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The Negative Effects of Mental Stress (Fear) from an Islamic Perspective: A Research Study

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Abstract

Mental stress is a significant challenge in today's fast-paced world, impacting individuals' emotional, physical, and mental well-being. This research explores the negative effects of mental stress and how Islamic principles can play a crucial role in building resilience and character. By focusing on Islamic teachings related to patience, self-control, and reliance on God, this paper aims to provide insights into how these principles can counteract the detrimental effects of stress. The study investigates how practicing these principles can lead to better mental health, improved coping mechanisms, and overall personal growth.

Keywords: *Negative Effects, Mental Stress. Fear, Islamic Perspective*

Introduction:

In contemporary society, mental stress has become an increasing concern, leading to numerous health issues such as anxiety, depression, and physical ailments. The pressure of daily life, work, and personal challenges can overwhelm an individual, leaving them struggling to manage their emotions and mental health. While various psychological and medical approaches are available, spiritual and religious teachings offer a different perspective. Among these, Islamic principles are rich in teachings that guide individuals toward mental peace and the development of a strong character. This paper examines the negative effects of mental stress and explores how Islamic values can promote mental well-being and character building.

Problem Statement:

Despite the growing body of research on mental stress and coping strategies, there is limited exploration of how spiritual and religious principles, particularly in Islam, can help address the negative impacts of stress and contribute to personal development. This research aims to fill this gap by examining the negative effects of mental stress and the Islamic principles that can aid in character development and resilience.

Hypothesis:

Islamic principles such as patience, gratitude, prayer, and reliance on God can significantly reduce the negative effects of mental stress and foster the development of a resilient and morally upright character.

Objectives:

1. To identify the negative effects of mental stress on individuals' health and well-being.
2. To explore Islamic teachings and principles related to stress management and character building.
3. To analyze the role of Islamic values such as patience (Sabr), gratitude (Shukr), and reliance on God (Tawakkul) in mitigating stress.
4. To examine the relationship between practicing Islamic principles and the development of a strong, resilient character.
5. To propose strategies based on Islamic teachings for improving mental health and building a balanced personality.
6. **Causes and Triggers of Mental Stress:**

1. Causes and Triggers of Mental Stress

Mental stress is a state in which a person feels mentally pressured and stressed. This stress is often caused by various aspects of life, such as work, personal relationships, financial difficulties, or health issues. The negative effects of mental stress not only affect a person's mental state but also have an adverse impact on physical health. This condition affects the brain to such an extent that there is a noticeable decline in daily activities and the quality of life.

In a state of mental stress, a person's thinking and behavior become disturbed leading to various physical and psychological issues. The effects include insomnia, nervous tension, depression, irritability, and difficulty concentrating. Long-term mental stress can lead to physical diseases such as heart diseases, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

These effects negatively impact an individual's overall health and quality of life, which is why timely diagnosis and treatment of mental stress are crucial to improving both

physical and mental health. The causes of mental stress and the negative effects it produces are reviewed. Among the first negative effects are those caused by fear? Fear, as mentioned in the context of triggers, is discussed here in more detail along with its effects:

1.1. The Concepts of Fear and Apprehension

Fear (خوف) comes from the Arabic root "خاف يخاف خوفًا," which relates to terror, dread, fear, and anxiety. From this root, terms like "تخويف" (to instill fear) and "اخافه" (to make someone fear) are derived, and its adjective form is "خائف" (fearful). (Al-Jurjani, *Al-Ta'arifat* (p. 90))

In terms of definition, the meaning of fear is almost similar to its literal sense. *Al-Asfahani* defined it as "the expected presence of something unpleasant through a known or suspected sign," (Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, *Al-Mufradat* p. 356) much like how hope and desire are linked to something desired. Fear can be found in both worldly and afterlife-related matters. Al-Jurjani defined fear as "the expected occurrence of something unpleasant or the fear of losing something beloved." (*Al-Ta'arifat* p. 90) Al-Taftazani described it as "the fear that a person experiences regarding the bad outcome that they anticipate." (*Al-Tawqif* (p. 161))

From these definitions, it is evident that fear is a feeling of anxiety and unease that arises from the expected occurrence of an unpleasant event in the present or the future. The opposite of fear is "safety" (امن), which is a state of not expecting any negative event in the future. Its root is "اطمئنان," meaning peace of heart and the absence of fear. The term "خشيت" (apprehension) also refers to fear and dread. (Maqayis al-Lugha, 2 409)

1.2.The Concept of Fear in the Qur'an and its Types and Effects on Humans

The concepts of fear and apprehension are used in different contexts in the Qur'an. Understanding the meanings and effects of these terms is crucial as they influence a person's state on spiritual, mental, and physical levels.

The Concept of Apprehension (خشيت):

The term "خشيت" (apprehension) is defined by Al-Asfahani as "a type of fear that includes reverence, and this fear generally arises when a person is aware of something that frightens them" (Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, , p. 383). Similarly, Al-Jurjani defined apprehension as "the heart feeling distressed, considering that some unpleasant event may happen in the future. This is sometimes caused by the excess of one's sins and sometimes due to the awe and majesty of Allah" (Al-Jurjani, p. 86). These definitions show that apprehension (خشيت) is more intense than simple fear and occurs when one recognizes the greatness of Allah or fears His punishment due to their sins.

Terror (رعب):

The literal meaning of "رعب" (terror) according to Ibn Faris is "fear, to be filled with fear, and to be paralyzed" (Ibn Faris, 1979, p. 409). Al-Raghib defined it as "the state of being filled with fear, resulting in a complete mental state of fear" (Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, n.d., p. 356).

Terminologically, terror (رعب) refers to an extreme form of fear that paralyzes the person, preventing them from taking any action. It is more intense than simple fear and disables a person's abilities.

Compassion and Mercy (شفقت و اشفاق):

Alongside fear and apprehension, words like "شفقت" (compassion) and "اشفاق" (mercy) are also used in the Qur'an. The linguistic definition of "شفقت" is "to feel fear for something and try to protect others from harm" (Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, n.d., p. 356). The Qur'an gives examples of Allah's compassion and mercy towards humans, symbolizing that Allah shows mercy towards His servants and helps alleviate their fears through His grace.

Effects on Humans:

Fear and apprehension can deeply affect a person's spirituality. Fear makes a person aware of their sins and motivates them to seek Allah's mercy. Similarly, apprehension makes a person realize the necessity of humbling themselves before the greatness and awe of Allah. Both of these emotional states lead a person towards self-improvement and play a crucial role in their spiritual development. However, these are considered positive aspects of stress, but they also have negative effects

Compassion, Awe, and Terror: Their Meanings and Effects in the Qur'an

Compassion (شفقت):

Compassion is, in technical terms, the tenderness and softness of heart that affects a person, often accompanied by fear. *Ibn Qayyim* referred to it as "the gentleness of fear," meaning a fear that is accompanied by mercy, where the person feeling fear also feels compassion for others. He said that compassion is "the softest and gentlest aspect of mercy." For example, when it is said, "The mother shows compassion to her child," it means she shows gentleness and care, looking after the child's needs. This is different from fear or apprehension.

