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# Healthy Lifestyle from the Perspective of the Qur'an and Nahj al-Balagha

## ABSTRACT

A healthy lifestyle from the perspective of the Holy Qur'an and Nahj al-Balagha offers a comprehensive model for balanced and purposeful living that encompasses the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of human life. The Qur'anic teachings, with an emphasis on moderation, justice, inner and outer purity, and connection with God, provide a foundation for the well-being of both individuals and society. Nahj al-Balagha likewise illuminates the path of moral excellence through recommendations such as asceticism (zuhd), contentment (qana'ah), self-purification (tahdhīb al-nafs), and self-awareness (ma'rifat al-nafs). This article, employing an analytical approach, examines the principles of a healthy lifestyle in these two Islamic sources and proposes a practical model for ethically oriented living in the contemporary era.

**Keywords:** healthy lifestyle, Holy Qur'an, Nahj al-Balagha

## Introduction

Throughout history, human life has consistently been accompanied by ups and downs, as well as various pressures—many of which, in fact, have been created or exacerbated by human hands. Regardless of their status or position, every individual harbors a longing for peace, comfort, and a life free from anxiety and turmoil. However, the reality is that the intrusion of daily anxieties, depression, worries, and frustrations distances life from its essential goal: the attainment of inner peace and contentment (1).

Human life is like a complex and intertwined puzzle. If one adds to this complexity with baseless worries and fruitless preoccupations, only suffering and regret will remain. Many individuals either dwell on the painful memories of the past,

trapping themselves in mistakes and remorse, or they become lost in the fears and hopes of the future—thus forgetting to live in the present moment, which is their most valuable asset. This neglect of the “present” is a root cause of many concerns, restlessness, and mental disorders such as anxiety and depression (2).

It is in such conditions that divine guidance and spiritual teachings find their place. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) states in a luminous hadith: “*When tribulations become confusing to you like parts of a dark night, adhere to the Qur’an.*” This prophetic statement reminds us that the only path to salvation from the whirlpool of seditions, darkness, and life’s confusion lies in adherence to the Holy Qur’an—because the Qur’an is the word of God, and nothing but truth and light resides within it (3).

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also considers the Qur’an a sincere advisor who never betrays humanity nor leads it astray. In this divine book, the right way of living, a noble lifestyle, and a comprehensive program for achieving human perfection and divine closeness are presented. God Almighty, in the verses of the Qur’an, introduces the ideal model for human life as “*Hayat Tayyiba*”—a pure and wholesome life that liberates individuals from futile anxieties and baseless concerns, guiding them toward deep serenity and divine satisfaction (4).

A person who lives in the light of Qur’anic teachings understands the true meaning of life and learns to maintain hope in all situations, live in the present, express gratitude, and ease life’s burdens through remembrance of and reliance on God. Truly, attaining *Hayat Tayyiba* and living a Qur’anic lifestyle not only frees one from worldly confusion but also places them on the path toward achieving lofty human and divine goals—manifesting the noble attributes of the Creator and attaining divine proximity (5).

Therefore, returning to the Qur’an and acting upon its guidance is the most vital strategy for overcoming individual and social crises and achieving sustainable peace and purposeful living. This is the kind of life in which a person, in addition to outward comfort, also attains inner tranquility, hope, satisfaction, and spiritual perfection (6).

In the contemporary world, human lifestyles have become increasingly influenced by rapid technological advancements, the expansion of mass media, cultural shifts, and social transformations. These changes, while offering new opportunities, have also introduced fundamental challenges in the realms of mental health, human relationships, and the meaning of life. Within this context, the modern individual has become somewhat disconnected from their spiritual and moral roots, and in many cases, their lifestyle has shifted toward consumerism, extreme individualism, and disregard for inner values. In response to this condition, a return to authentic and inspirational Islamic sources such as the Holy Qur’an and *Nahj al-Balagha* may offer an effective path for redefining a healthy and balanced lifestyle (7).

