

Ramadan Tool-Kit

2011



Compiled by:

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Mission: *Green Muslims* seek to reemphasize the unique role and responsibility entrusted upon humanity by God: environmental stewardship. We hope to serve as a bridge between American Muslim communities as well as partner with a wide spectrum of organizations accomplishing great work. Additionally, *Green Muslims* seek to provide a unique and organic source of environmental leadership, inspiration, awareness, and direct action within Muslim communities.

Our Prayer:

Oh Most Merciful, Oh Lord of the Worlds, O Creator of the Universe, protect our homes, protect our land, protect our water, protect our air.

Oh Sustainer, Oh Most Powerful, Oh Inspirer, help us maintain good habits, help us be agents for change, help us inspire our communities to action.

Ameen

Director: Sarah Jawaid

Sarah is an urban planner and artist originally from Southern California and now, residing in Washington, DC. She currently works on affordable housing advocacy issues. Sarah got involved with GM because she believes it is important for Muslim communities to actively engage in the environmental stewardship conversation with the intention of creating a movement that inspires thought to action.

Volunteer Manager: Rizwaan Akhtar

Rizwaan currently administers an exchange program that focuses on leadership development for Iraqi youth. Originally from Chicago, IL, Rizwaan is drawn to Green Muslims' potential to increase Muslims' involvement in service, stewardship, and civic engagement.

Communications Manager: Ryan Strom

A native of Michigan, Ryan has lived in The District for the past two years to attend Law School. He currently works on Youth Environmental Engagement in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and as a Legal Intern in the DC Department of the Environment. An avid bicyclist and public transit proponent, Ryan is interested in the ways we connect with communities and spaces around us, and how urban structures define not only ourselves but our interactions with each other.

Educational Program Manager: Sarrah AbuLughod

Sarrah grew up in Wisconsin and moved out to DC about 3 years ago. Sarrah currently is the Manager of Family Services at the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, a youth development non-profit. She got involved in Green Muslims because it was a way for her to continue to practice what she preaches. The concepts of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle were a large part of her childhood. She hopes to naturally combine resourcefulness and environmental consciousness with her Islamic identity, and to help others do so as well.

Partnerships Manager: Kevin Gordon Barrow

Kevin is a DC native and lover of all things Green. Amongst his activities and engagements are several projects in the sustainable energy and environmental public health spheres. A member of Green Muslims since 2008, he now leads the charge in forging partnerships with organizations at both the grass roots and national levels that have interests in environmental advocacy, civic development and social justice.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The month of Ramadan is a time to take an inventory of the last 365 days of your life, while making the intention to create better habits for the coming year. This year, we hope to help you build more environmentally friendly habits while connecting you with your faith in a unique way.

Fasting during the month of Ramadan can be an exercise in self-control; it can be a time of focus and, if you are intentional, fasting during Ramadan will help you gain a stronger connection with your faith.

This three part tool-kit hopes to enhance your Ramadan experience using those same concepts. Each day highlights an Ayah, a quote, or a hadith that aspires to inspire you to action. The “challenge yourself” section of the day gives you a suggestion in how to adjust your habits, and the “reflection” section hopes to help you analyze your current habits in order to make the habit-forming both action-oriented and intellectual.

Habits aren't formed overnight; they take time to cultivate and this is why this is a 30-day booklet. InshaAllah, you can use it to develop at least one habit that will carry you on to next Ramadan.

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"Have they, then never considered the earth – how much of every noble kind (of life) We have caused to grow upon it?"

- Quran, 26:7

A step forward or back tracking?

Ramadan should be a time of instilling good habits, both spiritually and literally, in your daily practice.

Challenge Yourself: At every *iftar* this week, BYOD – Bring your own dishes, instead of adding to the landfill, start a sustainable trend in your community!

Reflect on your Ramadan Footprint.