In the Qur'an, compassion represents a form of mercy and softness, and it is not directly related to fear. As Allah Almighty states, "**Indeed, those who are in awe of their Lord are full of compassion**" (Qur'an, 23:57). This verse shows the connection between compassion and fear, but compassion here denotes a higher degree of care and mercy that goes beyond fear.

Awe (الرهبة):

Linguistically, "رهبة" (awe) comes from the root "رهب", which means fear. The words "رَبِيَّةٌ" and "رُبِيًّا" both refer to fear. The term "رَجُلٌ رَبِيوْتُ" means a person who is feared, implying that this person instills fear in others. It is said, "رَبِيْتُ خَيْرٌ مِنْ رَحْمَتِي", meaning it is better to instill fear than to show mercy. Awe is thus a type of intense fear that goes beyond ordinary fear and instills a deeper level of respect and dread in others.

Awe (الرهبة), Terror (الفرع), and Their Impact: Meanings and Connections

Awe (الرهبة):

In technical terms, الرهبة refers to an intense effort to avoid something unpleasant or harmful. It is a specific type of fear that involves caution and anxiety. This contrasts with "رغبت" (desire), which refers to the heart's journey towards something desired. Al-Ikseri mentioned: "الرهبة is prolonged fear and its continuity; hence, a monk is called a 'rahb' because they remain in constant fear." Therefore, الرهبة is a specific type of fear.

Terror (الفرع):

Linguistically, Ibn Faris stated that "الفرع" relates to two roots: one being "ذعر" (terror) and the other being "الإغاثة" (help). It is said, "فرع منه وفرعاً وفرعاً", meaning the person was frightened or terrified. "أفرعه وفرعه" means to make someone terrified or distressed. This indicates the person is in a state of "فرع" (terror).

In terms of definition, "الفرع" refers to the unexpected fear or distress a person feels when confronted with something terrifying. It is a type of "جزع" (distress), and it would not be accurate to say "فزعت من الله" (I was terrified of Allah) in the same manner as saying "خفت منه" (I was afraid of Him).

The relationship between fear and terror is that "الفرع" is an immediate attack of fear when it comes suddenly and intensely. Terror is a sudden fear that occurs when a person faces an unexpected danger or frightening situation. In the dictionary, "فرع" refers to the panic or distress a person experiences when confronted with something terrifying. "فرع" is similar to "جزع", but it is a faster and more immediate response. Terror has an immediate effect on a person's body and mind, causing them to attempt to escape or avoid the feared situation.

The Connection between These Emotions:

Fear, compassion, awe, and terror share some commonalities, but each represents a different level of emotion. Compassion involves mercy and tenderness, awe involves caution and attention, while terror is an immediate reaction when a person faces sudden fear. All these emotions impact a person mentally and spiritually and influence their responses, which may vary based on their circumstances and experiences

1.3. Different Types of Fear

2. *Terror* (الفرع):

Terror refers to the anxiety that arises in a person's heart due to an unexpected danger or fear, and it involves a rapid reaction. It means that a person is suddenly overwhelmed by fear, trying either to escape or confront it. In terror, a person experiences the fear of encountering a bad or frightening outcome immediately, and their heart is filled with anxiety and agitation.

In the Qur'an, terror (الفرع) is mentioned when the angels appeared before Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) (PBUH) and acted in an unusual manner. At this moment, Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) experienced a state of terror because he realized that something extraordinary was happening. Similarly, when Prophet Musa (Moses) (PBUH) witnessed the signs of Allah's power, he too experienced a state of terror (Qur'an, 11:69-70; 20:67-68).

3. *Anxiety* (الوجل):

Anxiety (الوجل) means a state of fear and dread. It is used in expressions such as "إنني لأوجل" and "رجل أوجل ووجل". In these contexts, it signifies a person feeling uneasy or restless. When someone says "يأجل", they are referring to a specific way of pronouncing words with changes in phonetics due to linguistic norms in certain Arabic dialects.

"وجل الرجل" means that the person became uneasy and could not find peace. It is also used in contrast with "طمأنينة" (calmness), indicating that someone is anxious, while the other person is at ease. "Fear" is an action that can affect others, while "anxiety" is a state that does not transfer to others. In essence, "anxiety" is the inner restlessness and disturbance that steals peace from the heart and weakens the mind (Ibn Manzur, 1994, Lisan al-Arab).

"Fear" and "terror" reflect similar effects, but there is a distinction: anxiety is the opposite of calmness, whereas fear is a more intense feeling that differs in its nature.

Anxiety is a type of fear, but it is softer compared to terror. It is the unrest and worry that arises in a person's heart, and it takes them away from a state of peace and tranquility. In anxiety, a person experiences agitation in their heart and mind, but it is a less intense form of fear compared to terror.

In the Qur'an, anxiety (الوجل) is mentioned in various places. One verse states: "إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ" (When Allah is mentioned, their hearts tremble) (Qur'an, 8:2). This shows that the mention of Allah induces a particular kind of anxiety and fear that stirs the heart and makes it emotionally active.

Effects:

These different states of fear deeply affect the human heart and mind. In such states, specific changes occur in the body as a response to energy and reaction, which either aid in defense or further increase anxiety. In both *faza'* (terror) and *al-wajal* (anxiety), there are mental and physical reactions, and these reactions depend on the individual's environment and current circumstances.

The effects of *al-wajal* and *faza'* influence a person's thinking and can weaken their decision-making abilities. In contrast, the remembrance of Allah and His mention bring peace and tranquility to the heart, creating a state of calmness (*tuma'ninah*).

Even attaining peace is a realization that fulfilling the responsibilities of servitude and obedience with determination and in the presence of divine lordship is essential. *Al-ikhat* (الاحبات) means arriving at a state of peace where there is no anxiety or instability. It signifies the elimination of restlessness and fear in a person's state, bringing them closer to faith, as it involves passing through a state of peace and security.

In the first verse, "the believers" (*mu'minoon*) are mentioned, and in the second verse, "the humble" (*mukhbitoona*) are referenced. The first verse describes the state of obedience and faith, meaning that a person remains steadfast in their previous responsibilities without any instability or deviation.

This steadfastness and firmness reflect the need to turn further toward the greatness of God, showing that a person must perform their acts of worship with certainty and faith. It means that a person should carry out their tasks with reassurance and peace, free from anxiety or restlessness. Turning to God and believing in the Day of Judgment and the Hereafter with certainty is essential.

Therefore, *al-wajal* should not be considered synonymous with "fear." In these verses, where the mention of God is present, using "fear" as *al-wajal* is not appropriate because *al-wajal* is softer and gentler, with a greater element of anxiety or restlessness.

There is a difference between "fear" (*khawf*) and *al-wajal*, as *al-wajal* occurs in the initial stages of fear. The beauty of the Qur'an is evident in how both terms are used differently in the context of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) (peace be upon him), sometimes as *al-wajal* and other times as *khawf*.

