



## Day 1: Spiritual Retreat

### Bismillah

Ok, so taking the inspiration from Ramadan and itikaaf what we want to do for the next 10 days is that we want to create our very own 'Spiritual Retreat'.

What is a 'Spiritual Retreat?'

It is a time where we seclude ourselves so we can devote ourselves fully to worshipping Allah – mind, body and soul – a place to recharge, refresh and remerge.

We know that in Ramadan when we perform itikaaf we just focus on our ibaadah and maximise our time.

We can always create a short retreat for ourselves anytime of the year.

And in fact in today's world we need it more so as our lives are so hectic and our minds are working non-stop.

We have our day to day life to take care of so the first thing I want you to do is grab your journal and write down what time every day for the next 10 days you will create this special time where you can just devote yourself to Allah – either by reciting Qur'an, doing dhikr or just practicing mind-quieting.

Since you have other commitments throughout the day this specific time will be where you can unwind and focus.

It may be anytime of the day where you can just be you and have you time in this retreat with Allah.

Start with 15 minutes as you may be new to this but please increase it to 20 minutes, 30 minutes and then an hour.

This is for everyday for the next 10 days.

Have you scheduled it in?

Honestly, how many times during the day do you say; 'I don't get time for myself'.

Exactly! Well here's your chance now.



## **Day 1: Spiritual Retreat**

Have your 'Me time' for your other activities but this is for you and Allah and ibaadah – yes even if it is closing your eyes, quieting the mind and reciting some dhikr.

Creating this retreat will also strengthen your whole 10 Day Challenge as this may be the time where you journal in your thoughts, how your challenge for the day has been, what you can improve, and of course emailing me!

So this 'Spiritual Retreat' can be multi-type – depending upon your own uniqueness.

This is also a good practice to continue throughout our life as 15 minutes before we go to sleep we should account for our day and what we did and 15 minutes in the morning we should spend the time setting the intention for the day and what we want to and need to achieve.

So all in all it's a good practice.

And if you have never done this before then you will find it very peaceful as you will realise how much of our time is spent in noise, worry and negative thoughts. In other words – time wasted!

Find a comfortable place in your house where you will choose for your daily spiritual retreat and make it as comfortable as possible but not too comfortable where you fall asleep!

Make sure it is distraction free – remember this is a time to reconnect and then remerge. Your cat is allowed – so long as s/he has been fed!

Settle in your retreat, set the timer for 5 minutes and take three deep breathes and slowly breathe out.

With each exhale relax yourself – all the way from the top of your head to the tips of your toes – that's right.

Think of a place that really relaxes you and helps you unwind – for me it's the beach. We call this place our 'safe-place' – because we are safe here.

Yours can be whatever it is for you insha'Allah.



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I want you to continue with your slow but deep breathing – each time relaxing even more.

See yourself in your place (like the beach for me) and take in all the sounds, smells, tastes. What do you see? What can you smell? How does it feel?

Turn the volume up to your place – a bit like turning up the dial on those old radios and brighten the place up – give it a HD effect.

Keep breathing and just allow your heart and soul to relax and whilst you take in your surroundings in your place just allow whatever it is to come to you.

Whatever you see or feel – give it permission and just observe it.

Continue until your alarm goes off and slowly – when you are ready – start stretching and open your eyes. Can you smell that coffee? Good!

Grab your journal and write down whatever came to you in your moment of awareness. (And the coffee smell was to get you back from your place)

Take a sip of water (if you're not fasting – as you may want to have your retreat during the day) and continue in your retreat by doing whatever else you have scheduled (remember the first thing I asked you to do is to schedule what you will do in your retreat).

Make sure that if you are continuing for more than 15 minutes then you do choose ibaadah activities as this challenge is to maximise our ibaadah and reward in these 10 days of Dhul-Hijjah and outside of this time still try and use this time for ibaadah activities.

I mean how many times have we rushed our prayers and Qur'an recital?

Exactly – you feel me! This 'Spiritual Retreat' is our ibaadah retreat!

So, how do you feel?

Will you continue this challenge daily for the next 10 days and beyond?

Of course you will insha'Allah!

Email me with your daily reflection feedback. This is just the beginning! 😊