

Self-Care and Clarity of Mind...a weekly column by Princess Lakshman (Sister Iqra)



Welcome to my weekly column on **Self-Care and Clarity of Mind**. If you're taking time out to read this, pat yourself on the back because you have shown commitment to taking care of your mind and body.

Today, In Shaa ALLAH, we will explore the topic: **What You Feed Your Mind Determines What You Feed Your Body**

For years I used food for comfort. Any emotional occurrence such as happiness, sadness, anger, guilt, frustration, and more, would be my cue to hit the pantry and finish a whole packet of crisps or an entire family-size chocolate bar (the giant Toblerone from Airport Duty Free?...Oh boy...Don't even get me started on that story!).

Every Monday morning I would decide to eat healthily and every Monday lunchtime I would decide to postpone the healthy-eating commitment to next Monday. That was my pattern. Apart from the weight gain, I was also feeling lousy about my sugar addiction. Yes, sugar is poison and yes, sugar addiction is very real and detrimental to mental and physical wellbeing. And I was tired of feeling lousy about myself, my weight, my lack of energy and my irritability. This had to stop.

I was aware of my pattern. As Oprah says, when you know better, you do better. I had to find out why I had this pattern and address the elephant that incessantly roamed the jungle of my mind. I sat myself down with my journal and fiercely wrote. It took three hours for me to trace my pattern back to an incident that happened when I was around five years old. It took another few hours to link my eating pattern with my life's major incidents where I had to make choices that affected my wellbeing. Most of those choices were harmful to my wellbeing and when I connected the dots

between my dietary pattern and those lifestyle choices and how my mental state was back then, everything became crystal clear.

A paradigm shift, which I now call my Gut-Shift, revealed to me that for me to make better choices in life, stay strong in my imaan and nourish my soul with love, light, peace and joy, I must first and foremost, nourish my mind with the right mental foods so that I could then choose better foods and beverages to nourish my physical self. If my essential self, my soul and my mind, was starving, how was I ever going to choose the right foods for my body?

How To Feed Your Mind And Body

Good thoughts, good words, good deeds. I had to heal from my emotional eating pattern one thought at a time. The following are strategies to feed your mind, process your emotions and then choose the right foods to manage your emotions:

Junk Thought	Healthy Thought
I hate myself	I am a beautiful creation of ALLAH
I'm a failure	I have survived through my tests and learnt my lessons
I need food to feel better	ALLAH is my comforter. Only ALLAH can make me feel better. I submit to ALLAH.
I'm stuck	My life is unfolding according to ALLAH's plans for me. Alhumdolillah.
I hate feeling like I'm always struggling	I am grateful for everything I'm learning through this experience. ALLAH has put me to it and HE is putting me through it. I am wiser and stronger now that I am going through this experience.
No one loves me. I will end up alone	I am a beautiful creation of ALLAH. I deserve love, light, peace and joy. I give love, I receive love.

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