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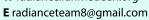
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Assalamualeikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.

Recently, Alhamdulillah Radiance conducted online courses for young girls... and it proved to be an exceptionally fulfilling experience, Subhan'Allah! I certainly felt an upsurge of energy in my own self after witnessing the enthusiasm from these girls. We were lucky to have a huge crowd of around four hundred girls on board with us from all around the world – a highly motivated and skilled crowd, I must add.

Apart from attending the live lectures and participating in the discussions, there were assignments to complete following every lecture, which the attendees meticulously sent to the helper teachers. Not only that, but they often came up with numerous queries of their own: how to start taking up the hijab; how to deal with peer pressure and say no to temptations, especially if involved in relationships; how to quit them altogether; how to be obedient daughters, amongst others.

Indubitably, we were amazed at how the cou-

This girl can do it An Online course for girls

rse helped our youth recalibrate their balances and scoop up what it takes to rise high in their spiritual journeys. In the end, it turned out as more of a mentoring program than the spiritual grooming workshop initially planned. In'sha'Allah there are more such courses lined up, so you can spread the word to anyone you know who might be interested.

The girls were full of gratitude to their teachers, but we told them they don't need to thank us as it is our duty and a source of salvation for us too to exert ourselves in calling everyone towards Allah and helping them realise their Heavenly purpose of being. It delights us to purify ourselves and others, and even mandate ourselves to achieving a much greater goal in life; which is to meet Allah with a soul that is moulded, trained, and disciplined to be happy with the will of Allah. A soul whose prime concern is to care for and protect what matters to Allah and disregard that which doesn't.

Although some people have told us that there is something about Radiance that makes them wish to live and love the young Muslim lifestyle, nevertheless, it is the magic of the duas of our Ulema e Karaam behind the cause which grant that spiritual push for all our energies and causes them to be boosted up in the right direction. May Allah always keep their loving shade above our heads. And may Allah open His doors of Hidayah and mercy upon us all and grant us the Taufeeq to live our lives celebrating the joys of His submission. Ameen.

Look out for details of the prize distribution ceremony in the next issue of Radiance In'sha'Allah

Was'salam,

UmmuAbdillah

Editor.radiance@gmail.com



Refreshing tips & advice by Khadeeja Kiyani on how to manage stress, mental illness & stay focused

I've noticed that problems and stressful situations have become quite frequent in our lives, such as examinations, school and peer pressure. Especially in our society, and in the day and age of social media, balancing our faith and trying to keep up with everything else can take a huge toll on our mental - and sometimes physical - health. It's important to remind myself and others that if these situations aren't dealt with in the correct manner, they can have serious consequences.

The way we live has a big influence on our mental and physical wellbeing. We should eat healthy foods; you may think that's only for physical health, but the foods we put into our bodies do affect our mental health a lot. Exercising and sports are also good for both mental and physical health. Keep toxic people away from you, including people who bring you down in any aspect. Stay away from them, because the people you surround yourself with will have either a positive or a negative impact on you, so surround yourself with people that will have a good impact on your happiness. The Prophet Muhammad is an example for all of us regarding mental and physical wellbeing: he would eat just enough food, he would exercise and he kept faith in Allah &.

When I look around myself, I always feel sad when I realise that some people have serious issues, such as anxiety or depression. These issues are actual illnesses, and if not treated by doctors, psychiatrists, and therapists, can lead to the illness worsening. In many societies, including ours, this has a huge stigma; many times we forget that this is an actual illness. There is a difference between being stressed out and having anxiety, or being sad and having depression. Rather than shaming

Honestly, finding something you're really interested in, or really like, such as creative writing, art or a sport, can help you take your mind off things.

people with such illnesses, we must get them the help they need before it's too late. The more we educate people on mental illness, the more people will have the courage to come out and get the help they need.

For people who don't have extreme issues and are dealing with everyday stresses, there is a helpful advice that is sure to help. Try and take a break from social media for a couple of days or have a day dedicated to making yourself feel calm, free from stress and overall a happier person. For this, you can read the Quran, some inspirational books, write in a journal, or treat yourself a little. Doing this will even help you work on the things you're stressed about, because you'll have a clear mind and a positive outlook on what you're doing. From my own experience I know that whenever I'm feeling really stressed out for a long period of time, taking a break from Instagram, Snapchat and other forms of social media is hard at first, but after a while it becomes easier to focus and clear my mind. Honestly, finding something you're really interested in, or really like, such as creative writing, art or a sport, can help you take your mind off things.

Throughout these trials, the believers should always turn to Allah for He guides us through all our hardships in this life. If we put our trust in Allah, we will get sukoon in our heart. We should also channel our stress and worries towards the eternal life of the Here

after, which is more important to us than this short worldly life. Remember that this life istemporary and we should not be stressed – as long as we have done our very best, everything will be fine. As Rasulullah said: "Strange is the affair of the mu'min (the believer). Verily, all his affairs are good for him. If something pleasing befalls him, he thanks (Allah) and it becomes better for him. And if something harmful befalls him, he is patient and it becomes better for him. And this is only for the mu'min."