These two sources not only contain ethical and spiritual teachings but also offer practical principles for everyday living—principles that, despite their historical origin, remain applicable to modern life. The Holy Qur’an, by emphasizing concepts such as moderation, avoidance of extravagance, respect for others’ rights, and constant connection with God, presents a comprehensive model for physical, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being (7). *Nahj al-Balagha*, with the wise words of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), guides individuals toward self-knowledge, self-purification, justice, and responsibility. These teachings can bring about transformative change not only at the individual level but also within social structures (8).

Moreover, the concept of a healthy lifestyle in Islamic thought is not limited to physical hygiene or proper nutrition. Rather, it encompasses deeper dimensions such as inner peace, life satisfaction, ethical interaction with others, and spiritual growth. Within this framework, the human being—as a multidimensional entity—requires a model that can guide all aspects of their existence toward transcendence (9).

Understanding lifestyle in today’s world, which coincides with the period of the Occultation (*Ghayba*), is considered a fundamental and essential inquiry. This is because one of our primary responsibilities is to raise an aware and prepared

generation that can assist Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) and help create the conditions for his advent. Reflection upon the Qur'anic verses and the sayings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) reveals that achieving *Hayat Tayyiba* and a noble lifestyle during the era of the Imam's reappearance depends on recognition and understanding of the Divine Proof. Governance during the time of Imam al-Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) will be in the hands of the righteous, and under his guardianship, *Hayat Tayyiba* will manifest in its highest form (10).

The Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balagha*, by offering *Hayat Tayyiba* as an ideal model for lifestyle, seek to reform and elevate human societies. However, this does not imply imposing a fixed model of life on all communities. Rather, the Qur'anic lifestyle provides a dynamic and flexible framework that, while based on monotheistic principles, takes into account the environmental, climatic, and cultural conditions of each society—organizing and refining their values and customs accordingly (11).

The theoretical foundations of a healthy lifestyle from the perspective of the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balagha* are based on a multidimensional understanding of human beings and their needs. Humans require not only physical and mental health but also guidance in their path toward social development and spiritual transcendence. In this framework, a healthy lifestyle is defined as a collection of behaviors, attitudes, and choices that support the maintenance and enhancement of well-being in all dimensions of human existence. The Holy Qur'an, by emphasizing principles such as moderation in affairs, avoidance of wastefulness, respect for the rights of others, and ongoing connection with God, offers a balanced model for faithful living (12).

These teachings are not only concerned with physical and mental health but also ensure spiritual well-being through cultivating inner peace, strengthening trust in God (*tawakkul*), and encouraging remembrance of the Divine (*dhikr*) (13). In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) teaches that a healthy life requires balance between worship, livelihood, and permissible pleasures—thereby encouraging moderation in benefiting from both worldly and afterlife resources. His recommendations on asceticism (*zuhd*), contentment (*qana'ah*), self-purification, and self-awareness reflect a profound concern for moral and spiritual development (14).

These views align with modern psychological theories. For instance, Maslow's hierarchy of needs—from physiological to self-actualization—and Jung's theory of self-realization and psychic unity can complement the understanding of a healthy lifestyle in Islamic thought (13). Furthermore, the concept of the "Perfect Human" (*Insan Kamil*) in Islamic philosophy represents an ideal model for achieving a healthy lifestyle—a person who progresses through servitude, justice, and moral virtue. In this sense, a healthy lifestyle not only addresses daily needs but also guides the human toward the ultimate goal of *Hayat Tayyiba* and enduring felicity.

This lifestyle, grounded in divine principles, is applicable in both personal and societal contexts and can serve as a model for cultural and educational reconstruction in Islamic communities (15). In sum, the theoretical foundations of a healthy lifestyle from the perspective of the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balagha* comprise a fusion of divine wisdom, moral rationality, and spiritual psychology that guide the human being toward holistic growth (16).

