



10 great goals to set for this Ramadan

1. Eat, drink and be moderate.

Almost all of us do it - once Iftar time hits, we just keep plowing food and drink into our mouths till it's hard to move afterwards. And those of us who do it know this is totally contrary to the spirit of Ramadan, through which we're supposed to learn self-control not self-indulgence. Let's try to stick to the Prophetic rule on eating: fill our stomachs with one-third food, one-third water and one-third breathing space, even in Ramadan.

2. Give a dollar a day in charity...or five or ten.

The Prophet Muhammad Sallal Laahu Ta'ala Alayhi Wa Sallam, peace and blessings be upon him, was always generous but even more so in Ramadan. Let's open our hearts and dig a little deeper in our wallets this year. Even less than a dollar a day adds up. Whatever you can give, **it's the intention that counts.**

3. Memorize 4 new Surahs.

Memorizing the Quran often seems like a daunting task. But the key is doing it in small bits. Since there are four weeks in Ramadan, try to memorize one new Surah a week. Start off with a short, easy one. Once you've started, you'll build momentum and may even want to memorize a longer one the following week.

4. Go to Tarawih prayers.

Post-Iftar, the first urge is to sleep after an exhausting day. But try your best to head out to the masjid for Tarawih prayers. Praying alone is wonderful, but doing it in congregation is fantastic. The community spirit is part of Ramadan's blessings. Don't miss it this year. If going every day is not possible, try going at least one week.

5. Attend the Tarawih prayer in which the recitation of the Quran will be finished.

Call the local masjid and find out which day the Imam will be finishing the recitation of the Quran in prayer. Attend to not only hear part of the Quran's recitation in prayer, but also participate in the heart-rending Duas that follow it.

6. Stop swearing and/or backbiting – with a special box.

It's hard not to shoot our mouths off when someone's upset us. Whether we utter those four-letter words or backbite about someone to our family and friends, we know this isn't the God-approved way of letting off steam. In Ramadan, when we want to build our spirituality, we've got to wage Jihad against our bad habits.

Try this: get a box and every time you catch yourself swearing or backbiting put some money in it. It could be a buck or less. The point is to choose an amount that makes it feel like punishment.

At the end of the month send the money to a charity or buy a gift for the person whom you've backbitten the most against.

7. Call/email your relatives.

You'd think that given the easy access to email, competitive long-distance calling rates, phone cards, etc. these days, we'd keep in touch with family and friends more often. But the opposite seems to be the case, as we get caught up in life's "busyness."

Strengthening ties with family members and keeping in touch with friends is part of our way of life and an act Allah is very pleased with. This Ramadan, call family and friends or at least email them a Ramadan card and ask them how their fasting is going.

8. Go on a technology diet.

Even if you work in the IT industry, you can do this. Avoid checking personal email and surfing the web during your fast. After Iftar, instead of plopping yourself in front of the screen, go to Tarawih. The same goes for the television. The point is to try to give our full attention to spiritual elevation this month.

9. Read 5 minutes of Quran a day...just five, not more, not less.

Even if you feel you've got absolutely no time, set a timer or the alarm on your cell phone and find a relatively quiet place. You can read the first page of the Quran you open or follow a sequence. The choice is yours. The point is simply to connect with Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala through His revelation in the month of the Quran.

10. Forgive everyone who has hurt you.

Still got a festering wound from the fight with your friend last year? Still upset about something your spouse said during a heated argument? Or are you still bitter about the way your parents sometimes treated you as a kid? Let go of the anger and pain this Ramadan and forgive those who have hurt you. Forgiving someone is not only good for the body, but it's also great for the soul. And in Ramadan, ten days of which are devoted to Allah's forgiveness, shouldn't we lesser beings forgive too?

If you find it very difficult to forgive everyone, forgive at least three people.

The Board of Noori Masjid – Amsterdam,
Wishes You and your Family
A Pleasant, Happy and above all
A Blessed Ramadan.

Jazakallah Khair.