How much leftover food do you waste? How many Styrofoam cups of chai do you idly toss in the trash? Calculate your carbon footprint at:

<http://www.conservation.org>

"And We have spread the earth out wide; set upon it firm and immovable mountains; and produced upon it all kinds of things in balance. And We have provided there means of subsistence for you and for those whose provision does not depend on you."

-Quran 15:19-20

Challenge Yourself: Prepare a local food *sahoor* for yourself and your family. Not only will you be helping the environment by cutting the amount of fossil fuels used to get the food to your table, you'll also be supporting local farmers and the overall economy.

Reflect on how buying and eating from your local "subsistence" is a way to interact with Allah's (swt) natural balance.

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"Don't you see how God has created the seven heavens in harmony and made the moon a light in their midst and made the sun a glorious lamp?"

-Quran 71:15-16

Reflect on the *Sunnah* of rising at *Fajr* and sleeping right after *Isha* and the effects of this practice on our energy consumption.

Challenge Yourself: Take advantage of the long, bright days, and keep your electricity and energy usage to a minimum. See how long you can go without turning on a light before *Maghrib* prayer.

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"...and removing a harmful thing from the path is a charitable act."

-Hadith

Challenge yourself: One of the most basic things we can do is help beautify our surroundings. Join a volunteer clean-up effort at a neighboring park, or better yet, carry a bag with you on a walk and pick up EVERY piece of trash you come across.

Reflect: Every time you pick up a harmful thing from the path, purify your intentions by saying "Bismillah remembering that everything is *"Fi-Sabillih."*

"One of the arts of appreciating nature is developing our knowledge of the names and characteristics of things; the other, companion art, is knowing how to keep quiet and pay attention, both within and without."

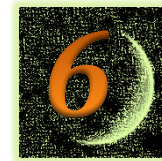
-The Book of Nature

Challenge yourself: Spend a day out of doors, in nature. Leave your phone at home. Listen to the rhythm of the Earth. Pay attention to the sounds of the forest, the waterfront, the field, the hillside.

Do you know the names of the flora and fauna around you? **Make a goal to look up and learn the name of a flower, tree, or plant.**

Reflect within. Notice the patterns of the day. Are you comfortable with quiet? Are you able to sit still?

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"O you who believe, you shall give to charity from the good things you earn, and from what we have produced for you from the earth. Do not pick out the bad therein to give away, when you yourselves do not accept it unless your eyes are closed. You should know that Allah is Rich, Praiseworthy."

-Quran 2:267

Challenge Yourself: Go through your closets, and empty your cupboards. Anything of good quality that you haven't used in over a year, donate to someone who could use it more than you.

Reflect: How luxurious of a life do you lead? Do you have belongings that are unused? Do you have neighbors who are needier than yourself? What could you do without?

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"The mutual rivalry for piling up of worldly things diverts you"

-Quran 102:1

Challenge Yourself: Find your local [Goodwill Industries Store](#) and sign up to volunteer for the day. Not only will you see the inner-workings of an organization, whose sole mission is to help the less fortunate, it will help you take a closer look at what you use, toss, and re-use. Consider going inside to do some shopping. The environmental footprint of re-used items is a fraction as compared to new items. Consider going vintage and shopping at places that re-sell rather than manufacture.

Reflect: Why do we feel the need to always have something "new"?

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"In the name of Allah and there is no power save with Allah. Praise be to Allah who made this means of transport subservient to us, what we (by ourselves) could never have accomplished."

-Travel Dua

Challenge Yourself: Set up a *Jumuah* or *Tarawih* car-pool for the week. Make sure no fewer than 4 people are riding with you as you make your way towards these forms of worship.

Reflect: What is your daily energy use, when it comes to transportation? If you drive, could you share the ride? If you share the ride, could you bike? What's one habit you could change that would take you a step closer to a more sustainable method of transportation?

"The greatest defect is to regard that defect in others, which is present in yourself."