In times of trouble, we should turn to patience and prayer. The Prophet always sought tranquility through prayer. He would ask Bilal to make the adhan and say, "O Bilal, give us peace with it." [Abu Dawud]

Mental illness is not something we should be ashamed of, it is something everyone goes through at some point in their life. Seeking help from a doctor or a therapist is something that is needed at times; we should encourage others to get the help they need. Whatever point you are on in your life, whatever you're doing, things will get better. This is all temporary, sometimes things don't work out as we planned, but we should try to accept those things and embrace them, and it will be easier for us to move on and focus on the life of the hereafter. The issues of this trivial life will work out eventually, don't be so harsh on yourself you are doing amazing!

by Hanaa Sajid



A good detective looks out for clues and connects them together to come to a sure conclusion. For each of these sentences, circle the TWO statements that prove that sentence to be true.

A tiger has escaped from the zoo. 1.

- The tiger enclosure in the zoo is empty.
- The zoo's only tiger has one ear. a.
- The zoo has been closed for the day. b.
- There's a one-eared tiger loose in the park. c.
- The zoo keepers are all panicking. d. e.

Bilal didn't rob the bank. 3.

- Bilal said he didn't rob the bank. a.
- Bilal works at a supermarket in the morning. b.
 - The getaway driver is Bilal's brother.
- c. Bilal robbed a bank thirty years ago. d.
- The bank was robbed at 10am. e.

Amna has eaten a slice of her mother's cake. Amna has cake crumbs around her lips. 2.

- Amna's mother bakes delicious cakes.
- a. ь.
- A slice of cake is missing. c.
 - q.

The cake was covered with chocolate. Amna has a sweet tooth.

Playing

dedective

3: b. and e.

Z: a. and c.

l: b. and d.

YN2MEK2:

Riddles adapted from Logic Puzzles by Simon Tudhope.



Aymun Sajid's story reflects on a common dilemma faced by practicing Muslims in dealing with their non-practicing counterparts

"Hurry up Aaliya, or I'm going to leave without you!" My father's shout came from the bottom of the stairs as I hurried to fix my nigab.

"Coming!" I called back, adding the last pin and grabbing my bag. I certainly didn't want him to leave without me. I'd been looking forward to this baking class for weeks.

I called a salaam to my mother as I ran out of the door and dashed to the car.

"Excited, huh?" my father grumbled good-naturedly, as I threw myself into the front seat. "You could've gotten ready a bit earlier."

"I AM excited!" I cried out, a grin spreading over my face. "You can bet I'll be making really good stuff at home from now on. Oh, and do you know that Noor is coming too?"

"You have railed on and on about this class for weeks," my father reminded me, "we know every single detail by now, Aaliya!"

That made me shut my mouth for the rest of the way. Instead I happily thought of all the cool new recipes I would learn, and all the friends I would make. After a bit my father pulled up in front of an impressive, modern house. I said salaam to him and excitedly stepped out of the car, all ready for this new experience.

However, as I approached the entrance, I stopped dead in my tracks.

The type of crowd milling around the gate caught me completely off guard. Skinny jeans, flowing hair, glittery makeup – you get the idea. My shock turning into plain disgust, I wondered why I hadn't expected this. I realised that staying with my close circle of religious friends had made me forget that these type of girls even existed, and that I might have to interact with them someday.

I stood rooted to the spot for a minute. Glancing back at my father's car, I realised he'd already left. The rude reality of the situation laughed at me in the face.

Well then, I thought, if I have to deal with it... why not go ahead and do just that?

I ploughed forward into the crowd with a renewed sense of boldness. If I had to stay with this mob, I might as well try to show them a

thing or two. "Astaghfirullah," I muttered as I brushed past a girl wearing a shoulderless dress, making sure I was loud enough to be heard. Some girls turned and stared, and I was sure I caught the words 'mullani' and 'ninja'. Although that did put me off quite a bit, I caught sight of another abaya-clad girl and realised, with a huge amount of relief, that it was my cousin Noor.

"Assalamualaikum!" she exclaimed when she came close. "I'm so glad you came!"

"WaAlaikum Salam waRahmatullahi wa-Baraaktuh," I replied, turning a few heads but not caring, as it was a form of Da'wah. "Of course I came! I'm absolutely dying to do this course."

"Me too," agreed Noor. "But forget about finding any new friends," she added in an undertone.

"Yeah," I whispered back. "I didn't know it'd be this bad."

"Girlssss!!" a voice rang out. All heads turned towards the woman standing on the porch of the house. I cringed visibly at her short shirt and tights.

"Please come this way, into our kitchen. Then we'll start our FIRST SESSION!"

Noor and I exchanged bewildered glances while a cheer went up in the rest of the group. They all eagerly surged forward to the door. We consciously brought up the rear. "Better stick together from here on out," Noor hissed.

In the large, flashy kitchen, the woman was telling everyone to pair up. I quickly bumped up beside Noor, but not before a girl beside me turned and asked, "Are we partners?"

That scared me out of my wits. I goggled at her face, but it was completely blank. I couldn't speak either, but Noor hurriedly blurted out, "No, uh, me and Aaliya are together."

The girl nodded. I watched her huge bun wobble up and down, and was almost tempted to poke it, but she turned away.

