

Islamic Perspective and Solution for Old Age Related Issues:

وَمَنْ نُعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ

“Whomsoever We grant a long life, We reverse their nature. Do they not understand anything from this?” [Qur’an, 36: 68]

Every age is a prime age at its precise time in a person’s life. Whatever the age, one is the best at every age. Allah’s creative perfection in fashioning man is not time specific: لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

“Surely We fashioned man in the best mold.” [Q, 95: 4].

At each phase of life, a person has a particular role to play, adding up to the overall goal of his constitution. Surely, each stage of life has its own challenges and edges; yet it has its own charm and meaning too. The culmination of this series of connected phases is the phenomenon of senior age. At this stage, the professional pressures and issues related to raising a family are over. It is time to be above the fray, and play the role of a fatherly figure, a mentor and a counselor who has been through all the intricacies of life. It is also the time to intensify devotional activities for spiritual enrichment. Dive deeper into the Qur’an. Inspirationally, it is the most uplifting and intellectually stimulating text that compels one to think and reflect. It is the best companion to have that relaxes hearts with serenity: “

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

...Surely in Allah’s remembrance do hearts find peacefulness.” [Q, 13: 28]
Capitalize on knowledge, vision and cumulative experience, and invest that capital to promote general welfare of the society.

The wealth of an elderly person is his lifelong accomplishments, well placed children and grandchildren that gratifies him and gives him a sense of

fulfillment. Families that have the presence of elderly parents or grandparents in the household are fortunate to benefit from their affection and experience. It is a priceless gift from Allah SWT. As integral part of the family, elderly parents with the fortune of their wisdom and compassion are an endless inspirational force for their children. For all their tender caring and contributions, they are on the honor roll.

While the role of seniors in the family cannot be overstated, they must dedicate their gratitude to Allah SWT Who allowed them to reach that stage. The life of many is cut short sooner:

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تَرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِيَكونُوا شُيُوخًا وَمِنْكُمْ مَن يُتَوَفَّى مِنْ قَبْلٍ وَلِتَبْلُغُوا أَجَلًا مُّسَمًّى وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

“He it is Who created you... then He makes you to grow further to reach old age, while some of you are recalled sooner. This is done so that you may reach an appointed time and may understand the reality.” [Q, 40: 67]

They must take each day as a gift from Allah SWT and make the best of it. Time is of the essence and it is an opportunity from the Merciful to hasten in accumulating virtues while it lasts. Those who do not use their time wisely, the only thing they will plead for as the death nears them is more time. Of course, they will be denied:

وَلَنْ يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

“...Allah does not at all delay a person when his term comes to an end ...” [Q, 63: 11]

There is no extension when the gate closes. Those, who do not heed when they have the opportunity, they are unlikely to change.

The celebrated status of old age is well established, and the family members generally feel privileged to enjoy the patriarchal / matriarchal presence of their legendary figures - symbol of love, support, and lineage. This is a highly respected phase in which the physical and mental powers have not yet suffered much decline. Such a person is sanctified with insight, experience and wisdom. He is looked up to with admiration and affection for guidance and support. This age is an asset and a hallmark of eminence in the family. Social culture demands respect and esteem for the elderly.

The dichotomy of old age, however, is a blend of glory and gloom. After an upsurge in esteem and prestige, the end of a revered elder could be emotionally, and in a many other ways, devastating. Degeneration and dilution of physical and mental health could turn an elderly into a composite of severe miseries. Cognitive decline and illnesses emerge with a crushing force. The final phase of existence is marked by depletion of mental alertness necessary for self-awareness and connecting with the social environment. He becomes a real test for the family, subjecting it to a stressful period of agony. The Qur'an describes the phase when a person reverts to the state of his infancy:

وَمَنْ نُعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ

"Whomsoever We grant a long life, We reverse him in his constitution..." [Q, 36: 68]

The elderly suffer from the same weaknesses, infirmities and dependencies that marked their infant life. They need others to help them in their basic needs and activities.