1.4. The Concept of Fear (*Khawf*) and Reverence (*Khashyah*) in the Qur'an

Al-Faza' (الفرع):

It is said, "Khaafa al-shay'a khawfan," which lexically means fear or shock. This indicates that a person fears the arrival of something unpleasant or the loss of something desirable. Expressions such as "Khaafa 'alā kadha" (he feared for something), "Khaafa minhu" (he feared from it), and "Khaafa 'alayhi" (he feared for him) are used, and the person is described as "Kha'if" (one who fears). Fear in relation to Allah does not merely mean that a person feels terror or dread in their mind; rather, it means that a person takes precautions to avoid sins and adopts righteous actions.

Therefore, it is said that a person who does not avoid sins is not called "Kha'if." This means that the fear of Allah encourages a person to avoid sins and follow the path of obedience.

The primary concern of fear from Allah is to protect a person from sins. As Allah says in the Qur'an: "*Qū anfusakum wa ahlīkum nāran*" (Save yourselves and your families from the Fire) (Qur'an, 66:6).

The term "Khawf" (fear) and its derivatives appear 124 times in the Qur'an, 87 of which are used as verbs. One example is the verse: "*Innī akhāfu Allāha rabba al-'ālamīn*" (I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds) (Qur'an, 59:13). Similarly, another verse states: "*Fa man tabi'a hudāya fa lā khawfun 'alayhim*" (Whoever follows My guidance, there will be no fear upon them) (Qur'an, 2:38). Another verse says: "*Alā khawfun 'alayhim wa lā hum yahzanūn*" (No fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve) (Qur'an, 2:62). This verse explains that the fear present in this world for the sake of Allah's pleasure will cease. There are many examples of this meaning in the Qur'an.

Second Aspect:

In some verses, the concept of "Khawf" is related to war or killing, as in Allah's statement: "*Wa u'idū ilā khawfin min al-qatli aw al-hazīmah*" (They were returned to a state of fear of being killed or defeated) (Qur'an, 3:151). Here, "Khawf" refers to the fear of the enemy in war or defeat. Al-Baghawi mentioned that "Khawf" here means killing or defeat, and Al-Tabari also stated that "Khawf" refers to the threat from the enemy.

Third Aspect:

"Khawf" is also used in the sense of knowledge or assumption, as in Allah's statement: "*Fa in khiftum*" (If you fear) (Qur'an, 4:3). Here, "Khawf" means "if you assume" or "if you are certain."

The Usage of "Khawf" in the Qur'an:

In the Qur'an, "Khawf" is used in various contexts, sometimes with "lā" (لا) as a prohibition and other times as negation. An example of "lā" as a prohibition is the verse: "*Lā takhaf nājūta min al-qawmi al-zālimīn*" (Do not fear; you have escaped from the wrongdoing people) (Qur'an, 28:25). An example of "lā" as negation is: "*Fa lā yakhāfu zulman wa lā haḍmā*" (They will fear neither injustice nor deprivation) (Qur'an, 20:112).

Fear (Khawf) and Reverence (Khashyah):

Fear (*Khawf*) and reverence (*Khashyah*) are two closely related but distinct terms in the Qur'an. The difference between them is one of generality and specificity. *Khashyah* is more specific and of a higher degree than *Khawf*, as *Khashyah* involves fear accompanied by knowledge and awareness. The difference between the two can be understood through the verse: "*Innamā yakhshā Allāha min 'ibādihi al-'ulamā*" (Only those of His servants who have knowledge fear Allah) (Qur'an, 35:28)

The Attributes of the People of Understanding (*Uli al-Albab*) as Described by Allah:

Allah says: "*Wa yakshawna rabbahum*" (And they fear their Lord) (Qur'an, 39:9). This means they strive to avoid all types of sins, protect the boundaries set by Allah, and stay away from His prohibitions.

Similarly, Allah says: "*Wa yakhāfūna sū'a al-ḥisāb*" (And they fear the severity of the reckoning) (Qur'an, 13:21). This indicates that they fear the harshness and detail of the reckoning on the Day of Judgment. They are terrified that Allah will hold them accountable for their deeds.

This shows that *khashyah* (reverence) is deeply connected to profound knowledge (*ma'rifah*) and piety (*taqwa*), while *khawf* (fear) is primarily related to the fear of punishment.

In *Tafsir al-Majma' al-Bahrain*, it is written that although *khawf* and *khashyah* are lexically similar, there is a distinction between them for those who possess deep understanding. *Khawf* is the state where a person is anxious due to the anticipated pain of punishment resulting from sins or shortcomings in worship, and this varies in intensity among people. On the other hand, *khashyah* is the state that arises from feeling the greatness and awe of Allah, and it is only found in those who have understood the majesty and the sweetness of closeness to Allah.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "*I am the most God-fearing among you, and I have the most reverence for Allah among you*" (Sahih Bukhari). Here, *khashyah* is given a higher status than *khawf* because *khashyah* is accompanied by knowledge (*ma'rifah*). Thus, *khawf* is a form of agitation, while *khashyah* is a state of tranquility and contraction.

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) explained the difference between *khawf* and *khashyah* in *Madarij al-Salikin*: "*Khawf is the agitation of the heart and its fleeing when it senses fear of something, while khashyah is the tranquility, contraction, and fear that comes with knowledge.*" Therefore, Allah mentioned the scholars with *khashyah* because when they fear Allah, their hearts attain tranquility. *Khawf* is fleeing from what is feared, while *khashyah* is attaining tranquility after that.

In the Qur'an, *khawf* is described in three ways:

1. **Fear itself**, as Allah says:
"*Wa lā tufsidū fī al-arḍi ba'da iṣlāḥihā wa'd'ūhu khawfan wa ṭama'an inna raḥmata Allāhi qarībun min al-muḥsinīn*" (Do not spread corruption on the earth after it has been set in order, and call upon Him with fear and hope. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good) (Qur'an, 7:56).

Second Aspect: Fear Related to Killing or War

An example of this is Allah's statement: "*Wa idhā jā'ahum amrun min al-amni aw al-khawfi adhā'ū bih*" (And when there comes to them news of security or fear, they spread it) (Qur'an, 4:83). Here, *khawf* refers to killing or defeat. Imam Al-Baghawi explained that in this verse, *khawf* means killing or defeat. Imam Al-Tabari added that the fear was from their enemy because the enemy was afraid of their attack.

Allah further says: "*Fa idhā jā'a al-khawfu ra'aytahum yanzurūna ilayka tadūru a'yunuhum ka-alladhī yughshā 'alayhi min al-mawt, fa idhā dhahaba al-khawfu salaqūkum bi-alsinatīn ḥidādin ashīḥḥatan 'alā al-khayr*" (And when fear comes, you see them looking at you, their eyes rolling like one fainting from death. But when fear departs, they lash you with sharp tongues, covetous of wealth) (Qur'an, 33:19). Here, *khawf* refers to the fear during war or battle, meaning that when war and calamity approach, they are overwhelmed by fear for their lives. The latter part of the verse, "*fa idhā dhahaba al-khawf*" (when fear departs), indicates that once the war ends and they feel at ease, they begin to oppose you. Ibn Ashur noted that before the Qur'an, the word *khawf* was not used in the context of war.

