



### **Advice from Hazrath Moulana Ilyas Patel Saheb (DB) to a sister performing I'tikaaf:**

Alhamdulillah the intention to be in I'tikaaf is a most noble one. The intention to do a noble deed is to move towards Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala loves such people. Masha Allah. In this time of fitna there are probably only a handful of sisters of a young age who have made such a tremendously great intention and will insha Allah spend their Ramadhaan in such a wonderful manner. May Allah Ta'ala accept it and make it a means of barkat and hidayat and every good for you, your husband and your entire family. Aameen. I have the following suggestions. May Allah Ta'ala make it a means of benefit for you.

1. Read up the entire section on I'tikaaf in "Virtues of Ramadhaan" by Hz. Sheikh Zakariyya (R.A.). This could be done over the first week or two of Ramadhaan.
2. Daily engage in dua for at least three mins, specifically begging Allah Ta'ala to make this I'tikaaf a means of earning His complete Pleasure and that it becomes a means of rectifying our life in every aspect. Whenever possible, perform at least two rakaats salatul haajah and beg Allah Ta'ala as mentioned.
3. Daily in the month of Ramadhaan recite at least 100 times istighfaar. During the istighfaar imagine a shower of noor coming down upon you from the sky and as it is falling upon you it is washing away all your sins. Try to concentrate as best as you can. Any short formula of istighfaar will be OK. After the istighfaar recite 100 times Durood Sharief. Imagine yourself standing with utmost respect and humility at the rowdah mubarak while reciting the durood sharief.
4. Make as much tilawat as you can. It will be very useful to set a minimum target of the number of paras you will recite in the day. Fix it according to what you will be able to manage and then keep to it. Before commencing tilawat on EVERY occasion, first raise

your hands in dua for at least a minute and beg Allah Ta'ala to make the tilawat a means of HIDAYAT. This intention must always be made before tilawat because the Qur'an Sharief was revealed for hidayat.

5. During Ramadhaan and especially in I'tikaaf be very careful about the tongue and the heart. Do not speak anything that is disliked by Allah Ta'ala or think of any wrong. When thinking, think of the following:
  - Think of all the great bounties and favours of Allah Ta'ala and make shukr to Him. Think of each favour separately, starting with the greatest gift of Imaan, the gift of being the ummati of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi wasallam), the ability to fulfil salaah and perform other righteous deeds, etc, and then even thinking about every limb of our body, the home we have, the food and clothing Allah Ta'ala has provided us, the fact that there are people who care for us, etc. Make shukr upon each thing.
  - Sometimes think of the time one will be leaving this world. Visualise the entire scene of the last moments of death, the people standing around and crying, ghusal being given to us, etc, until thinking of being lowered into the grave itself. Think about the preparation for that day. If one feels over affected by the thought of the grave, merely think that after death the home of a true believer is jannat, but to get there directly one will have made Allah Ta'ala happy.
  - Think about standing on the day of judgement and giving an account of one's deeds.
  - Sometimes simply think about the qudrat of Allah Ta'ala by pondering over the great creation of the skies and the earth as well as the wonderful way in which we have been created.
  - Think of the favours that Allah Ta'ala has bestowed upon us through people. Think of each favour and make shukr and also dua for those who have done the favour to us.
6. During I'tikaaf, set aside some time daily (at least 45 mins) to read some kitaabs. Presently (for the days of I'tikaaf), though there are many great people whose talks and books are available, I suggest that you restrict yourself to only the books of Hazrath Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (M. Z.) and Hazrath Moulana Yunus Patel Saheb (R.A.). Keep a selection of their books. Read whichever you wish to read. Apart from the books you may listen to the talks and majlis of Hazrath Moulana Yunus Patel Saheb (R.A.). Before listening to any CD or reading any book mentioned above, make the intention of gaining the love of Allah Ta'ala and His beloved Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).
7. Try to perform whichever nafil namaaz you can. At least try to complete awwabeen (6 rakaats after maghrib, including the 2 sunnats of maghrib) which gains the reward of 12 years of nafil ibadat as well as at least a few rakaats of tahajjud at sehri time.

8. Spend as much time as possible in dua, especially at sehri time and before iftaar. Make dua for yourself, your family and the entire ummah, including this sinful servant. Once again I suggest that you acquire the dua kitab of Hz. Moulana Yunus Patel (R.A.) and use it to engage in earnest dua. The dua must be with as much concentration as possible.
9. There are many things mentioned above. Do as much as you can comfortably manage. Do not try to exert oneself to a point that one will feel it very difficult. Rest as may be required. However, refrain from any useless talk.
10. Keep cheerful and happy at all times, especially during I'tikaaf. Keep reminding oneself that Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with so much that our hearts should be brimming with shukr. When we feel down for any reason, again think about the countless bounties of Allah Ta'ala, make shukr and be happy. At such times think what would have been the case if one had a shack to live in, only bread and water as food, rags for clothing, no money for medication, a vulgar and violent spouse, etc?? Then again make shukr for Allah Ta'ala's favours and REMEMBER that one has at least a billion things to be happy about. For the few difficulties that come as a test, turn to Allah Ta'ala and make dua. HE ALONE can remove our difficulties.
11. May Allah Ta'ala accept your I'tikaaf, grant you His muhabbat and radha (pleasure) and make you among His special friends. May He grant you the best of both worlds and give you true happiness. May he make you an inspiration for others and a means of hidayat for thousands of people. Aameen. Everything is in the qudrat of Allah Ta'ala. We need to turn to Him alone.