

The Early Bird Challenge – Worksheet 3: June 2012 – focus on dua

Diagnosis:

In private, or with someone else if you prefer, enter your answer to the following questions:

Question	My answer
Do I really understand how important dua is in life?	
Do I make time each day to make dua(s) to Allah?	
If I do make duas, are these 'automated' / mechanical duas, or those of the imam alone?	
Do I take time out to think about what I truly need and want, and make specific duas for that?	
Do I believe that my duas have to be in Arabic only?	
Do I truly believe that Allah will answer my duas?	
What actions cause Allah to reject duas?	
Am I doing anything – intentionally or out of forgetfulness – that would cause Allah to reject my duas?	
When are the best times to make dua (i.e. the times when they are readily accepted)?	
What actions cause Allah to readily accept duas?	
Am I carrying out these actions on a regular basis?	
Do I know the etiquettes of dua?	
Aside from personal duas, do I know duas from the Quran and Sunnah? (Either in English or Arabic.)	

Using the table below, list the weaknesses or problems you have in the abovementioned areas. If you've printed this, use a new page if you need more writing space:

Weakness / Problem
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

Root cause analysis:

Copy your weaknesses / problems from the previous table to the table below, and now use this table below to find the root cause of each issue. If you need more space, use a separate page:

Issue	Outward symptoms	Root causes <i>(Keep asking "Why?" until you come to the most basic cause)</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

Solutions:

Now brainstorm and list practical ways to solve the issues from the root:

Weakness / Problem	Possible solutions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Planning 1: Ideas for personal dua planning

Note that this section covers *only* the case where you need help with comprehensively listing the areas that you'd like to make dua in. The other issues you need to work on don't have ideas listed in this document.

Personal things I might want to make dua for:

- Relationship with Allah
- Forgiveness
- Spiritual purification
- Protection from harm
- Religious / spiritual life
- Character and speech
- Marriage, children, and family life
- Personal weaknesses
- Personal strengths
- Career
- Contributions to the community, country, and world
- Wealth / sustenance
- Health
- Social life
- Contribution to da'wah
- Special areas of interest
- Things I'd like to achieve, and places I'd like to go
- Death, time in the grave, resurrection, and Hereafter

Notes:

- These categories are only **prompts** to help you think of your own areas of need. Don't confine yourself to these categories, and don't feel the need to think of duas in all of them – make up your own categories according to your own needs and wants
- Remember to keep all requests halaal - i.e. do not ask for something haram
- Remember to balance your requests between this life and the Hereafter (i.e. think of each request in terms of the Hereafter as well, and not just what you need/want right now, in this life)
- Be unselfish by asking Allah to grant these things to other people as well
- If you feel there are other things you want to ask for, but can't remember them at the time of dua, ask Allah to fulfil all those other needs / desires as well, since He knows them even when you can't think of them
- Remember also to express your gratitude for everything you already have / had – if you thank Allah, He will give you more insha-Allah (Surah 14 verse 7)

Other people I might want to make dua for:

- Closest people (e.g. immediate family, other closest people)
- Relatives
- Friends
- Neighbours
- Work / study colleagues
- Acquaintances
- Deceased people
- People that are important to me now (not in the above categories)
- People that have been important at various points in my past (e.g. teachers, colleagues in different jobs, former friends, caregivers in childhood)
- The Muslim ummah at large
- Those suffering under oppression, poverty, disaster, etc
- My community, country, and the world
- Groups, organisations, and individuals that are making a positive difference in the world
- The Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), his companions, and all our pious predecessors and other prophets

Planning 2: Implementing the solutions

Now analyse your current schedule and life and come up with a realistic plan of how you can implement the solutions for each issue – breaking solutions into baby steps that you'll work on consistently this month (and perhaps in the months that follow). Feel free to make adjustments as needed, if you find you're not coping.

Also include ideas on how you can intensify your efforts for Ramadan.

Resources

For resources to help you with this month's challenge, visit the June 2012 "Early Bird Series" post at www.productivemuslim.com.