Third Aspect: Fear as Knowledge or Assumption

An example of this is Allah's statement: "*Al-ṭalāqu marratāni fa imsākun bi-ma'rūfin aw tasrīhun bi-iḥsān, wa lā yaḥillu lakum an ta'kudhū mim mā ātaytumūhunna shay'an illā an yakhāfā an yuqīmā ḥudūda Allāh, fa in khiftum an lā yuqīmā ḥudūda Allāh fa lā junāḥa 'alayhimā fīmā iftadat bih*" (Divorce is twice. Then, either keep her in an acceptable manner or release her with good treatment. And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them unless both fear that they will not keep within the limits of Allah. But if you fear that they will not keep within the limits of Allah, then there is no blame upon either of them concerning that by which she ransoms herself) (Qur'an, 2:229). Here, *yakhāfā* means to assume or have knowledge. Imam Al-Tabari explained that the Arabs used *ẓann* (assumption) in place of *khawf* and vice versa because their meanings are close.

In the Qur'an, the word *khawf* is also used in the sense of knowledge or assumption. For example, Allah says: "*Fa man khāfa min mūsin janāfan aw ithman*" (But if one fears from the bequeather some error or sin) (Qur'an, 2:182). Here, *khawf* means knowledge. Similarly, Allah says: "*Wa in imra'atun khāfat min ba'lihā nushūzan aw i'rāḍan*" (And if a woman fears from her husband contempt or evasion) (Qur'an, 4:128). Here, *khawf* also means knowledge, indicating that she knows her husband's attitude has changed.

Fear in the Context of an Enemy

The word *khawf* is also used in the Qur'an to mean fear of an enemy. For example, Allah says: "*Wa lanabluwannakum bi-shay'in min al-khawf*" (And We will surely test you with something of fear) (Qur'an, 2:155). Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) explained that this fear is from the enemy. Similarly, Allah says: "*Alladhī at'amahum min jū'in wa āmanahum min khawf*" (Who fed them from hunger and secured them from fear) (Qur'an, 106:4). Mujahid explained that this means providing security from the enemy.

The word *khawf* is also used in the sense of "loss" or "diminishment," as in Allah's statement: "*Aw ya'kudhahum 'alā takhawwuf*" (Or He seizes them while in a state of fear) (Qur'an, 16:47). Mujahid explained that this means "loss," indicating that they will be destroyed by gradual loss from their surroundings, as in the expression "*takhawwafahu al-dahr*" (time has diminished him)

1.5. Types of Fear in the Qur'an

Natural Fear:

Natural fear is an emotional state in which a person experiences anxiety and discomfort because they perceive or anticipate danger, harm, or suffering, and they strive to avoid it. This type of fear is found in all human beings, including the prophets, and it is generally not considered a flaw or deficiency as long as it is proportionate to the situation. A person is not blamed for this fear because it is inherent to human nature. Fear can vary in intensity—being excessive, deficient, or moderate—and the desired and good fear is that which is balanced.

Deficient fear is like the softness often associated with women. For example, when they hear a Qur'anic verse, their hearts are moved, and tears flow from their eyes, or when they witness a frightening scene. This type of fear has a weak impact and is less beneficial because it does not achieve its purpose and is not suitable for personal development.

Fear that exceeds moderation and leads to despair and hopelessness is inappropriate and blameworthy because it prevents a person from taking action.

On the other hand, balanced fear is the kind that prevents a person from committing sins and encourages them to perform acts of worship. However, if it remains only as a thought or mental activity without affecting physical actions, it cannot be called true fear.

Reflecting on the Qur'anic verses reveals that fear is divided into different types, and it is essential to understand which type of fear we should adopt. Should we choose the desirable and good fear, or the blameworthy and illegitimate fear?

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali (may Allah have mercy on him) said: *"The desired fear is that which motivates a person to fulfill obligations and avoid disobedience to Allah. If this fear increases, it also leads a person to perform voluntary acts of worship and avoid disliked actions, which is praiseworthy. However, if this fear becomes so intense that it causes illness, grief, or even death, and prevents a person from engaging in acts of worship that Allah loves, then it becomes harmful."*

The Desirable Aspect of Fear:

The desirable fear is that which is related to the greatness of Allah and prepares a person for the Day of Judgment. The Qur'an mentions fear of Allah's status in three different contexts.

Fear of Allah's Status and Its Effects:

Fear of Allah's status includes awe of His greatness and majesty, awareness of His watchfulness over His servants, accountability for one's actions, and fear of His anger and displeasure. This fear motivates believers to practice piety (*taqwa*), strive to worship Allah, and avoid disobedience. Through this fear, the personality of a believer is guided onto the right path and avoids all types of sins and transgressions.

Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966) wrote: *"A person who fears the status of their Lord will never incline toward sin, and if they commit a sin due to human weakness, their fear will lead them to*

repentance and seeking forgiveness, keeping them within the bounds of obedience. Fear of Allah is a strong barrier in the heart that prevents the intensity of desires. Allah did not command humans to never have desires or passions in their hearts, but rather to control their souls and use fear of Allah's status as a means to do so."

Fear of Allah's Punishment:

Another aspect of fear is the fear of Allah's punishment. The Qur'an contains numerous verses that warn people of His punishment, whether in this world or the Hereafter. Ibn Kathir said: *"It is necessary to fear Allah's punishment and to be cautious of its occurrence."*

Neglecting the fear of Allah's punishment leads a person to transgress His limits, ignore His commands, and fall into the traps of Satan. The Qur'an provides examples of past nations that disbelieved and denied Allah, only to face destruction as a result of His punishment. Their punishment was a consequence of their actions.

1.6. The Punishment of Allah in the Hereafter

The punishment of Allah in the Hereafter is far more severe and eternal, as mentioned in *Surah Ta-Ha*: it is described as "permanent and enduring" and "more humiliating and painful" (Qur'an, 20:74).

The Fear of the Prophets:

Given the intensity and severity of Allah's punishment, the Qur'an also describes the fear and concern of the prophets for their people. For example:

- Prophet Nuh (Noah) (peace be upon him) warned his people of Allah's punishment and urged them to repent.
- Prophet Hud (peace be upon him) also warned his people of Allah's punishment.
- Prophet Shu'ayb (peace be upon him) warned his people of Allah's punishment and called them to justice.

The Qur'an also mentions the fear of righteous individuals, such as the believer from the family of Pharaoh, who warned his people of Allah's punishment.

Fear of the Hereafter:

Believers are certain that Allah's reckoning is precise and comprehensive, and every small or large deed is recorded in His Book, for which they will be held accountable on the Day of Judgment. This instills fear in a person that they may fall short or that their actions may not align with Allah's pleasure.

This concept encourages believers to constantly monitor and evaluate their actions, fearing that their deeds may be flawed or not performed in the best manner. Allah says in the Qur'an: *"And they give food, despite their love for it, to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, [saying], 'We*

feed you only for the countenance of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude. Indeed, we fear from our Lord a Day austere and distressful'" (Qur'an, 76:8-10).

