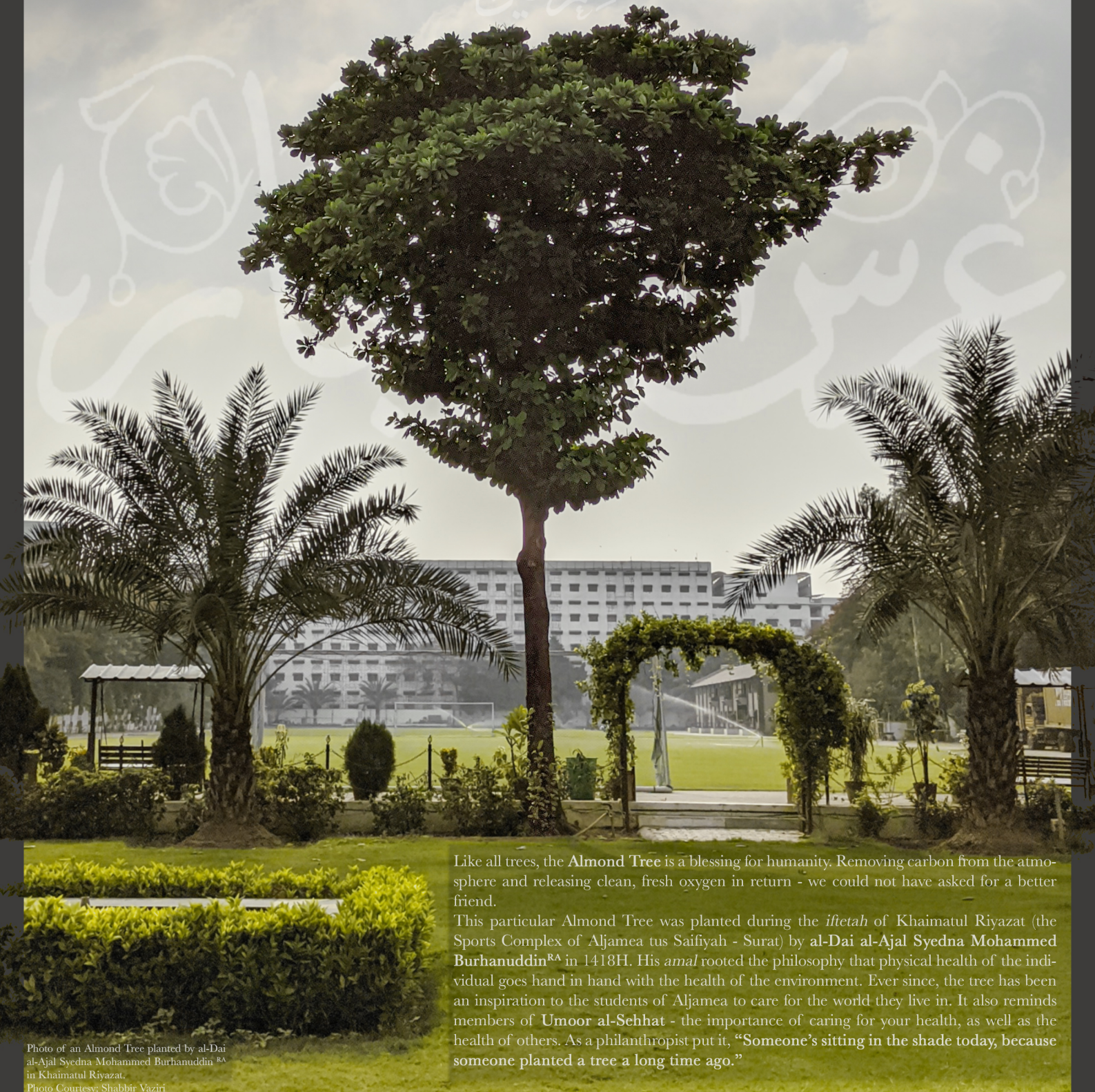


SILK-E-HAYAAT

UMOOR SEHHAT

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نِعْمَ الْخَيْرُ



Like all trees, the **Almond Tree** is a blessing for humanity. Removing carbon from the atmosphere and releasing clean, fresh oxygen in return - we could not have asked for a better friend.