The session started. We were learning how to make sponge cakes. It was fun, but my surroundings were constantly keeping me out of my comfort zone. In the end, I cheered up a bit when the teacher said that at the end of the week, we would have a competition in which whoever made the best piece would win a cake-decorating set.

"It would be fun to kind of prove ourselves here," I whispered to Noor. She grinned a bit nervously, but nodded.

We put our cakes into the ovens and the lady announced a 20-minute break which was basically waiting for the cakes to bake. We went out of the kitchen into the lounge, and all the girls broke into pairs and groups, chatting away noisily. Noor took my hand and backed into a corner.

"So far, so good," I said jokingly.

"Good?!" Noor was clearly exasperated. "I don't know how we'll stick it out until the rest of the-"

She stopped abruptly, cutting herself off. The same 'bun girl' who'd stood beside me during the session was approaching us.

She smiled briefly. "Excuse me, but may I ask you a question?"

Continued on pg 25





Tawheed in a nufshell

Shanze Salman summarizes the lessons in a short Surah that we read frequently, yet are unaware of its hidden treasures

One of the first surahs we all memorise as children is Surah Ikhlaas, and it gives us a complete introduction of Allah swt. It encapsulates the core of the Prophet's message and thus, is equated to a third of the Quran, since about one third of the Quran talks about Tawheed.

Everything about this Surah is important, even its placement. It comes soon after Surah Kafirun in which the Prophet is told to say to the disbelievers: "You do not worship what I worship." So now the question arises: "What is it that the Nabi worships?" This surah is an answer to that.

The delegation's question

A delegation from Najraan came to the Prophet and asked him: "What is your God made of?" Interestingly, they didn't ask: "Why do you have a god?" Or, "Do you have a god?" Instead their question was, "What is He made of?" They knew that everyone had a different depiction of God. They had no idea that one

could be so deviant so as to deny God totally! In this sense, today's times are worse off-there are 50-40 million people worldwide who are atheists. That's a big population! So, this surah was revealed in answer to the delegate's question.

Sahabah loved Al-Ikhlaas

There are many instances in the Prophet time in which Sahabah used to read Al-Ikhlaas in every prayer, if not in every rakah. You might say: "Well, I recite it regularly in prayer too." But the big difference between them and us is that when we recite Al-Ikhlaas, it's often because it is short and easy; but the sahabah used to read it out of love for it!

The message of Al-Ikhlaas

It is the declaration of Tawheed...the absolute oneness of God.

Ayah#1

Two unique names for Allah have been used in



this surah: Al-Ahad and As-Samad.

"Ahad" is a word for the number one. But it is unique in the sense that "Ahad" is only used for Allah. The commonly used word otherwise for the number one is washid. When we say QulhuwAllahuahad, we are actually reviving our kalimah- the basis of our faith.

Ayah#2

The second unique name that has been used for Allah is As-Samad. It means "immortal or everlasting". Samad is also someone 'who needs nobody and nothing, but everyone and everything needs Him'.

So yes Allah is alone, but He does not need anyone! Instead it's us who need to call Him in times of need...and that is all the time! It means He is our real and Number One helper. But today's sad reality is that Allah is our "back-up plan" instead of being our "only plan". When all else fails, we turn to Him.

In reality, Allah's help is like a one-window operation. If we have Him, we don't need anyone or anything else. But somehow we don't trust Him 100%: we don't believe He is enough for us and our needs, and we feel like we have to rely on worldly needs to solve our problems. How sad is that!

Ayah#3

The disbelievers of Makkah, influenced by their corrupt religion, would say to the Prophet : Insablanaarabbaka (Tell us the lineage of your Rabb), as lineage was a very big deal for the Arabs that decided their honour and respect in society. Allah replied on behalf of the Prophet : He was not given birth to nor does He give birth. He is not like the worldly kings who have ancestors and descendants. So He has not inherited His Kingdom from

anyone, nor is anyone going to inherit His Kingdom.

Another reason for this is also that a son usually resembles a father but no one can be like Allah.

Ayah#4

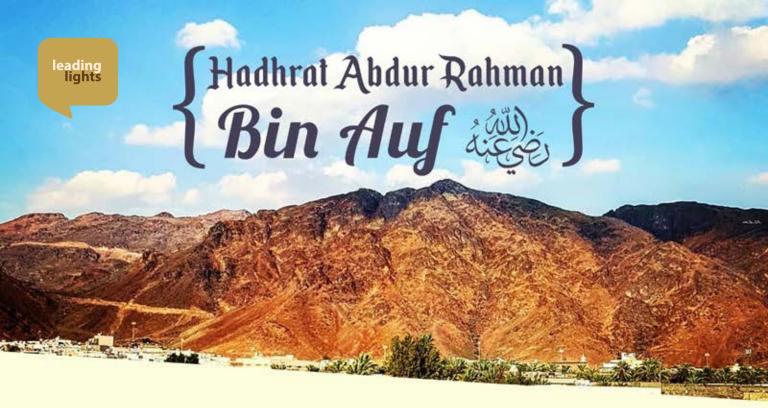
There is no one that can be like Him. He doesn't have any partner. Simply stated, He is incomparable.

