and for Muslims this also means acknowledgment of Allah swt kindness upon us all. The litmus test to assess the level of your kindness in your heart is your response to Allah swt advice. If you find you are not as kind as you thought, than one of the remedies for a hard heart is given by our beloved Prophet swws when he says;

***‘Stroke the head of the orphan and feed the poor’.***

Take a moment to consider what this means? To lay your hand upon the head of another human being who has experienced unimaginable pain and loss. Not just thinking about it, but reaching out and touching another human in pain, how would you feel? Human touch can remove the barriers of self-deceit and illusion. Being real teaches us kindness. Are you real about yourself?

***‘We have certainly created man in the best of stature’ (Ah-Tin:5)***

Allah swt has high praise and confidence in His creation, but we often fail to live up to that standard. Allah swt is kind to us, why are we not kind to ourselves? I’m not talking about telling others about how brilliant we are, that’s arrogance. I’m talking about acts of kindness to self in the best of ways, the practices of Islam.

**Allah** swt lists acts of kindness in Quran such as charity and saying words of kindness and He also mentions amongst those acts, self actions such as prayer (Surah Bakarah 2:177).

What about fasting? Is that an act of kindness, of course! it is kindness to your body. What about Hijab, is that an act of kindness? It is when we safeguard our privacy, when we choose to work on the inner self rather than be concerned with displaying the outer to others.

Application of the commands of Allah swt are all acts of kindness to self, they are in essence a purification of the self, which will cultivate a kind heart. I remember attending an Islamic seminar on Quran and the self. After the seminar, in private I complained to the speaker about my inability to pray at that time. He simply replied *'well, I see you do not love yourself'*. I had not considered the acts of prayer as an action of self-kindness and love. I had looked at prayer as a chore and for Allah. From there began a journey of self-discovery and a new view of Islam. The Quran helped me to uncover how much I criticized myself and still do (those inner critics are hard to silence!). I began to realize that acts of worship *are* acts of kindness. Viewing prayer as kindness turned the surrender so much sweeter.

**Be kind to yourself; be kind to others as Allah swt is *always* kind to us, even if we don't always realise it.**



## Acts of Self – Kindness

(just some of many recommended).

### 1 BODY

Fast  
Pray  
Observe Modesty  
(Hijab)  
Exercise

### 2 MIND

Read, Research,  
Reflect  
Keep good company  
Minimize, watch only  
positive media/TV

### 3 SOUL

Dhikr (remembrance  
of Allah)  
Prayer/Dua/Fast/Hajj/  
Zakat  
Recite Quran