Our life begins with weakness in childhood, and ends with weakness in old age. Children grow up to be strong and make progress, and attain power. Each day they move closer to their peak of youth and gain more strength. On the other hand, old people deteriorate and get weaker everyday as they approach the terminal of their life. Allah SWT has divided man's life into stages of childhood, youth and old age. By His will He creates some weak and some strong:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ

"It is Allah Who created you in a state of weakness; then after weakness He gave you strength; then after strength He made you weak and old..." [Q, 30: 54]

Again, by His will He causes some to die before youth, or grants someone to live a long life and still keeps him healthy and strong to continue enjoying a glorious age. Similarly, Allah SWT can grant someone a splendid youth and then cause to suffer a miserable old age. His mental sharpness and wisdom he once commanded degenerates into a crumbling old man:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن تُّرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِّن نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّن عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ آجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِّن بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا وَتَرَىٰ الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَّتْ وَأَنْبَتَتْ مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ

“...We bring you forth as infants (and nurture you) that you may come of age. Among you is he that dies (at a young age) and he who is kept back to the most dismal age so that after once having known, he reaches a stage when he knows nothing...” [Q, 22: 5]

Suddenly all his distinctions and assets of pride fade away like a sunset.

Aging and regression are natural parts of human development. With loss of physical and mental capacities as we age, our understanding turns into lack of comprehension, our strong memory is converted into senility, our perfection turns into shortcomings, our power turns into disability, and our freshness and beauty turns into wrinkles and ugliness. When we get old, we not only cannot learn new things, we will also forget what we learned earlier. Man is proud of his knowledge that distinguishes him from others. In old age, even the most knowledgeable, who used to be sought out for his wisdom, is diminished to a mere lump of flesh:

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ

“Allah has created you, and then He causes you to die. Some of you have your lives prolonged to a feeble old age, when one loses all knowledge after having acquired it...” [Q, 16: 70]

Gone is all his sharpness. His senses become dull, rendering him incapable of even looking after his ordinary affairs. Cognitive disabilities with aging are characterized as the hardest disease by the Prophet SAW. He even prayed to Allah SWT to protect him from this disease:

“O Allah, I seek refuge with You from cowardice, miserliness, and from being sent back to a feeble age.” [Bukhari]

For fear of long term sickness, sufferings, and agony for the family, one may even start wishing for death prematurely. It is not allowed. Life and death decisions are made by Allah SWT alone, based on His Wisdom and Mercy. He has created everyone for an appointed term. Prophet SAW has specifically prohibited wishing for death. He says that none of you should wish for death because of some harm that befalls him. If he must wish for death, let him say: *“O Allah, keep me alive so long as life is good for me, and cause me to die when death is good for me”* [Nasai]

Certain gifts of life are often taken for granted and neglected until taken away. Five of them, identified by the Prophet SAW, are especially critical:

“Take advantage of five before five: Your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before your work, and your life before your death.” [Hakim, Bayhaqi]

He then zeroed in on two: *“There are two favors which many people do not appreciate: Health and leisure.”* [Bukhari]

Without health, a person is limited in his abilities; and with time is running out for him/her, nothing matters. While we do not know our time of departure, we do bear responsibility until then to preserve our health any way we can. For the elderly population, health is the single most overriding concern.