Finally, let's all take a moment to appreciate our Deen for being so logical, clear and simple to understand. In the major (but false) religions, god is someone who can be many and who has been created... Naoozubillah. Take Hinduism for example. They have more than 30 million gods! Most of their gods have mothers, fathers and children. To me they don't seem less like gods but more like human characters with superpowers! Their beliefs are so corrupted. One Hindu myth tells us the story of four Hindu gods who also happened to be brothers. One of the brothers had a beautiful wife; the other three didn't; so they decided to share the wife and lived happily ever after! Astaghfirullah!

In conclusion, here are some points to ponder:

- Is Allah my only plan?
- · Am I reading Surah Ikhlaas out of love or
- · Do I appreciate Islam, and am I fully convinced of it being the only true and accept able Deen?

Let's yow to read Surah Ikhlaas out of love and live a life under the shade of Tawheed, bowing to no power but Allah. Let our life mission be making Allah, the One, the supreme authority in our individual and collective lives



Zawjah Junaid Mukaty uplifts our spirits with the life chronicles of the most wealthy Sahabi, who reports that his wealth always increased when he gave it in Allah's way

A young tall man with rosy complexion was the thirteenth to accept Islam. His father was Auf bin Abd Auf who belonged to Hadhrat Amna's clan, Banu Zahra. Like many other helpless Muslims, he was also subjected to the enmity of pagans in Makkah. For this reason, he migrated to Abyssinia twice, first in the 5th year of Prophethood and then in the 6th year of Prophethood. His third journey of migration was towards Madina in the 13th year of Prophethood. This man was known as Abd Amr (Servant of Amr) which was eventually changed by Prophet to Abdur Rahman (Servant of Rahman).

As a soldier

Hadhrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf was a brave man who participated in many battles. In the Battle of Badr two young boys, Hadhrat Muaaz and Muawiz approached him and inquired about Abu Jahl. Hadhrat Abdur Rahman pointed towards him and thus the two boys

attacked Abu Jahl ferociously and killed him.

The extent of his gallantry and valour can be judged by twenty one wounds that he received in the Battle of Uhud. The wound on his leg was severe due to which he limped all his life.

In Shaaban of 6th Hijra, Prophet sent him with six hundred men towards Banu Kalb in Dumatul Jandal. Before they departed Madinah, Prophet took off the turban from his head and tied a black one with his own blessed hands. What an honour! Companions of Apostle could have given their lives to have this honour. Hadhrat Abdur Rahman has another prominent incident in his life. While in the battlefield of Tabuk, the time of Fajr came and the Prophet was not there at the moment. The Muslims chose Abdur Rahman as their Imam.

Relation with Rashideen Caliphs

Hadhrat Abdur Rahman 🧠 was a humble, fore-

The extent of his gallantry and valour can be judged by twenty one wounds that he received in the Battle of Uhud. The wound on his leg was severe due to which he limped all his life.

sighted and responsible person. His ideas and suggestions carried weight therefore Hadhrat Abu Bakr took his opinion in many matters. Hadhrat Umar Farooq also made him a member of Advisory Council during his Caliphate and was also chosen as a witness to the contract made at the time of the siege of Bait ul Muggaddas.

He led Salah till the new Caliph was not chosen after the martyrdom of Hadhrat Umar . He was the first to pledge allegiance to the next caliph, Hadhrat Usman bin Affan. Hadhrat Usman also trusted him and sought his advice in different matters.

As a Businessman

Hadhrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf is widely known for his riches. History reveals that he was penniless when he migrated to Madina. Hadhrat Muhammad made his pair with Hadhrat Saad bin Rabiah who was a wealthy and God-fearing Ansari. He generously said to him,"My brother! Among the people of Madina I have the most wealth. I have two orchards and I have two wives. See which of the two orchards you like and I shall vacate it for you and which of my two wives is pleasing to you and I will divorce her for you." Hadhrat Abdur Rahman thankfully declined and said, "May Allah bless you with your family and money but show me the way where the market is."

His inclination towards business and hard work soon earned him an ample amount of money to marry. A few days later he met Muhammad with scent of perfume lingering

over him. Prophet asked him about the perfume on which he said that he has got married. Prophet congratulated him heartily and said, "You must have a valima even if it is with a single sheep. And may Allah give Barakah in your wealth and family." This dua of Barakah was so powerful that if he would move a stone he would find gold underneath. He also had a large family. He married fourteen times and had twenty sons and eight daughters.

There was another rich companion in Madina, Hadhrat Usman bin Affan . The business caravans of these two rich businessmen were very impressive but which caravan belonged to whom could be distinguished easily because caravan of Hadhrat Abdur Rahman could not be competed.

His Three Cardinal Principles of Business

When this astounding personality died, he had approximately three billion, one hundred three million Dinars. Dinars are gold coins which if converted into dollars are five hundred and twenty seven billion US dollars. Or it can be written as 527, 000,000,000 dollars. What a huge amount!

The generations after him tried to figure out the method of his business and dealings. The findings propose that he had three main principles of business.

- 1) He always did buying and selling on cash. No credits, no debits.
- 2) He never tried to store his goods. He sold them quickly, he would never even earn a

Though he was one among the Ashra Mubashira, those who were given glad tidings of Paradise in their lives, Hadhrat Abdur Rahman h wept and worried lest he had been given his reward in this life rather than in the next.

penny as profit. This resulted in smooth flow of money.