Previous research on Islamic lifestyle indicates that this topic has been explored from various angles. One notable study is the article titled "*Lifestyle and Its Barriers in Nahj al-Balagha*", which analyzes the ethical and behavioral obstacles to achieving a healthy life as viewed by Imam Ali (peace be upon him). Another study, "*Exploring a Healthy Lifestyle from the Perspective of Imam Ali in Nahj al-Balagha*", elaborates on the economic, social, and moral criteria for a sound life and highlights the roles of justice, contentment, and responsibility in shaping an Islamic lifestyle. Additionally, commentary on Wisdom 390 of *Nahj al-Balagha*—in which Imam Ali (peace be upon him) recommends dividing the day into worship, livelihood, and permissible pleasures—has garnered scholarly attention as a balanced model for healthy living. These works demonstrate that *Nahj al-Balagha*, as a rich source of Alawi wisdom, holds vast potential for offering behavioral and lifestyle

models rooted in Islamic teachings and can serve as both theoretical and practical foundations for research related to individual and social well-being.

The aim of this article is to examine the Qur’anic and Alawi teachings on a healthy lifestyle and to extract principles that can provide guidance when facing the challenges of modern life. This study, using an analytical approach, seeks to develop a practical and inspirational model for healthy living in the contemporary era—one that both aligns with current needs and is rooted in timeless wisdom.

## Methods and Materials

The methodology of this study is based on a descriptive–analytical approach with a primary focus on content analysis of religious texts. The objective of this method is to extract the fundamental concepts of a healthy lifestyle from Islamic sources and to explain them in a scientifically grounded and practical framework. This study is qualitative in nature, and data were collected through an examination of primary sources, including verses from the Holy Qur’an and the wisdoms and sermons of *Nahj al-Balagha*. Additionally, secondary sources such as scholarly articles, authoritative commentaries, and classical Islamic ethical texts were utilized to enrich the analysis.

The research population consists of Qur’anic verses related to lifestyle and the Alawi teachings contained in *Nahj al-Balagha*, which were categorized and examined through a thematic content analysis approach. This method enables the identification of behavioral patterns, ethical values, and principles of healthy living, thereby laying the foundation for a theoretical model of Islamic lifestyle relevant to the contemporary era.

The data were derived through content analysis of Qur’anic verses and *Nahj al-Balagha*’s wisdoms. The findings were categorized under four thematic areas:

- Physical health (nutrition, hygiene, avoidance of extravagance)
- Psychological health (remembrance of God, tranquility, trust in God)
- Social health (justice, respect, empathy)
- Spiritual health (worship, self-purification, self-awareness)

The analysis revealed that a healthy lifestyle in Islamic sources addresses not only individual needs but also facilitates social and spiritual development.

## Findings and Results

### 1. Physical Health (Nutrition, Hygiene, Avoidance of Extravagance)

Islam, as a comprehensive religion, regards physical health as a prerequisite for spiritual elevation and human perfection. Both the Holy Qur’an and the wise sayings of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) place strong emphasis on healthy eating, cleanliness, and moderation in consumption.

God Almighty says: “*Eat and drink, but do not be excessive; indeed, He does not like those who commit excess*” (Qur’an 7:31). This verse invites Muslims to proper nutrition and moderation in food and drink.

Elsewhere, God commands: “*O mankind! Eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and pure*” (Qur’an 2:168). This verse emphasizes the permissibility and purity of food, indicating that healthy eating in Islam is not merely about consumption but also about the quality and cleanliness of what is consumed.

Another verse underscores the importance of water: “*And We made from water every living thing*” (Qur’an 21:30). This statement highlights the necessity of proper utilization of water, its cleanliness, and adherence to hygiene principles.

In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) repeatedly emphasizes moderation and avoidance of waste. He states: *“Moderation in expenditure is half of livelihood”* (Wisdom 126) and also: *“He who adopts moderation prospers”* (Wisdom 257).

In a letter to his son Imam Hasan (peace be upon him), he advises: *“Be moderate in your walking and lower your voice”* (Letter 31), indicating that moderation is essential even in everyday physical behavior and that religion emphasizes avoiding both extremes in bodily actions.

Cleanliness is repeatedly mentioned in Islamic narrations as a sign of faith. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) said: *“Cleanliness is part of faith.”* This narration illustrates the high status of personal and public hygiene within the Islamic lifestyle.