Al-Zajjaj (d. 923 CE), in his interpretation of this verse, explained that their hearts are filled with fear because they will return to their Lord, and this fear stems from their concern that their deeds may not be accepted in the desired manner, not merely because they will return to Allah.

Al-Shawkani (d. 1250 AH) also commented on this, stating: *"Those who perform acts of worship fear their obedience more because they are concerned that their worship may not be accepted."*

It is narrated from Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) that when she asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about this verse, she said: *"Are these the people who drink alcohol and steal?"* The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: *"No, my daughter. Rather, they are the ones who fast, pray, give charity, and fear that their deeds may not be accepted."*

Thus, fear (*khawf*) and anxiety (*wajal*) cleanse the hearts of believers from arrogance, pride, hypocrisy, and other diseases of the heart.

Reasons for Praiseworthy Fear:

Reflecting on the Qur'anic verses, some reasons for praiseworthy fear include:

1. Reflecting on the Qur'an and pondering its verses.
2. Gaining Knowledge of Allah and His Attributes
3. Feeling remorse for shortcomings in fulfilling Allah's rights and recognizing the consequences of sins.
4. Being conscious of Allah's watchfulness, whether in secret or in public.
5. Reflecting on death and its hardships, and contemplating the state of the grave.
6. Pondering the terrifying events of the Day of Judgment.
7. Reflecting on the punishment of Hell and its severity.
8. Keeping the company of righteous people and listening to their advice.

Effects of Praiseworthy Fear:

Praiseworthy fear has several positive effects on a person, including: Steadfastness in obeying Allah and avoiding major sins and transgressions. Benefiting from reminders and warnings, being influenced by Qur'anic verses, and acting on its guidance. Being deeply moved during the recitation of the Qur'an and shedding tears out of fear of Allah. Showing eagerness in performing good deeds and acts of worship, doing them with sincerity, and competing in righteous actions.

Blameworthy Fear:

Blameworthy fear is not from Allah, nor is it related to His attributes that inspire awe and fear. It is also not caused by a person's sins or shortcomings. Rather, it arises from other sources. Allah has mentioned examples of blameworthy fear in the Qur'an and warned worshippers against it, such as:

Fear of Satan:

The Qur'an contains various verses that warn against the enmity of Satan and instruct Allah's servants not to fear his deceit and plots. These verses also advise believers not to succumb to the whispers of Satan, who instills fear and despair in the hearts of believers through disbelievers and hypocrites, aiming to weaken them in their call to faith and struggle (jihad). For example, after the Battle of Uhud, when the believers were weakened and heading to Hamra' al-Asad, Satan took advantage of the situation to instill fear in their hearts and make them afraid of their enemies. Allah says:

"Indeed, Satan frightens you of his allies, so do not fear them but fear Me, if you are true believers" (Qur'an, 3:175). Satan frightens believers through his followers or tries to prevent his followers from engaging in jihad against disbelievers.

Another fear that Satan instills in hearts is the fear of poverty (faqr), as Allah says:

"Satan threatens you with poverty and orders you to immorality, while Allah promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing" (Qur'an, 2:268).

This verse explains that Satan frightens people into thinking that if they spend in the way of Allah, they will become poor. Satan uses this fear of poverty as a temptation, even though Allah promises forgiveness and abundance.

The heart of a believer should remain protected from the fear of Satan because they prostrate to Allah, and when Satan whispers to them, they immediately turn to their Lord. As Allah says:

"Indeed, those who fear Allah, when an impulse from Satan touches them, they remember Allah, and at once they have insight" (Qur'an, 7:201).

2. The Sources of Fear Are Diverse, but They Can Be Divided into Three Main Dimensions:

1. Psychological Dimension:

Fear is a natural part of human psychology, but socially acquired fear shapes the intensity and nature of these emotions. In many cases, fear is not just a natural human emotion but becomes a psychological disorder that takes hold of a person, making their life miserable.

2. Social Dimension:

Family relationships, or more specifically, family upbringing, can amplify feelings of fear, especially in children. As they grow older, their fear and hesitation toward everything increase. They become hesitant to take action or make decisions and face difficulties in building relationships with others. Parents who witness social corruption, moral deviations, and changing values develop intense fear about their children's future. They feel that their children's future is uncertain and blurry, and this fear is often transferred to their children, further increasing their sense of fear.

3. Economic Dimension:

The final dimension is economic, related to the pressure and uncertainty caused by economic crises in recent years, which have affected various countries and populations worldwide. As a result, it has become difficult for people to maintain a quality standard of living, and they face increasing unemployment, poverty, and financial difficulties, leading to a growing fear of the future. This fear gradually grows like a snowball, becoming larger with time.

The Consequences of Fear:

It is clear that feelings of fear have crossed natural and normal limits and have become one of the modern-day diseases. As we know, current life circumstances, along with their psychological and material characteristics, have exacerbated this issue. Pessimism and uncertainty have taken root in people's minds, affecting their behavior. Families have broken down, and the love that once bound family members together has disappeared. They are now failing to raise a courageous, active, and brave generation.

In societies, crime, moral decline, opportunism, and extreme selfishness have increased—all signs of hopelessness and fear. People have even begun to fear life itself. There are two ways to deal with this situation:

- 1. Living Under the Weight of Fear:**

Individuals live under the complete burden of fear, which affects their relationships, whether within the family or outside it. These people often fail to overcome life's harsh challenges.

- 2. Understanding and Overcoming Fear:**

Individuals try to understand this phenomenon, reflect on its causes and consequences, and seek solutions. This is the most effective way to overcome the crisis of fear. Some more courageous individuals seek help from psychologists to address the issue, which helps them achieve psychological and social balance and succeed in life.

We believe that understanding current circumstances and recognizing the changes in life, family, and society are the most important tools through which we can prevent fear from crossing its natural and normal limits and becoming a psychological problem.

4. Fear of Enemies

Criminals and opponents have always countered the call of the prophets and preachers, sometimes through denial and at other times through plots and conspiracies. Enemies have employed all means and strategies to instill fear in the hearts of believers and to discourage them. Therefore, the concept of fearing enemies falls under the category of blameworthy fear (*khawf madhmum*), from which Allah Almighty has repeatedly warned His prophets and Muslims. For example, Allah says:

"You will not harm them at all except that Allah will afflict them. And if you believe, then fear Allah alone, for He is sufficient as a disposer of affairs" (Qur'an, 3:175).

And says:

"Do not fear them, but fear Me, if you are true believers" (Qur'an, 3:175).

Believers cannot fear enemies because they know that Allah is their Protector and Helper, the One who holds power over life, death, and provision. Fear of enemies is natural if it motivates a person to prepare and take precautions. However, when this fear exceeds its limits and leads to cowardice, escape, or surrender, it becomes blameworthy fear, for which the person will be punished. Allah has praised His believers for fighting in His cause and not fearing the disbelievers. They show strength and determination in their faith and do not care about the harm inflicted by others.