-Imam Ali
Nahjul Balagha

Challenge Yourself: We as a community need to take time to take a look in the mirror. What is our collective carbon footprint? Contact your local mosque or community and see what you can do to help ensure we are doing our part in cleaning and "greening" the world.

Reflect: On the Day of Judgment, will we have an easy time answering to our Lord regarding our habits here on Earth? Are we each meeting our potential when it comes to protecting our planet?

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"Blessed is He who has placed in the sky great stars and placed therein a [burning] lamp and luminous moon."

-Quran 25:61

Challenge Yourself: The month of Ramadan is a perfect time to enhance your night prayers. Plan an outdoor night *qiyam* for your friends and family. Take some time between prayers to look up at the moon and try to identify constellations.

Reflect: There are so many ayat about the night, the sky and the moon. Take some time to reflect on Allah's words and how they can have new meaning in your life.

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things."

-Quran 24:35

Challenge Yourself: Make the intention to change all of the light bulbs in your house to the energy saver bulbs to do your part in conserving electricity.

Reflect: What are ways you can make "Allah's Light" shine brighter in your life? How can you become a better reflection of his Mercy and Blessings?

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"It is He who sends down rain from the sky: from it you drink and with it plants grow on which you feed your cattle."

-Quran 16:10

Challenge Yourself: Think of how precious fresh water was at the time of the Prophet (pbuh). Think of how precious it still is today and how much we waste! Make a pledge to cut down on the time it takes you to take a shower, wash your hands, and even, make *wudhu*.

Reflect: There is the same amount of water on the earth now, as when it was formed. Just imagine, the water you are using to make *wudhu* might have been the same molecules used by the Prophet (pbuh) himself!

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"He it is who has made the earth easy to live upon: go about, then, in all its regions, and partake the sustenance which He provides: but [always bear in mind that] unto Him you shall be resurrected."

-Quran 67:15

Challenge Yourself: Travel is an important part of our Islamic tradition. In today's world, traveling long distances often requires flying, one of the most environmentally destructive forms of transport. Consider donating to an initiative that focuses either on research and development for more sustainable transportation or on planting trees that cancel out the pollution produced by your travel.

Reflect: Allah (swt) has given us so much ability and so many blessings; it is our duty to make sure we are using those blessings and abilities to the best of our potential.

"As a butterfly soared overhead, one caterpillar said to the other, 'You'll never get me up in one of those things.'"

-Anonymous

Challenge Yourself: With your friends or family, care for a caterpillar and watch as it goes through the different forms of life; from chrysalis to butterfly. Watch first-hand, a miracle of Allah (swt) take place in front of your eyes.

Reflect: Just as we will go through phases and even forms of life in this *dunya* and in the *akhira*, the butterfly is a clear example for us to reflect upon.

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"...with which He makes crops grow, and olives, dates and grapes and fruits of every kind for you. In this is a sign for those who think."

-Quran 16:11

Challenge Yourself: Become more connected with your sustenance. Plan a trip to a local farm and learn how your food is grown. Sit and talk with a farmer and gain an understanding of the connection they have with the land and weather.

Reflect: When you have a realistic concept of how much energy goes into the food you put on your table, it is easier to be more mindful about how much we use and how much we waste.

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“All the earth is a place of prostration, every field and meadow, mountain, park, city, farm, plantation. Every roadside, seaside, hillside, walkway, any place clean and green can be a place to pray...”
-Dawud Wharnsby

Challenge Yourself: Set a goal to make every prayer this week just as it comes time to pray. Try praying outside. Notice how other animals and plants worship in their own way.

Reflect upon the focus of your prayer when you pray outside. Are you better able to concentrate, or do you have trouble staying in tune with your worship?

“If the Day of Judgment erupts while you are planting a new tree, carry on and plant it.”