For a healthy lifestyle, personal hygiene is the first step basic to healthcare. It is also the starting point in Islam. Soon after entering Islam, the first order of duty is personal hygiene. Since it is required for every act in Islam, the Prophet SAW calls it half of the faith:

“Purity is half of Faith” [Muslim]

Further, we must abstain from things that are detrimental to our wellness and adopt a lifestyle beneficial to our physical and mental fitness. The Qur’an warns:

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“----Do not let your own hands throw you into destruction -----” [Q, 2: 195];

And so does the Prophet SAW: *“...Your body has a right over you....”* [Bukhari]

Our body is a trust; it needs to be protected and kept in good shape. Islam requires a healthy balance between body and soul. A healthy and energetic individual is more capable compared to a weak one to perform his duties efficiently for the benefit of all. Obviously, such a person will be closer to Allah SWT as indicated by the Prophet SAW:

“A strong believer is better and dearer to Allah than a weak one...” [Bukhari, Muslim]

Two major factors that have far reaching impact on our body and mind are the diet and physical exercise. Adopting a healthy lifestyle, being selective in eating and drinking choices, work ethics, relaxation, exercise, hygiene, cleanliness precautions, and sleeping schedule are not just a few pieces of advice from the Prophet SAW, rather specific instructions that have cumulative impact on the soundness of our body and mind. It is an obligation that needs to be worked on.

Regarding healthy dietary habits, Islam prescribes three steps to stay healthy and well. Eat healthy and allowable foods; avoid unhealthy and prohibited foods; and eat in moderation whatever you eat. Seek more nutritious food alternatives to protect and promote a healthy living. Engage in regular physical activities. Good diet and recreation to attain physical wellbeing can be deemed as a vehicle to attaining spiritual and moral fitness, and conversely.

Islam is a pathway of moderation aiming at optimization of human potential at any age:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا
وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ
وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ
لَرُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

“...We have appointed you to be the nation of the middle way...” [Q, 2: 143]

Everything is at the expense of something else. Not only Allah SWT requires balance in all pursuits, including devotional acts, He firmly rebukes excessiveness and extremism:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُسْرِفِينَ

“...Allah does not like extravagant and wasteful peoples.” [Q, 7: 31]

He has taught a golden mean between extreme positions even in doing the right things as the best course of action.

The Prophet SAW alluded to this in a narration: *“Moderation in living is one of the signs of a man’s wisdom” [Ahmad]*

The favorable role of physical activity and exercise in maintaining health is scientifically proven. Any movement we do counts as physical activity, such as doing house and yard chores, playing with the kids, and taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Regardless of what types of moving around we do daily, those movements are beneficial to our overall wellbeing. Exercise refers to planned, structured and repetitive movement with a goal of fitness improvements. Running on a treadmill, lifting weights, and swimming are forms of exercise that help improve physical fitness. For mental health, it is important that the aging parents have the opportunity to remain socially active and connected to family and friends. Interacting with social groups keeps the brain active and slows down cognitive decline. Exercise and Social engagement prevent this decline.

The leader of Islam was very athletic - healthy, strong and energetic. He used to regularly walk and participate in physical activities. A mountain hiker and a camper, he regularly spent days in a cave. He encouraged his followers to participate in healthy sports. Providing the incentive for physical exercise, he disclosed:

“Any action without remembrance of Allah is either a diversion or heedlessness excepting four acts: Walking from target to target (during archery practice), training a horse, playing with one’s family and learning to swim.” [Tabarani]

Within our capacity, we must do the right things to take care of our physical and mental wellness. Obviously, we do not have full control over our body functions and things may still go wrong. We should seek the medical care, if necessary, before relying on Allah SWT. Once someone asked the Prophet SAW “Should we make use of medical treatment for any disease?” He replied: *“Make use of medical treatment, for Allah has not created a disease without*

creating a cure for it except for one.” They asked which one. He replied “old age.” [Dawud]

A person in his old age becomes very sensitive about his self-esteem. For him, all that is left is his dignity. He needs to be treated respectfully more than anything else, care and service included. As he feels frail and limited in his capacities; any trace of disrespect is emotionally hurtful and detrimental to his health and sense of security. Research studies have confirmed an association between progression in age and regression in mental and physical health. Any damage in the human body will affect the psychological makeup. Weak people with no means to act or express, are very vulnerable. Even a harsh word can offend and affect them harmfully.