The group of Satan always works to damage the honor of the people of faith, turning their virtues into vices out of envy, hatred, and malice. The Qur'an mentions the example of the Children of Israel, who faced fear of their enemies, refused to fight, and declined to enter the holy land, resulting in humiliation and disgrace. Muslims are also warned against such behavior.

5. Fear, Despair, and Hopelessness:

It is well-known that fear which protects a person from what Allah has forbidden is praiseworthy (*mahmud*). However, if this fear exceeds its limits and leads to despair (*ya's*) and hopelessness (*qunut*), it can drive a person toward sins and disobedience because their courage and hope are shattered. Therefore, it is essential for a believer not to let their fear lead to despair in Allah's mercy, as this type of fear is blameworthy and can cause inappropriate thoughts about Allah's mercy, even though His mercy prevails over His wrath.

The Qur'an contains many verses that encourage believers to maintain a balance between fear and hope. For example, Allah mentions both His forgiveness and His punishment. A believer's heart should always oscillate between fear and hope, between longing and awe. If they reflect on their Lord's mercy, forgiveness, and generosity, hope and longing arise. But if they reflect on their sins and shortcomings in fulfilling Allah's rights, fear and awe manifest. Allah has warned His servants in numerous verses against despairing of His spirit and losing hope in His mercy.

6. Other Forms of Blameworthy Fear:

Other forms of blameworthy fear include:

1. Fear of false deities, idols, or unseen beings, such as jinn or humans, thinking they can cause harm.
2. Fear of death, as seen in the example of the people of Hud (peace be upon him).

3. The polytheists tried to frighten the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by invoking their idols.

Allah warns His servants against such blameworthy fear and reminds them that Allah alone is the One who harms and benefits. Whoever relies on Allah, He is sufficient for them.

Mental Stress and Fear: Positive and Negative Aspects

In the context of mental stress, both positive and negative aspects of fear have been addressed to clarify that among the negative effects of mental stress, anger and conflict are also significant.

Anger and Conflict

Definition of Anger:

In psychology, anger is defined as an emotion that a person experiences, characterized by aggressive thoughts and behaviors, accompanied by physiological arousal. It often leads to inappropriate and offensive behavior that the angry person directs toward others. It is also accompanied by physical symptoms such as increased heart rate, headaches, and other signs like shouting, throwing objects, breaking pens, or hitting walls. Sometimes, a person does not express these emotions, and they remain an internal feeling, causing inner turmoil.

Causes of Anger:

The primary causes of anger are the environment and the challenges a person faces, such as:

- Difficult family and social circumstances.
- Feelings of exhaustion.
- Financial responsibilities.
- Exposure to abuse and violence.
- Demands and pressures exceeding a person's tolerance.
- Various anxieties, such as addiction to alcohol.
- Living in a family with anger management issues.
- Genetics and the body's ability to handle chemical changes and hormones.

There are also other causes and triggers of anger that can increase mental stress and psychological anxiety or make it a permanent trait in some individuals' social lives. These include:

As Imam Al-Ghazali (d. 505 AH) said: *"The causes that provoke anger include self-centeredness, arrogance, mockery, ridicule, criticism, opposition, betrayal, and intense desire for wealth and status. All of these are bad morals that are blameworthy in Sharia."*

Other causes of anger include the perception of anger as bravery, masculinity, and self-respect. Some people praise angry individuals, making anger seem desirable, which inclines the heart toward liking and justifying anger.

Environmental and social factors also contribute to anger, such as fatigue outside of work or home, lack of mental peace, and certain illnesses, especially if they have a physical impact. These factors affect a person's behavior because they feel inferior to others. Additionally, a lack of harmony in the family and poor social and familial relationships can also cause anger. Similarly, financial difficulties can be a cause of anger.

Anger as an Emotion or Social Affect:

Anger is considered an emotion or social affect that evokes various feelings in a person, such as the pain caused by anger. Therefore, a person takes precautionary measures to protect themselves and transforms anger without feeling it because they prefer to engage in actions that distract them temporarily from the root cause. This prevents them from directly confronting their true emotions, and they try to avoid them. They attempt to convert pain into anger and focus their attention on others to avoid focusing on themselves. Anger becomes a shield for them to hide their emotions from others. Whether the anger is justified or not, it provides a sense of self-confidence and transforms a person's weaknesses and helplessness into a powerful and controlling stance. However, anger cannot eliminate pain.

Anger: Negative Effects and Positive Aspects

Anger, while often associated with negative consequences, also has a positive dimension. It is an individual instinct aimed at self-protection, such as when facing an enemy one intends to overpower or encountering an obstacle that hinders the fulfillment of a desire or action. This is evident in both humans and animals. For example:

- A cat becomes angry when it sees a dog.
- A child becomes angry if something is taken from their hand without their consent.

In such cases, anger is often accompanied by screaming, crying, intense physical movements, stomping on the ground, or damaging objects within reach. This may escalate into a fight that lasts for some time, but eventually, the child achieves their desired outcome.

The instinctive reaction triggered by anger is not always a fight. The emotional element associated with fighting is anger, which can sometimes transform into hatred and resentment, especially when a person fails to defeat their enemy. If the enemy is powerful enough to shift from defense to offense, the emotional element of anger may turn into fear, leading to avoidance or hiding. Conversely, fear can also turn into anger when a fearful person gains courage and perceives the enemy's weakness or inability to resist. From this, we can see a connection between the instincts of flight and fight.

Social Effects of Anger:

Anger, like fear, is a state that provides a person with a powerful surge of nervous energy, enabling them to perform actions they might not otherwise be capable of. For instance, an angry person might slap their enemy or knock them down, causing harm. The rapid circulation of blood, the activation of almost all bodily systems, and the tension in muscles and nerves—all these factors make it difficult for an angry person to control themselves, their will, or their rationality. Instead, they are swept away by waves of anger and may act in ways that the law might forgive.

After anger subsides, a specific emotional state arises in which it becomes difficult for a person to think, reflect, behave kindly, accept apologies, or incline toward positive relationships. Therefore, it is better to leave an angry person alone for some time until the storm passes and the effects of anger dissipate. It has been observed that civilized individuals do not always resort to direct confrontation during anger. Instead, they may harbor ill feelings toward their enemy, seek opportunities to attack, or use legal means to seek revenge. A religious person, on the other hand, seeks help from Allah during anger and asks for His assistance in dealing with their enemy.

This means that the effects of anger do not manifest in civilized individuals in the same way as they do in animals, uncivilized humans, or children. Laws, social norms, and upbringing compel humans to suppress their anger. However, the nervous energy that does not find an outlet during anger may manifest in other ways. For example, a person might redirect their anger toward someone else, such as their spouse, children, or family members, or it may manifest as symptoms of illness or psychological distress.

Anger and Morality:

Anger is a double-edged sword. If it leans toward evil, it can harm a person's health and social life, potentially leading to destruction in society. However, if it is directed toward a noble purpose, it can motivate a person to defend their honor, dignity, family, homeland, or justice.

In everyday life, one of the psychological changes a person experiences is anger, stress, and emotional reactions. These arise due to mental pressure or specific circumstances, leading to anger and emotional responses. The effects of anger manifest in a person's behavior and conduct, potentially causing physical effects and psychological or behavioral changes.