-Hadith

Challenge Yourself: Plant a tree. Simply put. Just do it. It might seem like a cliché thing to do, but not only is it clearly part of our tradition, it continues to be one of the best things to do for our environment. Say *Bismillah* and recite *Al-Fatiha* as you plant it for its continued growth and health.

Reflect: If possible share this experience with your family, and create a memory that you can literally watch grow as the years go by.

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“Those who spend their money in the cause of God, then do not follow their charity with insult or harm, will receive their recompense from their Lord; they have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve.”

-Quran 2:262

Challenge Yourself: Look into your investments. Consider investing more consciously in companies and business that are environmentally aware and sustainable.

Reflect: Just as we are careful with our money when it comes to usury, we must also be aware of how our money works for or against us when we invest. We will be held accountable for not only what we helped support, but also what we did not support.

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“For it is He who has brought into being gardens-[both] the cultivated ones and those growing wild -and the date-palm, and fields bearing multiform produce, and the olive tree, and the pomegranate: [all] resembling one another and yet so different! Eat of their fruit when it comes to fruition, and give [unto the poor] their due on harvest day. And do not waste [God's bounties]: verily, He does not love the wasteful!”

-Quran 6:142

Challenge Yourself: Don't waste a single morsel of food this week. Anything you cannot eat, compost. Don't allow any of your leftovers go to waste. Consider inviting friends over for a "leftar" where you eat only leftovers for *iftar*.

Reflect: Being mindful of food waste helps us to be more in tune with the focus of Ramadan. Think of those less fortunate, and how what you throw away, could be feeding others.

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“If any Muslim plants any plant and a human being or an animal eats of it, he will be rewarded as if he had given that much in charity”

-Hadith

Challenge Yourself: Plant a garden. If you don't have a big enough plot, consider joining a community gardening effort near your home. If this is still not feasible, consider planting and caring for one plant.

Reflect: Caring for a living thing and watching it grow can be an incredibly rewarding process. Clearly reflected in the *hadith* above is the importance of growing and sharing our food sources, and yet so few of us have shared in this experience.

“It is He who sends down water from the skies, and brings out of it everything that grows, the green foliage, the grain lying close, the date palm trees with clusters of dates, and the gardens of grapes, and of olives and pomegranates, so similar yet so unlike. Look at the fruits, how they appear on the trees, and they ripen. In all these are signs for those who believe.”

-Quran 6:99

Challenge Yourself: The consumption of meat in the US is at an all-time high and the environmental ramifications are devastating. Acres of rainforests have been destroyed to feed these habits, to name only one effect. Try extending your fast and avoiding meat during your *iftar* this week.

Reflect: Just as you reflect on how you feel while fasting all day, reflect on how you feel without meat in your diet.

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“And you see the mountains and think them solid but they are fleeting like clouds – the creation of God who has well completed the creation of everything.

-Quran 27:88

Challenge yourself: If you don't already, make a commitment to recycle. See how many things that you throw away, could be re-used. Just as the *ayah* says, the most solid things are fleeting. Our most basic energy sources are drying up and we are left to consider how wasteful we really are.

Reflect: Allah created us as the caretakers of this Earth. What are you personally doing to fulfill this trust?

“The best person among you is the one who treats his family members best.”

-Hadith

Challenge Yourself: Follow the *Sunnah* of our prophet and actively spend more time with your family this month. Do “green” activities together. Play board games, go for walks, or bike to the park. Take advantage of the extra time after work before *iftar* and make this time, family time.

Reflect: Family and family ties are so important in our tradition. In this digital age, it is very easy to lose touch, or to only maintain distant ties. What do you do, to stay connected with your family?

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“Forbidden you is carrion and blood, and the flesh of the swine, and whatsoever has been killed in the name of some other than God, and whatever has been strangled, or killed by a blow or a fall...”

-Quran 5:3

Challenge Yourself: If you take a close look at the meat industry and the slaughtering habits in the US, you'll find that they are not consistent with the clear teachings we have in our holy book. Make the investment and consider finding a meat source that slaughters the animal according to our teachings.