Family members need to be cautious about this sensitivity and need to endure with patience and understanding. Incentive motivates action and Allah SWT provides plenty. Children are commanded to treat their aging parents with kindness and grace. Parents rank second only to Allah SWT for the instrumental role they played in the natural process of their existence and upbringing:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا آفٌ وَلَا تُنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

"Your Lord has decreed: Do not worship any but Him; and be good to your parents; and should any or both of them attain old age with you, do not say to them even 'fie' neither yell at them, but speak to them with honor; and be humble and tender to them and say: 'Lord! Show mercy to them as they nurtured me when I was small.'" [Q, 17: 23-24]

This command underscores that there is no limit to being gentle to parents. Service and obedience to them is a link to Paradise. It must be understood, this

command is not contingent upon parents' faith, religion, lifestyle or personality, nor is it on their health condition or finances. Respect and generosity to them is simply and partly in recognition of the services they have already rendered.

Numerous narrations of the Prophet SAW in regard to obedience to parents have been reported and must be taken thoughtfully.

Abdullah bin Masood asked him:

"What is the best deed most pleasing to Allah?" He replied: "*Offering salat on time.*" He asked: "What is after that?" He replied: "*Serving parents kindly....*" [Bukhari, Muslim]

How amazing it is, just looking at parents is full of rewards. The Prophet SWT says:

"*Whoever among the righteous children looks at his parents affectionately, Allah rewards him for one accepted Hajj.*" Some people asked: "O Prophet of Allah! What if someone looks at his parents one hundred times a day?" He replied: "*Yes, still if someone does it one hundred times a day; Allah SWT is most Great and exalted.*" [Muslim]

The Prophet SAW was very considerate about honoring the elderly. Inferring it as a sign of reverence, he said:

"*It is out of reverence to Allah to respect the white-headed Muslim.*" [Dawud]

He showed his dismay and distanced away from those who violate this norm: "*Whoever does not show mercy to our young ones, or acknowledge the rights of our elders, is not one of us.*" [Tirmidhi, Ahmad]

He assigned priority to elderly in all social settings. Respect is their right and part of worship. Anyone who recognizes the honor status of an elderly, Allah SWT will save him from the hardship of the Day of Judgment. He describes reciprocity:

"*If a young man honors an elderly on account of his age, Allah appoints someone to honor him in his old age.*" [Tirmidhi]

When such a young person reaches the peak of his maturity at age forty, he acquires a panoramic view of life. From the apex of his farsightedness, he finds his growing children and the aging parents at the center of his attention as

treasured gifts of Allah SWT. His compelling inner feelings are so perceptively captured by Allah SWT:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

“...when he attains full strength and reaches forty years, he says: My Lord! Inspire me so that I may render thanks for the favor You have bestowed on me and my parents, and that I may act righteously in a manner that would please You. And (my Lord!) grant me for my comfort goodness in my children. I turn to you repentant, and truly I am of those who submit in compliance.” [Q, 46: 15]

These are exceptionally dutiful believers who are guided by their conscience and appreciation of the love and care with which they were raised in their early years. Allah SWT recognizes them and assures them:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَنْقَبِلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَدَّ الصِّدْقَ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ

“From such people We accept the best of their deeds and overlook their sins. They are among the owners of the Paradise. This is the true promise which they were pledged (in the world).” [Q, 46: 16]

Death is inevitable. It is not a matter of belief. It has many faces, including the old age syndrome. Elderly disorder and its impact may be a test for a person and his family. Right from his conception until his death, man faces difficulties:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ

“We have created Man into hardships.” [Q, 90:4]

These challenges may be in the form of diseases, mental disorders, or aging miseries.