In conclusion, the collection of verses and wisdoms demonstrates that lawful and healthy food, hygiene, and avoidance of waste are integral components of physical health in the Islamic lifestyle. A healthy body serves as a tool for achieving lofty human objectives and provides the foundation for moral and spiritual growth.

## **2. Psychological Health (Remembrance, Tranquility, Trust in God)**

In Islamic teachings, mental health is profoundly and fundamentally connected to remembrance of God, inner tranquility, and genuine trust in the Creator. A believer understands that true peace resides in hearts that are constantly alive with the remembrance of God.

The Almighty states: *“Indeed, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest”* (Qur’an 13:28). This noble verse clearly illustrates the role of *dhikr* (remembrance) and spiritual connection with God in achieving psychological peace.

Moreover, the Qur’an elsewhere states: *“It is He who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers that they would increase in faith along with their [present] faith”* (Qur’an 48:4). This verse affirms that mental and emotional peace is a divine gift attained through strengthened faith and intimacy with God.

Trust in God is another pillar of mental health. It strengthens the individual against difficulties and frees them from anxiety and worry. The Qur’an states: *“And whoever relies upon Allah – then He is sufficient for him”* (Qur’an 65:3). This declaration reinforces the spirit of *tawakkul* (trust in God) and reduces the burden of anxiety.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also said in *Nahj al-Balagha*: *“He who relies upon God, hardships become easy for him”* (Wisdom 286). This luminous statement reminds us that trust in God is a soothing internal force that mitigates anxiety and equips one with resilience in facing life’s challenges.

The traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) also stress that remembrance of God is the key to spiritual tranquility. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) stated: *“The best among people is the one who falls in love with worship, embraces it, loves it with his heart, and performs it with his body.”* This narration presents worship and *dhikr* as pathways to achieving inner peace and mental well-being.

Thus, from the perspective of the Qur’an and the Sunnah, psychological health is attained when the heart is a sanctuary of divine remembrance, the tongue is habituated to *dhikr*, and the soul finds release from anxiety through trust and hope in God. Such tranquility is a precious resource for confronting life’s hardships and progressing along the path of human perfection.

## **3. Social Health (Justice, Respect, Empathy)**

Islam constructs a healthy and dynamic society based on justice, the observance of others’ rights, mutual respect, and a spirit of empathy and cooperation among all individuals. God Almighty states in the Holy Qur’an: *“Indeed, Allah commands justice, good conduct, and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality, bad conduct, and oppression”* (Qur’an 16:90). This noble verse introduces justice as the foundational principle of social relations and identifies benevolence and care for kin as expressions of empathy and cooperation.

In another verse, God says: *“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives”* (Qur’an 4:135). This divine statement clarifies that justice in Islam is not limited to rhetoric or slogans; rather, it must be practiced even under difficult circumstances.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him), in his renowned letter to Malik al-Ashtar, regards social justice as the cornerstone of governance and states: *“Let your heart overflow with compassion for your subjects, and love and kindness for them”* (Letter 53). This radiant sentence reveals that an Islamic leader must be compassionate toward the people and treat them with justice and benevolence.

In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also said: *“Love for others what you love for yourself, and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself”* (Wisdom 43). This statement reflects the golden rule of empathy and mutual respect in social interactions, the implementation of which can eliminate many conflicts and misunderstandings.

The Holy Qur’an also encourages mutual respect and cooperation among people: *“And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression”* (Qur’an 5:2). This divine command strengthens the spirit of healthy collaboration and social empathy within the Islamic community.

Thus, the body of Qur’anic verses and the radiant words of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) demonstrates that justice, kindness, fairness, mutual respect, and cooperation are pillars of the Islamic lifestyle. A society in which its members uphold justice, value one another, and support each other in times of need and adversity is undoubtedly a vibrant, healthy, and inspiring community rooted in divine values.

#### **4. Spiritual Health (Worship, Self-Purification, Self-Knowledge)**

In the Qur’anic lifestyle, spiritual health is the foundation upon which all other dimensions of life rest, and without it, physical, psychological, and social well-being cannot reach their full potential. Spiritual health is attained through sincere worship, self-purification, and true self-knowledge. God Almighty states in the Holy Qur’an: *“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me”* (Qur’an 51:56). This verse introduces the ultimate goal of human creation as a deep connection with the Creator through worship.