Reflect on the life that was taken in order to feed you and don't lose sight of the Sacred in this action.

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"For, He it is who has made you inherit the earth, and has raised some of you by degrees above others, so that He might try you by means of what He has bestowed upon you. Verily, thy Sustainer is swift in retribution: yet, behold, He is indeed much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace."

-Quran 6:165

Reflect: If we are the inheritors of the earth, what are we doing to make sure we are fulfilling our trust?

Challenge Yourself: It is all in the small steps. Make a point of researching the cleaning products you use. Make sure they don't include harmful chemicals or products that damage the eco-system.

"None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."

-Hadith

Challenge Yourself: Start a new tradition of planning your *Eid* celebrations to include a service project. Incorporate service, volunteerism, and community support in your annual tradition.

Reflect: Find ways to connect more with the idea behind *Zakat-ul-Fitr*. Servicing and supporting our closest community in need should be more than dropping a few dollars in a box at the *Eid* prayer. What are ways you connect with your *Zakat*?

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"...and Allah is the best of Planners"

-Quran 3:54

Challenge Yourself: Bad planning and disorganization often lead to multiple trips, impulse buying, and wasted energy. Make a to-do list. Plan out your week so that you can run all your errands on the same day. Organize your time and define your actual needs before setting out for the day.

Reflect: Setting aside time to think about your plans helps you reflect on the actuality of what you do in any given day. What are your patterns? Are you happy with what is on your to-do list?

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“Do not turn your knowledge into ignorance or your conviction into doubt. When you gain knowledge, act upon it and when you acquire conviction, proceed.”

-Nahjul Balagha

Challenge Yourself: Going forward, try to continue the more environmentally friendly habits you have started this Ramadan. Take the knowledge you have gained and turn it into conviction.

Reflect on this past month during these last few days and plan out a path going forward. What habits have had a true impact on you? What changes have you made to your spirit, your community, your practice?

“If you have a need from Allah, the Glorified, then begin by seeking Allah’s blessing on His Messenger. May Allah bless him and his family, then ask your need, because Allah is too generous to accept one of the two requests made to Him and deny the other.”

*-Imam Ali
Nahjul Balagha*

Challenge Yourself: During these last days of this blessed month, don’t forget to make *dua* for the earth. Pray that through our collective work, we can make a difference.

Reflect: Though it may seem small, our whispered prayers can change the world. Have you every prayed for the environment?

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“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”

-Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet

Challenge Yourself: Give homemade gifts for *Eid* this year. Write a poem, make a piece of art, frame a favorite picture, or bake some cookies. Try to think less about the monetary or societal value on the gifts you give, and more on the value of the friendship you have with the person you are gifting. By making the gifts you give this year, try focusing on being intentional rather than consumer driven.

Reflect: Putting thought and care into gifts from the heart, helps us focus on what is truly important.

Ramadan Kareem! and Eid Mubarak!

Get Involved!

Join our Listserve

The Green Muslims listserv will keep you up to date with Green Muslims news and events. It is also a great way to network and share ideas with others on the listserv.

Become a Green Muslims volunteer!

Green Muslims seeks to engage our volunteers in a variety of community engagement projects in the Washington, DC area, including park clean-ups, school beautification projects, tree-plantings and more.

If you would like to volunteer with Green Muslims or ask Green Muslims to volunteer for you, please email: volunteer@green-muslims.org to get involved and to get more information.

Follow and promote us online!

Make sure to follow @GreenMuslims on [Twitter](#) and on [Facebook](#)!

Write for the Green Muslims blog!

Green Muslims continually seeks to feature unique and insightful voices. If you would like to post your writings on the Green Muslims blog, share your ideas about Islam and the earth, or reflect upon an activity you participated in with Green Muslims, we would love to feature it!

To write for the Green Muslims blog, please email info@green-muslims.org.