This particular Almond Tree was planted during the *iftetah* of Khaimatul Riyazat (the Sports Complex of Aljamea tus Saifiyah - Surat) by **al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin^{RA}** in 1418H. His *amal* rooted the philosophy that physical health of the individual goes hand in hand with the health of the environment. Ever since, the tree has been an inspiration to the students of Aljamea to care for the world they live in. It also reminds members of **Umoor al-Sehhat** - the importance of caring for your health, as well as the health of others. As a philanthropist put it, “Someone’s sitting in the shade today, because someone planted a tree a long time ago.”

Having all the Time in the World

Article by: Salma Kothari, Student of Al Jamea tus Saifiyah - al-Dirasaat al-Khassa

Our days are numbered. And by ‘our days’ I mean the sum of days that constitute our individual lifespans. From the life expectancy going from 56.9 years in 1970 to our current best of 72.6 years in 2019, we have indeed come a long way. This impressive increase in the longevity of life is the result of collaborative efforts of scientists, doctors, and governments across the world. Researchers and experts in the field of medicine work tirelessly to find ways to add more years to a human life, to reverse the effects of time, to uncover the secret to immortality, to find a cure to death itself. But despite enormous scientific and technological progress, that ambition remains quite elusive. This is our destiny: our time in this world is limited and we have but one lifetime to fulfil our goals and convert our dreams into reality.

Bearing in mind the absolute certainty of death, Amirul Mumineen ^{AS} has given us a unique perspective for coming to terms with our mortality. He has said - “Work for the affairs regarding your *akherat* (hereafter) as if you were to die tomorrow, and work for the affairs of your *duniya* (temporal world), as if you were to live forever.”

Let us especially focus on the latter half of the *kalaam* today. In the grand scheme of things, our residence on this Earth is but a state of transit. However, Amirul Mumineen ^{AS} teaches us that in spite of this temporary stay, we should not live half-heartedly and take our lives for granted. Instead, our lives should be meticulously planned to ensure our physical and spiritual comfort, both during our lifetime and thereafter.

Devising a lifestyle fit for an ‘eternity’ can be a daunting task and so an important question comes to mind. How can we start implementing the teachings of this *kalaam*?

Our health is a good place to begin. There are two, irreplaceable things that we must spend our living days with – our minds and our bodies. There are no return or exchange policies for either. As

“Work for the affairs of your *duniya* (temporal world), as if you were to live forever.”

such, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we do everything in our power to keep them in their optimal condition.

As we keep planning and searching for ways to lead healthier lives, it’s no surprise then that there is a plethora of fitness, diet, and health regimens to choose from, each honing its techniques to provide the best formula to remain healthy.

Abiding by the *shariat* can provide a very balanced way to maintain both our physical and mental health – along with developing our spiritual well-being. Our *shariat* can provide structure to our day to day lives. Praying *fajr namaz* regularly, not only means waking up early, but also ensures that we start each morning in a positive and composed manner. Similarly, Rasulullah ^{SAW} has advised – “Do *roza*, you will become healthy.” There are many such teachings of our Hudaat Kiraam ^{AS} which highlight the importance of staying fit and leading an active life.

Amirul Mumineen’s ^{AS} *kalaam* is yet another example of Awliyaa Kiraam’s ^{AS} attention and consideration of our health: “Teach your children swimming, archery and horse riding.” The healthcare benefits of these three sports are extensive. Swimming is one of the healthiest forms of exercise that promotes physical development of the muscles of the entire body. Archery strengthens the upper body, helps with maintaining a good posture, and develops and tunes the archer’s ability

to focus and concentrate – an important aspect of mental health. Horse riding improves reflexes and coordination, strengthens the core and the back. It invokes empathy within the riders as they learn to understand their mounts and guide them by communicating through non-verbal cues. All these combined can play a role in the emotional development of the person. In a way, this *kalaam* tutors us to train our bodies, minds, and souls in every way possible right from childhood!

An interesting aspect of the three activities highlighted in the *kalaam* is the utility of each. While horse-riding and archery were a common trade, imagine how amazing it would sound to a person residing in sixth-century Arabia to be asked to teach their children how to swim! Keeping in mind that there were no swimming pools at that time, just when would swimming come in handy to a person settled in the desert? The utility is definitely there, but we often become too short sighted to see it.

