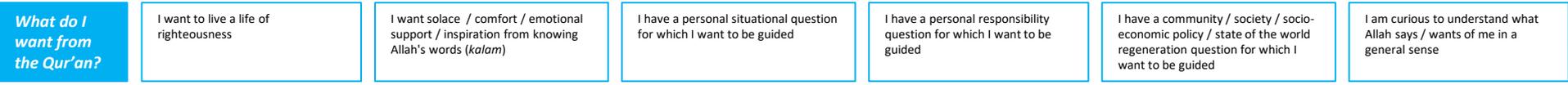


Learning how to be guided by the Qur'an

Start here

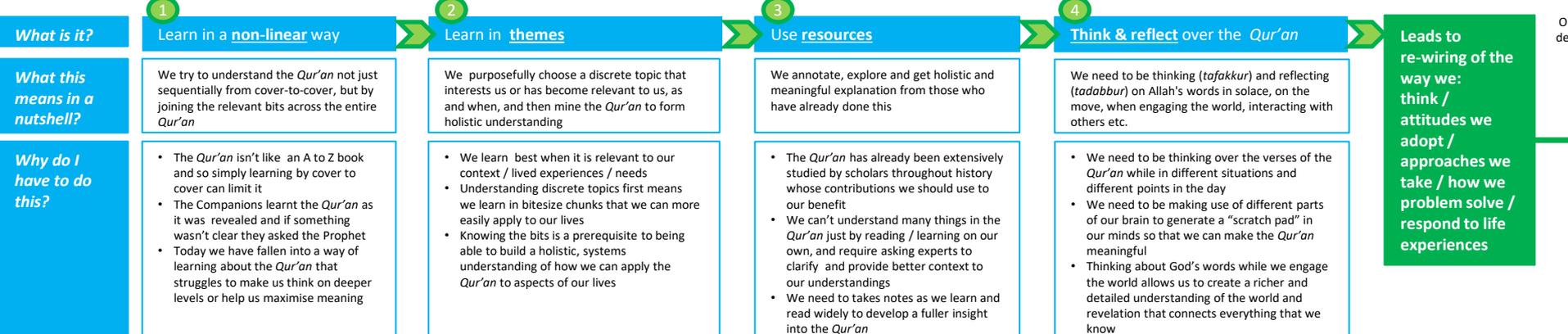


Understand your niyyah (intention)

To be guided is to gain Allah's mercy (*rahmah*), unlocking the blessings (*hasanah*) in Allah's order (*nizam*) and human (*insaan*) potential to do good (*'amal al-salih*) in this world and, ultimately, to gain Allah's forgiveness (*maghfirah*) and acceptance in the Hereafter (*Akhirah*)

To get what we want from the Qur'an we need to make the Qur'an more relevant to us. We can only do this if we understand the Qur'an. The more we know the Qur'an and the more deeper and apply it sincerely (*ikhlas*) the more we will be guided