From the Qur’anic perspective, worship is not limited to outward rituals such as prayer and fasting; rather, it is an ongoing and profound connection with God that cleanses the soul from worldly impurities and links it to the source of purity and light. God says: *“Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing”* (Qur’an 29:45). This verse emphasizes that genuine worship plays a preventive role in moral refinement and purification of the heart.

In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) repeatedly stresses self-purification and vigilance over the heart. In *Wisdom 45*, he states: *“Oppose your self, and you shall be safe.”* This brief sentence opens the door to the realm of the Greater Jihad (*jihad al-akbar*), as struggling against one’s desires is the greatest battlefield of human existence. In *Wisdom 221*, he also states: *“He who overcomes his desires has succeeded.”* These words demonstrate that spiritual health is only achieved through mastery over the ego and regulation of internal impulses.

Self-knowledge is a prelude to the knowledge of God and liberates one from misguidance. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states in *Wisdom 17*: *“He who knows himself has indeed known his Lord.”* This sentence reflects the connection between inner awareness and understanding the essence of existence.

The Holy Qur’an also emphasizes *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification), presenting it as the path to salvation: *“He has succeeded who purifies it, and he has failed who instills it with corruption”* (Qur’an 91:9–10). This verse is clear evidence that spiritual purification and removal of ethical impurities are the keys to eternal peace and happiness.



Therefore, spiritual health in the Qur'anic and Alawi lifestyle is not merely the performance of outward rituals but a path toward deep divine awareness, inner purification, and progression toward ultimate perfection. Worship, self-purification, and self-knowledge are intertwined, and when all three are practiced in personal and social life, they cleanse the human spirit from the dust of sin and elevate it to the rank of sincere servitude and divine satisfaction.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the findings presented in this article, it becomes evident that the Islamic lifestyle is rooted in the revealed teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the luminous words of the religious leaders—particularly Imam Ali (peace be upon him). In this lifestyle, physical, psychological, social, and spiritual health are emphasized as four interrelated and complementary dimensions.

From the Qur'anic viewpoint, maintaining healthy nutrition, personal hygiene, and avoiding extravagance are the foundations of physical well-being and prepare the ground for spiritual refinement and the fulfillment of one's religious duties. In the psychological dimension, remembrance of God, trust in Him, *dhikr*, and belief in divine promises are presented as the best refuge from daily anxieties and stresses.

Socially, justice, respect for others' rights, empathy, cooperation, and fairness constitute the structure of a healthy, elevated, and ethically cohesive society. Ultimately, spiritual health—which is, in truth, the soul of all other dimensions—is realized through sincere worship, self-purification, and self-knowledge, guiding the human being to the ultimate goal of creation: nearness to God and divine pleasure.

Together, these dimensions shape the Qur'anic lifestyle into a comprehensive and dynamic model for personal and social growth—a model not limited to any specific time or place but one that meets the essential needs of humanity across all eras and cultures.

In today's world, where humans are entangled in various concerns, stresses, imbalances, and alienation from authentic values, returning to this holistic model can offer solutions to many individual and societal crises. Therefore, the Islamic–Qur'anic lifestyle, centered on divine verses and the wisdom of *Nahj al-Balagha*, serves as a reliable path toward achieving *Hayat Tayyiba* (the good life) and preparing individuals and societies for the era of the Promised Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance).

The practical application of this lifestyle ensures not only the physical and psychological well-being of individuals but also guarantees the formation of a just, empathetic, ethical, and God-centered society—a society in which every member advances along the path of servitude and spiritual growth, thereby contributing to the realization of the grand ideal of a global Mahdist governance of justice. As such, understanding and promoting this lifestyle is a universal responsibility and an undeniable necessity for all ages and generations.

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## Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

## Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

## Ethical Considerations

All ethical principles were adhered in conducting and writing this article.

## Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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