This instruction is a prime example of Amirul Mumineen's ^{AS} far sightedness and his planning for the long term. He teaches us that even a person who has never been to sea should be prepared for a day they might have to set sail. That they should know skills which might not be useful today, but become vital in the future. In this case, the ability to stay afloat for just moments longer - can become a

question of life and death while being on the high seas.

On a similar note, we might feel today that our bodies are robust and our minds sharp, but let us make sure that our energetic youth does not burn away our health to fuel its cravings. If we are to plan for an 'eternal' life, then we must be active today to ensure that our bodies remain healthy tomorrow. We must walk today to ensure that our legs do not fail us. We must burn excess fat today to make sure that our hearts do not succumb to the weight of cholesterol in our bloodstreams. 'And work for the affairs of your *duniya* as if you were to live forever'.

The same long-term planning should be implemented for the environment. Our homes and workplaces should be clean and well organized. Assigning a proper place for every little thing may feel time consuming but is always beneficial in the long run. On a larger scale, we must also start considering for our planet. Thinking that we will not be there when the world runs out of oil, or the sea levels rise to catastrophic levels goes against the teachings of Amirul Mumineen ^{AS}. We should start caring for our home as if we would be its residents for a very long time. As a Chinese proverb finely puts it – the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.

Not only does this *kalaam* teach us foresightedness, but it also teaches us to be patient and not be hasty when it comes to the affairs of our *duniya*. That it takes time and trial to achieve success. Becoming fit and getting into shape is not something that will come easily. Often times we enthusiastically over commit to some form of exercise only to find ourselves checking the weight scale after every set. We have to understand that becoming healthy is not a one-time project, but it is a choice and lifestyle.

In conclusion, the *kalaam* teaches us that we must never stop trying just because we lost our 'form'. It encourages us to keep making healthy choices time after time again. We might miss a few targets here and there, but at the end of the day – the sum of our actions should add up towards achieving our goals. Even if we take an eternity to get there.



Often used to express the power of a bow, draw-weight measures the force required to hold back the string at its maximum limit or at full draw. This 50 lb draw-weight bow is strong enough to take down medium sized game (such as deer) with ease, and is commonly used in most archery competitions.

Photo courtesy: Aliasgar Yamani

GLIMPSES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

A win-win Situation in

Hyderabad

The Hyderabad Jamaat has set up Vermicompost towers around the perimeters of their Masjid. These towers are filled with wet-waste generated from kitchens, topped with dry leaves and catalyzed by outsourced red earthworms. Within forty days, this waste composts completely which is later used as a fertilizer for the garden.

Not only are they contributing to the welfare of their city by reducing the waste, but they are also able to turn the wet-waste of their kitchens into a high-quality vermicompost for their gardens at absolutely no cost. This is a win-win.

Tackling Plastic Waste 1 Step at a Time in

Taheri Mohallah, Karachi

The Nazafat Committee in Karachi has taken commendable measures in reducing plastic waste. Realizing that a majority of the waste generated during events was of plastic bottles, they opted to serve water directly in paper cups. This resulted in a sharp 90% reduction of waste generation! It was quite normal to have a heap of trash at the end of the day, which was now limited to just 7-8 garbage bags!

The Power of Prayers, Raza and Dua

Dr Ibrahim bhai Kothawala, MBBS MS (Surgery) DNB (Surgery) DNB (Urology)



I have performed hundreds of surgeries in my lifetime, and with great confidence I can say that I have witnessed the effects of *dua* and prayers during my operations. I always make it a point to start my surgeries with 'Bismillah', my sole *niyat* being that 'When I fall sick, it is He who cures', that it is Allah ^{TA} who is curing the patient, and I am just an instrument.