3) He always dealt fairly. If there was any defect in his goods he would not hesitate in showing it to the buyer.

Generosity and Simplicity

The vision of companions of Prophet was never this world. Allah has set uncountable examples for us in their lives. Hadhrat Abdur Rahman was a simple and humble man. His wealth did not make him arrogant or proud. He had host of workers and slaves working for him. Anybody who did not know him could not tell who Abdur Rahman was when he was with them due to his simplicity.

Many narrations tell us about his generosity. Once Prophet wanted to despatch a troop but the funds were limited. Hadhrat Abdur Rahman donated two thousand Dinars. Prophet asked him what he had left behind. He said half. Prophet made a dua for him, "O Allah! Grant Abdur Rahman barakah in what he has given and grant him barakah in what he has left behind." He reports his wealth always increased whenever he gave.

At the time of Battle of Tabuk he gave two hundred ounces of gold. This was a very critical time for the Muslims as they did not have much to prepare for the expedition. Once he sold a property worth forty thousand Dinars. With a portion of this amount he went out looking for the family of Hadhrat Muhammad's mother, Hadhrat Amna, and distributed among them. Another portion of it he gave to the wives of Prophet . The remaining money was then distributed among the poor.

He took the responsibility of the wives of Prophet after his death. He provided them the best camels if they wished to travel. He also travelled with them to take care of their needs. Near to his death, he gave four hundred gold coins to each participant of Battle of Badr who were alive. This total reached to forty thousand coins.

Though he was one among the Ashra Mubashira, those who were given glad tidings of Paradise in their lives, Hadhrat Abdur Rahman wept and worried lest he had been given his reward in this life rather than in the next.

Death

He died at the age of seventy five and was buried in Jordan. Apart from the Dinars he also left thousand camels, hundred stallions and three thousand sheep. Yet he was such a simple and humble man.

May Allah also bless us with halal wealth and a heart to spend it in His way. Ameen

TIPS ON HOW TO AID THE MUSLIM UMMAH



1. INCREASE IN DU'AA

The greatest act of support, Du'aa, is the weapon of the believer. Single out the last third of the night to pray for the Ummah.

2. CHANGE YOURSELF

Our sins not only affect us but the Ummah at large as well.

3. BE THE BEST THAT YOU CAN BE

Each one of us has amazing potential and the Ummah needs us to bring our best forward.

4. INVEST YOUR TALENTS

Utilise your talents and take part in community projects that will strengthen and unite the Ummah.

5. VOLUNTEER AID

Lighten your pockets and help save the lives of those in poverty-stricken areas and war zones.

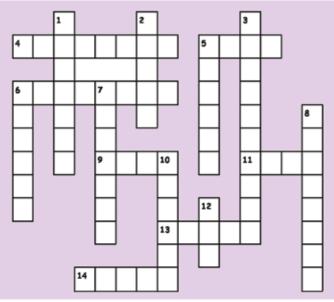


screw bolts

Only Genius Can Find 3 Difference



FIVE PILLARS CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS DOWN

- 1. The oneness of Allah.
- 2. Performed facing the Ka'bah.
- 3. English word for Fardh.
- 5. There are five of these in Islam.
- 6. A person who follows the commands of Allah.
- 7. The prayer after sunset.
- 8. The month in which the
- Tarawih prayer is performed.
- 10. The Arabic name of the special day of the week .
- 12. The minimum number of times the Hajj must be performed.

- 4. The first pillar of Islam.
- 5. Zakah should be paid to these
- 6. ___ was given the title Al-Amin.
- 9. This worship can only be done in the month of Zul Hijjah.
- 11. ____ is to fast in the month of Ramadhan.
- 13. We must give 2.5% of our excess ____ to the poor.
- 14. We do this act of worship annually.

MAKE A BALLOON ROCKET!

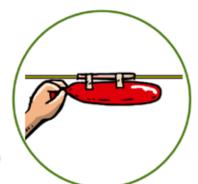
YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 balloon (round ones will work, but the longer "airship" balloons work best)
- 1 long piece of kite string (about 10-15 feet long)
- 1 plastic straw
- Tape

WHAT TO DO

- Tie one end of the string to a chair, door knob, or other support.
- 2. Put the other end of the string through the straw.
- 3. Pull the string tight and tie it to another support in the room.
- 4. Blow up the balloon (but don't tie it.) Pinch the end of the balloon and tape the balloon to the straw as shown above. You're ready for launch.
- 5. Let go and watch the rocket fly!







HOW DOES IT WORK?

So how does it work? It's all about the air...and thrust. As the air rushes out of the balloon, it creates a forward motion called THRUST. Thrust is a pushing force created by energy. In the balloon experiment, our thrust comes from the energy of the balloon forcing the air out. Different sizes and shapes of balloon will create more or less thrust. In a real rocket, thrust is created by the force of burning rocket fuel as it blasts from the rockets engine - as the engines blast down, the rocket goes up!

MAKE IT AN EXPERIMENT:

The project above is a DEMONSTRATION. To make it a true experiment, you can try to answer these questions:

- 1. Does the shape of the balloon affect how far (or fast) the rocket travels?
- 2. Does the length of the straw affect how far (or fast) the rocket travels?
- 3. Does the type of string affect how far (or fast) the rocket travels? (try fishing line, nylon string, cotton string, etc.)
- 4. Does the angle of the string affect how far (or fast) the rocket travels?