We are all susceptible to this state. Anger and psychological stress affect everyone, young or old. What differs is how each person responds to these feelings and their ability to control the

Facing Provocation and the Nature of Anger:

Facing provocation tests a person's self-discipline and control. However, sometimes anger is a natural reaction that may be appropriate depending on the situation, and it is not necessarily a sign of illness. But at other times, anger takes on a blameworthy form, exceeding its limits and becoming a pathological state.

This occurs when anger goes beyond moderation, reaching exaggeration and extremism, overpowering a person's rationality and adherence to Islamic principles. In such a state, a person loses insight, wisdom, and the ability to reflect, often leading to self-destruction. By the time they realize their mistake, it is often too late. Such anger can escalate over trivial matters, leading to

major crimes or actions the person would never normally commit, only to regret them later. This type of anger is blameworthy both religiously and rationally, as mentioned by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

"The strong is not the one who overcomes people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger." (Sahih Bukhari)

Psychological Perspective on Anger:

Psychologists have studied anger in detail and classified it as a psychological disorder, especially if it becomes a permanent part of an individual's personality. The three primary components of anger are:

1. Thought or Interpretation:

This involves interpreting an external behavior as a threat or an imminent danger, often perceived as an attack on one's personality. For example:

- "This is an attack on my self-esteem."
- "This person is disloyal."
- "They have not given me my rights."
- "They do not respect me."

2. Physiological Response:

This includes:

- Muscle tension.
- Increased breathing rate.
- Rapid heartbeat due to heightened hormonal activity.
- Facial muscle tension.
- Increased blood pressure.
- A state of readiness to attack.

3. External Behavior:

This can start with verbal attacks, such as cursing or shouting, and escalate to physical aggression, such as fighting, violence, or even murder.

Some individuals tend to get angry quickly over minor issues, while others have specific triggers that provoke intense anger due to personal sensitivities.

Anger in Islamic Teachings:

Anger is like fire, and a person in a state of anger falls under the influence of Satan. Allah says:

"You created me from fire, and You created him from clay." (Qur'an, 7:12)

The nature of clay is calmness and dignity, while the nature of fire is burning, blazing, movement, and restlessness.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) advised a person who sought his counsel: *"Do not become angry,"* and he repeated this advice multiple times. (Sahih Bukhari)

In another narration, Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) asked the Prophet (peace be upon him): *"What can save me from Allah's anger?"* The Prophet replied: *"Do not become angry."* (Sahih Bukhari)

Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"The strong is not the one who overcomes people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger."* (Sahih Bukhari)

Ikrimah, while interpreting Allah's statement: "*And he will be a chief and chaste,*" said: "*A chief is one who controls himself in anger, and his anger does not overpower him.*"

It is said: "*Avoid anger, for it ruins faith just as aloe ruins honey,*" and anger is the enemy of reason.

Anger is like boiling blood in the heart, arising from a desire for revenge. When a person becomes angry, the fire of anger boils the blood, spreading it throughout the body, much like water boiling over in a pot. This is why the face, eyes, and skin turn red, reflecting the redness of the blood within, just as the color of a bottle reflects the color of its contents.

The Manifestation of Anger and Its Effects:

If anger is directed toward a weaker person, and the angry individual feels they have the power to control them, the blood spreads to the upper parts of the body. However, if the anger is directed toward a stronger person with no hope of retaliation, the blood contracts inward toward the skin and returns to the heart, causing sadness and turning the complexion yellow. If the anger is directed toward an equal, the blood fluctuates between contraction and expansion, resulting in a mix of red and yellow complexion and causing restlessness in the body. The desire for revenge further intensifies the power of anger.

Types of People in the State of Anger:

People can be divided into three categories regarding anger: excess (*ifrat*), deficiency (*tafrit*), and moderation (*i'tidal*).

1. **Excess (*Ifrat*):**
Anger completely overpowers the person, causing them to lose control of their mind and religion. In this state, the person has no control, thought, or decision-making ability.
2. **Deficiency (*Tafrit*):**
Anger is completely ignored, leading to a lack of zeal and honor in the person. Someone entirely devoid of anger fails to control their ego.
3. **Moderation (*I'tidal*):**
The correct path is moderation, where a person controls their anger internally.

Effects of Anger:

When anger becomes extreme, it blinds and deafens a person, as it reaches the brain and blocks the ability to think. The brain enters a state akin to a cave filled with blazing fire, blackened and filled with smoke. This fire destroys a person's intellect, and if anger becomes too intense, it can become life-threatening.

The physical effects of anger include changes in complexion, trembling hands and feet, erratic physical movements, and alterations in facial expressions. When a person sees their state during anger, they feel disgusted because the internal turmoil is reflected externally. Envy plays a significant role in exacerbating anger.

Negative Stress and Self-Admiration (*Al-'Ujb*):

Self-Admiration (Al-'Ujb) refers to a person magnifying even their smallest virtues and desiring excessive praise for them beyond what they deserve. A person afflicted with self-admiration does not consider anyone better than themselves in their qualities.

Self-admiration is a dangerous affliction that affects many people, preventing them from thanking their Creator and instead inclining them to thank themselves. It diverts them from praising Allah to praising themselves, replacing humility and submission to the Creator with arrogance, pride, and boasting about their deeds. As a result, such individuals begin to look down on others instead of respecting them and understanding their rights.

Self-admiration is the state of being proud of oneself and exaggerating one's deeds, where a person attributes their actions to themselves and forgets that they are blessings from Allah.

The Harms of Self-Admiration:

The harms of self-admiration include:

- It nullifies good deeds.
- It hides virtues and highlights flaws.
- It leads to condemnation and prevents one from attaining excellence.

Al-Mawardi said:
"Self-admiration hides virtues and exposes flaws. It leads to condemnation and prevents excellence... The condemnation of arrogance does not reach its limit, and the ignorant consequences of self-admiration have no end. It erases virtues and strips away renowned excellences. Nothing is worse than a bad habit that destroys all good deeds, and a flaw that ruins a virtue. At the same time, it increases enmity and breeds hatred."

Signs of Self-Admiration:

The signs of self-admiration are numerous, including:

1. Denying the truth and looking down on others.
2. Showing arrogance in behavior (e.g., puffing up one's cheeks).
3. Refusing to seek advice from the wise and elders.
4. Displaying arrogance in walking.
5. Considering acts of worship as overly significant and boasting about them.
6. Taking pride in knowledge and comparing one to others.
7. Mocking and ridiculing others.
8. Boasting about lineage and beauty.
9. Deliberately opposing others to elevate one.
10. Disrespecting righteous scholars.
11. Praising one.
12. Forgetting sins and considering them insignificant.
13. Always expecting good rewards and hoping for prayers to be answered.
14. Insisting on mistakes.
15. Becoming lazy in worship and believing one has reached perfection.

16. Looking down on sinners and wrongdoers.
17. Providing guidance without wisdom.
18. Ignoring the advice of knowledgeable people.