Understand what the process is and why you should do it this way



Follow these helpful tips under each part of the process

What is it?	1 Learn in a non-linear way	2 Learn in themes	3 Use resources	4 Think & reflect over the Qur'an
What this means in a nutshell?	We try to understand the Qur'an not just sequentially from cover-to-cover, but by joining the relevant bits across the entire Qur'an	We purposefully choose a discrete topic that interests us or has become relevant to us, as and when, and then mine the Qur'an to form holistic understanding	We annotate, explore and get holistic and meaningful explanation from those who have already done this	We need to be thinking (<i>tafakkur</i>) and reflecting (<i>tadabbur</i>) on Allah's words in solace, on the move, when engaging the world, interacting with others etc.
Why do I have to do this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Qur'an isn't like an A to Z book and so simply learning by cover to cover can limit it The Companions learnt the Qur'an as it was revealed and if something wasn't clear they asked the Prophet Today we have fallen into a way of learning about the Qur'an that struggles to make us think on deeper levels or help us maximise meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We learn best when it is relevant to our context / lived experiences / needs Understanding discrete topics first means we learn in bitesize chunks that we can more easily apply to our lives Knowing the bits is a prerequisite to being able to build a holistic, systems understanding of how we can apply the Qur'an to aspects of our lives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Qur'an has already been extensively studied by scholars throughout history whose contributions we should use to our benefit We can't understand many things in the Qur'an just by reading / learning on our own, and require asking experts to clarify and provide better context to our understandings We need to take notes as we learn and read widely to develop a fuller insight into the Qur'an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to be thinking over the verses of the Qur'an while in different situations and different points in the day We need to be making use of different parts of our brain to generate a "scratch pad" in our minds so that we can make the Qur'an meaningful Thinking about God's words while we engage the world allows us to create a richer and detailed understanding of the world and revelation that connects everything that we know
How can I do this?	<p>Explore revelatory / chronological order of the Qur'an and in light of Prophetic life events</p> <p>Explore discrete elements (language / meaning) and their patterns within <i>surahs</i> and between <i>surahs</i>, and how they are connected or disconnected</p> <p>Explore structural / linguistic / literary patterns and forms in the Qur'an, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How words carry acoustic effects that impact our sensory and aesthetics reception Dynamism in grammatical shifts Linguistic features - rhythm, figures of speech, similes, metaphors, rhetorical questions, persuasive language etc. Compare / contrast verses and <i>surahs</i> revealed in Makkah versus Madinah 	<p>Explore links/relationships between things mentioned in the Qur'an, e.g. laws (<i>ahkam</i>), words, virtues, Allah's attributes (<i>sifat</i>), sins, ethical concepts, Allah's account of reality etc.</p> <p>Explore stories in the Qur'an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories of the prophets (<i>qasas al-ambiya</i>) Primordial life (<i>mithal</i>), the reality of the Hereafter (<i>Akhirah</i>) Past people / civilisations / historical events Moral lessons / virtues / ethical principles etc. Explore <i>hadiths</i> related to the virtues of the Qur'an <p>Explore parables on topics in the Qur'an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree, Spider, Bees, Niche of lamp etc. Use of rain, land, water to describe Worldly life and Hereafter etc. <p>Explore when Allah directly addresses the Prophet or events surrounding the life of the Prophet and the Companions</p> <p>Explore Allah's descriptions of the nature of the physical world</p> <p>Explore human nature/character of people and communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the way they used their intellect or showed human utility In the way they engaged revelation e.g. righteous / hypocrites / corrupt / doubters / sceptics Traits they displayed – arrogance, pride, jealousy, bravery, generosity etc. <p>Explore solutions to problems Allah provides for different situations / behaviour changes / call to virtue</p>	<p>For English speakers, use an English translation of the Qur'an that works for you, this could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sticking to the most-lucid translation to you Comparing translations side-by-side to get the best meaning. Using an old English translation like Pickthall to keep the language more arcane to avoid potentially restricting semantic fields. A translation with colour co-ordination of the words to support your learning of Qur'anic Arabic. <p>Use reliable commentaries (<i>tafsir</i>) of the Qur'an to provide greater depth of reasoning and explanation of <i>ayaaths</i> and discussion points. There are many commentaries in the English language such as <i>Tafsir al-Kabir</i>, <i>Tafsir Jalalayn</i>, <i>Tafsir al-Tabari</i>, <i>Tafsir Ibn Kathir</i>, <i>Ma'ariful Qur'an</i>, <i>Fi Zilalil Qur'an</i>, <i>Tahfimum Qur'an</i>, <i>Tafsir Usmani</i>, etc. but if you have access to other languages there will be many more.</p> <p>Learn about <i>tafsir</i> and related sciences of the Qur'an ('<i>ulum al-Qur'an</i>) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attending lessons by reliable scholars offline or online Reading books (Suyuti's <i>Itqan</i>, Von Denffer's '<i>Ulum al-Qur'an</i> etc.) / research papers / PhD theses / web portal or videos produced by reliable scholars 	<p>Ask questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does this <i>ayaath</i> mean for me? How does it relate to my situation? What reasoning can I draw from it? Why is Allah saying this? Am I taking inspiration from it or from signs of nature that Allah refers to What other things could Allah be referring to? Is this a general learning point or does it refer to something specific? How can I apply it? Do I have examples from the Prophet's life or the life of the Companions? Am I aware of what scholars have said to explain the fuller meanings? Have I understood this in modern settings where it could apply and /or with reference to knowledge in other fields? Have there been times in the past where I could've applied this better? <p>Bring these questions to the fore of our minds while on the go. This is because our brains work differently while we are walking / doing activity, which will help bring to life / make clear Allah's</p> <p>Reflect on these questions as they apply to us as an individual first and then expand our focus to how it would apply to Muslim communities, followed by the wider society followed by the world we live in</p> <p>Try to memorise the <i>ayaaths</i> you learn about or their meaning and recall after prayer / while doing activity / on the go</p> <p>To help reinforce the learning, write it down / teach others / talk to others about it</p>

This guide was produced by Dr Mammun Khan and published on 1st May 2020 as part of the project www.beingbritishmuslims.com, which seeks to: (1) produce insights into how faith can become more meaningful and relevant in today's world; and (2) inform public debate and understanding of the multifarious crossroads, imaginings and challenges currently making and remaking British Muslim identity.