The Poison of Plastic bags

A nudge from Zaytunah Salman to awaken and save our planet from one of the most brutal pollution epidemic

5,000,000,000,000

That is the amount of plastic bags which will be consumed in 2019 (that's 5 trillion). 5 trillion plastic bags consumed per year! If we break down the math real quick, that's 160,000 a second and over 700 plastic bags a year for every person on this planet. In total, we use 100 million tonnes of plastic every year.

I find that quite scary. 10% of this plastic ends up in oceans. In the ocean, the plastic breaks up into tiny pieces. These pieces are eaten by fish, sea lions, turtles, sea birds, seals and whales. A whale was found in California who died because it had eaten 22.2 kilos of plastic!! The 'plastic bag' has been a problem for a long, long time now. Plastic decays at a very slow rate, unlike natural substances that decompose into the soil quickly. In fact, every single piece of plastic ever produced is still somewhere on our planet, slowly poisoning it.

Of course people are trying to find solutions for this problem. For example recycling the bags: people who care, try to recycle as much as they can. Sadly, the truth is that only 1% or even less than that are recycled. Basically, most of the plastic bags are eventually thrown out. They are usually made of polythene, which takes very long to degrade – up to 1000 years! People also try to use paper bags instead of plastic ones, but then again

paper bags have their own problems. Below are only some of the problems they have:

- Lots of water consumed in the production of paper bags
- Paper bags generate 80% more solid waste.
- Recycling paper bags consumes more fuel than it takes to make a new one.

As Muslims, we should care for our planet and be careful of how our activities affect the plants and animals around us. Islam encourages eco-friendliness. The Prophet has forbidden cruelty to animals and encouraged us to plant trees, keep our environment clean and respect nature. So, what can we do to reduce our impact and help in the plastic bags problem? Here are some solutions.

- 1. Re-use plastic bags: Re-using older plastic bags will help in reducing the amount of new plastic bags in our homes.
- 2. Raise awareness: If we want to live in a plastic free world, raising awareness is crucial.
- 3. Cloth Bags: Practicing what you preach is one of the most important things; so take cloth bags when going shopping and don't take new plastic bags from every store you shop at. When people see us using cloth bags, it automatically creates awareness.

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attack You can buy cloth bags from bazaars, book shops or sew them yourself with some durable cloth. There are many ways you can decorate your cloth bags. You can paint, draw or even do embroidery on it. Taking help from the internet makes it all easier or you may think something of your own too. The possibilities are endless. Below are instructions for how to decorate a bag with eraser stamping.

Things you will need:

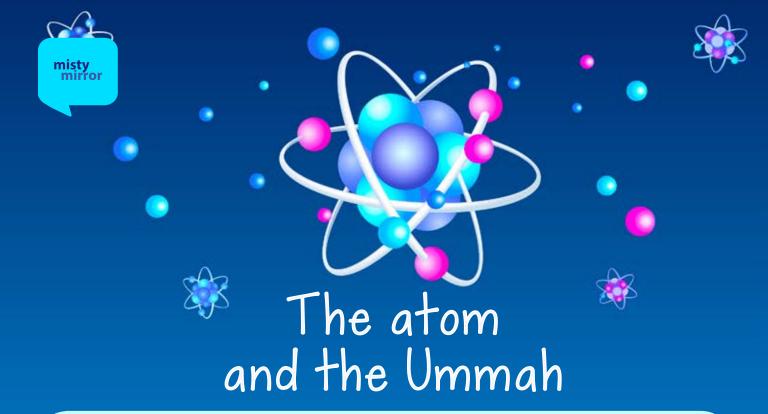
- A cloth bag
- A pencil with a small round back eraser
- Paints (fabric paint is the best for painting cloth materials but if your cloth bag is kind of rough like canvas then acrylic paints can work too; my cloth bags were a little bit like canvas so I used acrylic paints)
- · A paper or chart paper (chart paper is better as it is more sturdy)
- Scissors
- Tape
- Something flat and hard like a chopping board or a clip board

Instructions (for making a dotted heart bag):

First, make a stencil of the shape you want to paint on your paper, e.g. a heart shape. Cut out the inside of your stencil. Now place your stencil on your bag and insert a chopping board or clipboard inside your bag to protect paint from leaking through to the back of your bag.

Now start painting! Dip the end of your pencil (the eraser) into your paint and make some dots inside your stencil. If you are using two colours or multiple colors then paint a few scattered dots above the end of your first colour so that the next colour overlaps the first one. You can also use different shades of one colour, for example: I used the colour pink. I used dark pink for the base of my heart shape and then worked my way up with lighter pink shades so that it looks like a gradient.

Just keep on dotting your bag until your shape is filled (the dotting will take a little time). Once you are done, just leave your bag to dry. To speed up the drying process you can use a blow dryer. Using the same technique, but painting different shapes, you can make a bunch of these bags and each one will look great in its own way. This DIY is easy and simple and yet the result is very pretty



Aymun Sajid reflects upon the state of the Ummah today and how we can derive lessons from the smallest particle the atom

An atom has two parts. The nucleus is the dense part consisting of protons and neutrons. The other part is the electrons. They spin around the nucleus in orbits, much like our solar system. SubhanAllah, the biggest thing and smallest thing in this world are arranged so similarly!