Two conclusions are obvious: Firstly, this life is not for fun nor is this world a playground. It is full of challenges and must be taken seriously for its purpose. All elements and events that occur in this universe are components of a Master Plan of the Creator. What appears random to human eye is calculated in the Divine Administration. Central to these phenomena is the concept that Allah SWT is Sovereign and nothing can occur without His permission:

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنِ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“No calamity can occur, except by the permission of Allah ...” [Q, 64:11]

Secondly, this world and everything in it is temporary, including the earthly life:

يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ الْقَرَارِ

“O my people! The life of this world is a brief enjoyment; it is the Hereafter that is the lasting home.” [Q, 40: 39]

Similarly, the conditions one must endure during this short stay on earth are also short lived. Sooner or later all conditions people face will come to an end, and what will persist is how the subject individual lived through those conditions. If the problem is beyond control, it is a temporary trial. Live through it as best as you can with patience. There is an opportunity in it to get closer to Allah SWT.

Those who have faith, their hearts get stronger in difficult moments:

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنِ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“No affliction can ever befall except by the leave of Allah whoever has faith in Allah, He will rightly guide his heart through adversity, for Allah has perfect knowledge of all things” [Q, 64 :11]

Body and soul work together and frame the state of mind. The conviction and reliance in Allah SWT provide strength to tolerate virtuously what is commonly intolerable. The Prophet SAW provides that moral support:

“When Allah SWT intends to favor a person, He puts him through difficulties.” [Bukhari] He further says: “Whatever sufferings a believer goes through,

sickness, grief, or even a little thorn pinch, his sins are forgiven for that."
[Bukhari, Muslim]

The purpose behind these trials is to see how we behave when surrounded by extraordinary circumstances.

We pass the test if our commitment to Allah SWT grows stronger and healthier. When challenged:

وَلَمَّا رَأَى الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْأَحْزَابَ قَالُوا هَذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَصَدَقَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
وَمَا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا وَتَسْلِيمًا

"...it only increases their faith and submissiveness." [Q, 33: 22]

While it is a test for a person who is subjected to harsh conditions, old age challenges included, the bigger trial is for those who are around him, such as family members, relatives, and friends. They should be grateful to Allah SWT for being spared from those difficulties. The best way to express their gratitude is to do whatever possible to alleviate the sufferings of the fallen victim. Those who fear Allah SWT and are mindful of their duties in helping others during their stressful moments, He rescues them from their difficulties and makes things easy for them:

وَاللَّائِي يَئْسَنَ مِنَ الْمَحِيضِ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ إِنْ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَاللَّائِي لَمْ
يَحْضُنَّ وَأُولَاتُ الْأَحْمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ
يُسْرًا

"...Whoever is mindful of Allah, He makes his matters easy for him." [Q, 65: 4]

When sufferings become intolerable and no relief seems to be in sight, many go into depression due to despair and start entertaining eccentric thoughts, even suicide. Research studies reveal that physical health conditions increase suicide risk substantially. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report in 2020, health-related suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the US. A new study indicates, nearly one in 10 suicide deaths occurs in people with chronic pain. Hopelessness fuels suicidal tendencies. It is a sign of disbelief:

قَالَ وَمَنْ يَفْئُطْ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ

“...Who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except the misguided.” [Q, 15: 56]

Both despair and suicide are prohibited in Islam. This life is not an end in itself. The inner forces must be brought to bear to change the prospects and perspective. This life will continue endlessly after death, filled with comfort and rewards for those who put their faith in Allah SWT trusting that He will never disappoint those who have such unflinching faith in Him and remain steadfast:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

“We shall house those who believed and acted righteously in the lofty mansions of Paradise...There they shall remain forever ...who remained steadfast and put their trust in their Lord!” [Q, 29: 58, 59]

It is very important for old age people to write a “Will”/Wasiya with proper witnesses about their Assets to be distributed after their death. Make sure you follow Islamic heritage Law as described in Quran and Sunnah. For details about “Islamic inheritance Law” please refer to the article on this subject in the same website you are currently reading.

Note: In this article Q refers to Quran, first number refers to Surah # and next number/numbers refers to Aya # of that Surah.