Causes of Self-Admiration (Al-'Ujb):

1. **Ignorance (Jahl):** Some people take pride in their work, scholarly disputes, and the opinions of scholars, even though if they knew that boasting about knowledge is a sign of their ignorance, they would never be proud of themselves. Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali wrote: *"The cause of self-admiration is nothing but ignorance, and its cure lies in the knowledge that opposes this ignorance."*
2. **Lack of Piety and God-Consciousness (Taqwa).**
3. **Weak Understanding of Allah's Watchfulness.**
4. **Lack of Advisors.**
5. **Bad Intentions and Evil in the Heart.**
6. **People Praising and Flattering the Person Excessively:** This can become a tool for Satan.
7. **Deception of the World and Following Desires:** This leads to the corruption of the soul.
8. **Lack of Reflection:** If a person reflects, they will realize that every blessing is from Allah.
9. **Lack of Gratitude to Allah.**
10. **Reduced Remembrance of Allah.**
11. **Lack of Reflection on the Qur'an and Hadith.**
12. **Fearlessness of Allah's Plan and Overreliance on His Forgiveness.**

Treatment of Self-Admiration (Al-'Ujb):

The cure for self-admiration is for a person to strive to recognize their flaws and seek the help of a close companion who can point out their shortcomings. A person should not compare themselves to those inferior to them nor elevate themselves above their peers.

Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali (d. 505 AH) mentioned that the treatment of self-admiration lies in seven matters:

1. **Pride in Physical Attributes:** A person may boast about their beauty, health, strength, or appearance, forgetting that these are blessings from Allah that can vanish at any moment. The cure is to reflect on the filth and mortality of the body, realizing that what is beautiful today will decay in the earth, becoming a source of disgust.
2. **Pride in Strength and Power:** Like the people of 'Ad, who said, *"Who is mightier than us in strength?"* (Qur'an, 41:15). The cure is to thank Allah and remember that even a minor illness can impair one's mind and body. A person should not think too highly of themselves, as their knowledge is limited, and what they do not know is far greater.
3. **Pride in Noble Lineage:** Some people boast about their noble ancestry, believing their honor comes from lineage rather than good deeds and connection with Allah. The cure is to understand that if one's actions are bad, their lineage is meaningless. True honor comes from piety and deeds, not lineage.
4. **Pride in Numbers:** Boasting about the number of children, servants, family, or followers, as the disbelievers said, *"We are greater in wealth and children"* (Qur'an,

- 34:35). The cure is to reflect on one's weaknesses and realize that everyone is helpless and will face death alone, with no benefit from their numbers.
5. **Pride in the Lineage of Tyrannical Rulers and Their Supporters:** The cure is to reflect on their oppression and corruption, understanding that they are condemned in the sight of Allah.
 6. **Pride in Wealth:** As mentioned in the Qur'an: "*I am wealthier than you and mightier in followers*" (Qur'an, 18:34). The cure is to reflect on the calamities, rights, and problems associated with wealth, realizing that wealth is temporary and perishable. Remember the Prophet's (peace be upon him) statement: "*A man who boasted about his wealth and himself was swallowed by the earth and will groan until the Day of Judgment.*"
 7. **Pride in False Opinions:** As mentioned in the Qur'an: "*Is he whose evil deeds are made attractive to him, so he considers them good?*" (Qur'an, 35:8). The cure is to always doubt one's opinions and not rely solely on personal views. One should only hold an opinion if it is supported by the Qur'an, Sunnah, or sound reasoning, avoiding innovation and misguidance.

4. Summary

This article explores the negative effects of mental stress, particularly fear and anger, and examines how Islamic principles can provide solutions to these challenges. It begins by highlighting the prevalence of mental stress in contemporary society and its detrimental effects on physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The article then delves into the Islamic perspective on stress management, emphasizing the importance of faith-based approaches such as patience (*Sabr*), gratitude (*Shukr*), reliance on Allah (*Tawakkul*), and remembrance of Allah (*Dhikr*).

The article categorizes fear into different types, such as natural fear, anxiety (*al-Wajal*), and terror (*al-Faza'*), and discusses their psychological and spiritual impacts. It also examines the concept of fear in the Qur'an, distinguishing between praiseworthy fear (e.g., fear of Allah) and blameworthy fear (e.g., fear of enemies or worldly matters). The role of fear in motivating self-improvement and spiritual growth is highlighted, alongside its potential to cause harm when it leads to despair or hopelessness.

Anger is analyzed as both a natural emotion and a psychological disorder, with its causes, effects, and Islamic remedies discussed in detail. The article emphasizes the importance of controlling anger and redirecting it toward positive actions, as taught in Islamic teachings. Additionally, the concept of self-admiration (*al-'Ujb*) is explored, with its causes, harms, and remedies outlined to help individuals avoid arrogance and pride.

The article concludes by proposing practical strategies rooted in Islamic teachings to manage stress, overcome fear and anger, and build a resilient and morally upright character. It underscores the holistic approach of Islam in addressing mental health, combining spiritual, emotional, and practical solutions.

5. Conclusion:

Mental stress, fear, and anger are universal human experiences that can have profound negative effects on individuals' health and well-being. However, Islamic teachings offer a comprehensive

framework for managing these challenges and fostering personal growth. By relying on Allah, practicing patience, expressing gratitude, and engaging in regular worship, individuals can find peace and resilience in the face of life's difficulties.

The Qur'an and Hadith provide timeless guidance on overcoming fear, controlling anger, and avoiding self-admiration, emphasizing the importance of humility, self-reflection, and reliance on Allah. These principles not only help individuals cope with stress but also contribute to the development of a strong, balanced, and morally upright character.

In a world increasingly plagued by mental health issues, the Islamic approach to stress management offers a unique and effective solution. By integrating faith-based practices into daily life, individuals can achieve mental and emotional well-being while strengthening their connection with Allah. This article serves as a reminder of the profound wisdom embedded in Islamic teachings and their relevance to modern challenges.

Key Takeaways:

1. **Mental Stress and Fear:** Mental stress, particularly fear, has significant negative effects on health and well-being. Islamic teachings provide tools to manage these emotions effectively.
2. **Islamic Principles:** Patience (*Sabr*), gratitude (*Shukr*), reliance on Allah (*Tawakkul*), and remembrance of Allah (*Dhikr*) are central to overcoming stress and building resilience.
3. **Types of Fear:** Fear can be natural, praiseworthy (e.g., fear of Allah), or blameworthy (e.g., fear of enemies). Understanding these distinctions is crucial for spiritual growth.
4. **Anger Management:** Anger, while a natural emotion, can become harmful if not controlled. Islamic teachings emphasize self-control and redirecting anger toward positive actions.
5. **Self-Admiration (*Al-'Ujb*):** Arrogance and self-admiration are dangerous traits that hinder personal growth. Humility and self-reflection are essential remedies.
6. **Holistic Approach:** Islam offers a holistic approach to mental health, combining spiritual, emotional, and practical solutions to help individuals lead balanced and fulfilling lives.

By embracing these Islamic principles, individuals can navigate the challenges of modern life with resilience, peace, and a strong moral compass.

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