The atom's orbits are also called shells, which can be further divided into sub-shells. These shells can only accommodate a certain amount of electrons. New shells are added for more electrons.

The nucleus is positively charged because of the protons present in it, and the electrons are negatively charged. Since opposite charges attract - just like north and south poles of a magnet do - the electrons are strongly bound in their shells because of the attraction towards the nucleus. Interestingly, though, as the number of shells increases

and the electrons move further and further away from the nucleus, this force of attraction gets weaker and weaker.

This makes the furthest electrons more prone to be pulled away by other atoms or forces.

We can look at this in two ways. The first is that the further our generation gets from the time of Rasulullah, the easier it is for us to deviate, given the less attraction we have to our Deen. We can even get entirely pulled out of the atom - er, Ummah. The Prophet @ said, "The best people are those of my generation, and then (the second-best) those who will come after them (the next generation), and then, those who will come after them (i.e. the next generation)." [Sahih al-Bukhari, 6429]

The second aspect is that the nucleus is not just a representation of Rasulullah's time - it However, sometimes even electrons that are really far away from the nucleus are hard to yank out. And that's because they have company! Likewise, if you have like-minded company, it will be hard for someone to convince you otherwise. Your friends will tell you to hold up and think twice.

can also be your Deen in general. Some atoms have so many orbits of electrons, and the outermost are so easy to pull away, that they are literally termed 'free electrons'. Ever heard of the distinction between 'conservative' Muslims and 'liberal' or 'free-minded' Muslims? Some metal atoms have a few 'free electrons' in their outermost shell, making them good conductors. When current which is basically flowing charges, passes through them, they pull the electrons along, enhancing the flow of electricity. Some Muslims are extremely good conductors. Put the current of any nation through them, and they'll go with the flow without a problem.

However, sometimes even electrons that are really far away from the nucleus are hard to yank out. And that's because they have company! The more electrons there are in the outermost shell, the more overall attraction there is between the nucleus and that shell. This makes it tougher for the current or another atom to get the electrons to go with it; they don't detach from the atom so easily.

Likewise, if you have like-minded company, it will be hard for someone to convince you otherwise. Your friends will tell you to hold up and think twice. So surround yourself with people who would do that. Take care of who is in your shell - I mean, your circle of people, as it will affect your attraction towards the nucleus.

And just as the precious elements are rare in the periodic table, people of the truth and

pure religion will become scarcer towards the end of time. Islam will become strange and the people who follow it will become strangers. So maybe the electron shell won't be complete and the atom will become a bit reactive. Hopefully, this Ummah will care a little more about what's being done to their atom - not just to their individual electrons but their brothers and sisters in other shells. too. Maybe other atoms will stare at them and say stuff like, "but that's not your problem! They're other electrons. They aren't even in your shell!" But it is our problem. One electron getting added or subtracted can change the entire element!

So no matter how many reactions occur, you, the electron/Muslim, should hang on and try your best to stay with the atom

Continued from pg 18 To raise awareness, I've DIY-decorated tote bags which I'm going to sell and gift. Below are some of the bags I've decorated

Ant Work

By Eesha Iftikhan



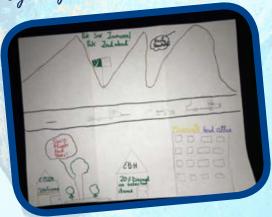
By Omama Anees



By Amna Anees



By Aayan Ullah Siddiqui



By Zakiriya Yahya



By Muhammad Ahmed Ali



Crust

3/4 cup butter room temperature

1/2 cup white sugar

1/2 tsp vanilla essence

1 pinch salt

13/4 cup all purpose flour



Directions

Crust:

- 1. Preheat oven to 175°C(350°F).
- 2. Combine butter, sugar, vanilla essence and salt in mixing bowl.
- 3. Mix flour in butter mixer. Knead into smooth dough. Press dough into 9 inch tart pan. Refrigerate it for 30 minutes.
- 4. Bake till crust is golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes.

Filling:

5. Whisk sugar, eggs, lemon zest, lemon juice and flour in a bowl until smooth. Pour lemon

Filling

11/2 cup powdered sugar 3 large eggs 1 tbsp lemon zest 1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon 1/2 cup all-purpose flour



9 years

filling into the crust. Put aluminum foil around edges to prevent burns.

6. Bake tart until filling is set, about 20 minutes. Cool completely. Dust with confectioners' sugar.

Tips

- 1. To avoid lumps in step 5, whisk sugar, eggs, lemon zest, lemon juice first and then gradually add flour.
- 2. In step 2, add the flour gradually so you don't get lumps.
- 3. Lots of people like to decorate their desserts, like me. If you want to make it prettier, add a few berries in the middle or at the edges and sprinkle with a bit of lemon zest.



How amazing fathers are... They never get enough credit for the herculean jobs they undertake and the exquisite way in which they fill their children's lives with love, mercy and sweetness.

I have always wanted to be on a phone call with someone who would say: "Where are you? I will pick you up from school," or "what do you want to eat today?", or "should I bring chocolate ice cream or would you prefer mango?" So that I can reply with something like "Baba, pick me straight from school and we could stop at some restaurant on the way," or, "Baba I want both, and bring me the caramel one too so I can eat it tomorrow".

I have always wanted and yearned for these calls. Don't get me wrong - I have people who love me dearly, who give me surprises every other day with ice creams, chocolates

and stuffed toys, and every other adorable thing. I have nice gadgets, bags, shoes, clothes, novels, and diaries. They bring me things without me asking, yet I long for someone to call Baba or Abba.

How sweet this word is, saying is silently fills one's mouth with a sweet taste like you have tasted something very delicious and saying it aloud will fill your heart with glitter and butterflies.

How sweet this word is!

I have longed for it.

You know how hard it becomes to smile like you don't care when your friends chat and talk about their fathers, when your friends show you pictures with them, when your friends tell you how they were upset and how their fathers soothe them... and believe me, it really aches to see them running into their fathers' arms after school. It hurts so bad that sometimes I feel a knot in my stomach.

I have noticed maby things multiple times, things that seem ordinary at first glance, but mean much more to me. I see kids coming with their fathers on motorcycles and in cars and by foot, and I see how the fathers have taken their bags and bottles and how they smile while listening to their kids or how lovingly they kiss them at the school gate... how lovingly!

How kind and warmhearted and sweet are their gestures. I have always admired it. I have wished for it.

And then I have seen people complain about their fathers, oh guys! How could you talk back and speak ill about your father? How could you ever hurt them?

Hadhrat Muhammad 🆀 said: "The father is the middle door of paradise so it is up to you whether you take advantage of it or not."

A man once came to the messenger of Allah & and said: "I have wealth and a son, and my father wants to take all my wealth." He replied: "You and your wealth belong to your father." (Ibn e Majah 3.12.2291)

So when someone complains about their father and disobeys him, I don't understand. How could you possibly forget how painstakingly he raised you? How he compromised his life so you could have the very best of everything possible? The protection and love a father gives his children is beyond words, I can't explain how fathers work day in and day out to make ends meet. To provide with the best to give everything they can to their children. As we get older, we tend to forget that our parents are growing older as well, and they are pushed aside to living on their own and we start to ignore them. Stop taking things and people for granted. Don't let their sacrifices and love go unnoticed.

Not everyone is blessed with parents. Not everyone is lucky to have a father by their side!

Continued from pg 09

I felt a pang of irritation. "AssalaamuAlaikum," I pointedly answered in an extra-sweet voice. "Sure, and what can the question be?"

"Er...Wa...Waalaikum...Assalaam." The girl seemed a little staggered out. She opened her mouth to continue speaking, but hesitated. "Um...I just don't want to offend you, but..."

I felt my blood boiling. I think I knew just what sort of a question this will be, I thought. "Go ahead," I said flatly.

The girl hesitated again, but then looked me in the eye. "Did your father force you to wear that?" she asked.

I almost exploded. Why did people always, always have that misconception? With my anger barely in check, I blurted out, "Well, did YOUR father force YOU to wear that?!" The girl bit her lip. "Actually, yes!"

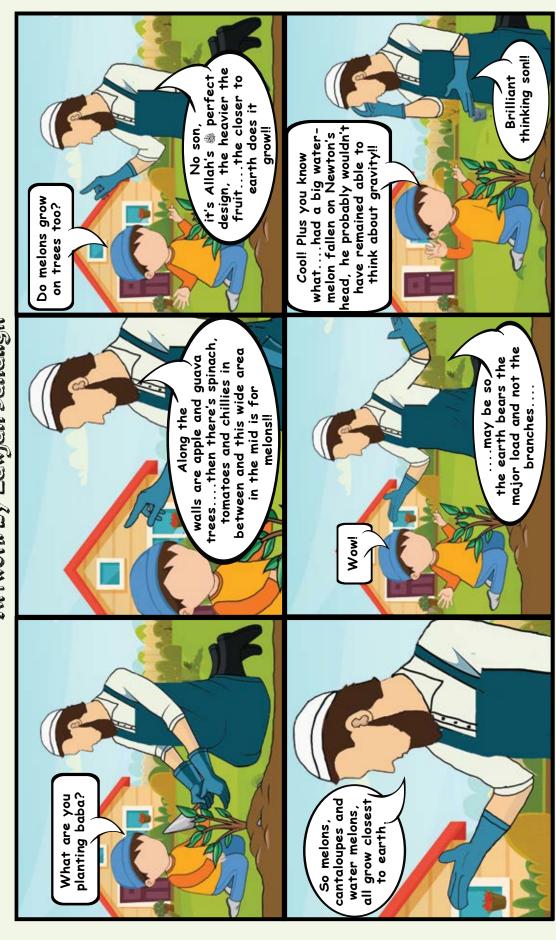
Continued In'sha'Allah...



For the sake of gravity

Concept by Zawjah Zia

Artwork by Zawjah Jehangir





Lifetime Membership

Keeping Steadfast in Helping Our Brothers in Pain

MEMBERSHIP (ROTIS)

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