Needless to say, the human body is highly complex and such medical procedures require many calculations and there are a lot of variables in each case. Thus, oftentimes it is difficult to say whether or not performing the surgery is the right course of action for the time. Several times, I have witnessed complications arise during the surgery, so much so that a patient's situation worsened. It is in such times that I take Imam Husain's ^{AS} *wasila* and remember Maulana ^{TUS}, which gives me strength to complete the surgery and make the right decisions. Once, after a simple surgery, a patient's condition

worsened due to their diabetes and they had to be shifted into the ICU. At that time, I took Babji Maula's ^{QR} *wasila*. Believe it or not, the patient had a fast and miraculous recovery. Just recently I was handling the case of a Mumin *bhai* from Dubai who had contracted the coronavirus and his oxygen reading was very low. He did *araz* for *dua mubarak* and shortly afterward, he had a full recovery. Similarly, a Mumin *bhai* who had 70-80% of lung damage and had lost hope for his life, did *araz* to Maulana ^{TUS} for a ziyafat. He too received *shifa*.

It also happens that sometimes we do *araz* in Huzure Ala ^{TUS} for *raza* for surgeries, and Maulana ^{TUS} then asks us to get a second opinion from other doctors. I have been in several *bethak* of Maulana ^{TUS} where he asks such Mumineen to talk with us, and I firmly believe that in that moment, through Maula's ^{TUS} *nazar*, we are able to provide such sound advice, that we ourselves are surprised at the outcomes of.

GLIMPSES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Weight - The Ticking Time Bomb

Sh. Juzer Bhai Kothari, Sigatul Amalat



Q 1. How was life like before pursuing a fitness regime?

Life was quite comfortable in the sense that there weren't any self-implied restraints on my schedule. However, the extra weight felt like a ticking bomb ready to explode at any moment. This was a source of constant worry at the back of my mind.

Q 2. What inspired you to start looking after your fitness?

I realized that if I did not address my weight problem, it would probably cause me a multitude of other health problems as well. Often times we see that people become less and less active over time especially if they aren't in shape. I was worried that the weight, as well any other accompanying illnesses could essentially make me dependent on others and deprive me of enjoying my remaining years.

Q 3. What fitness routine did you follow?

After researching and reading about the numerous ways to lose weight, I realized that the one thing all of them had in common was to focus on your diet and exercise. I changed my eating habits, adjusting my diet to eat healthier and consume lower quantities of food while still being able to sustain my daily activities and additional exercise. Additionally, I chose walking as my form of exercise. Rain or shine, I made it a point to at least walk 10,000 steps a day. As I lost weight, I started incorporating other forms of exercises like skipping and swimming.

Q.4 From 105 to 65, What is the biggest challenge that you faced while undergoing this transformation?

As I started getting into shape, I soon realized that losing weight is easy but keeping it off is a different challenge all together. It is a constant process. Keeping the lost weight off, even today still remains something to work for. I have made a lot of lifestyle changes in my journey, and even today I try to adhere to those changes.

COVID19 Support System in Pune

Volunteers from Pune, under the guidance of their Amil Saheb, have started a 24x7 COVID helpline to provide the best possible assistance to Mumineen all over the city over all *mohallas*. Those who are facing difficulties in acquiring medicines, or facing problems with hospital vacancy and bed shortages, oxygen tanks, coordination with doctors, testing, quarantine and isolation facilities, plasma, are being helped through this support system. Each issue has been assigned a separate team, so that Mumi-neen can be rerouted instantly for immediate assistance.

Champions in the Making in Dar-es-Salaam



Over the past year, al-Nadi al-Burhani in Dar-es-Salam has organized various sporting events to promote the cause of having a healthy body and a sound mind. These events have attracted over 200 participants of all age categories. Football, cricket, table tennis are amongst the many sports Mumi-neen take part in. Apart from these on-field events, occasional long cycling sessions are also held over the weekends. Such initiatives by Umoor al-Sehat, have kept men and women alike fit by promoting sporting activities on a daily/weekly basis, and then competing against each other for honors.

FAQs regarding the Pandemic

Fighting a pandemic is a frightening ordeal and in the internet age - differentiating between fact and myth can be quite complicated. Thankfully, a team of doctors agreed to do the required research and answer our most frequently asked questions regarding COVID-19 and the vaccination process. Here are some of the FAQs that they have answered:

Please note that these answers reflect scientific research as of May 2021. We highly recommend consulting your family doctor for more up-to date explanations. Special thanks to Dr. Qusai bhai Arsiwala, Dr. Huzaifa bhai Adamali, Dr. Hozefa bhai Ebrahim, and Dr. Moez bhai Dunganwalla for providing these answers.

How much time do virus particles survive on different external surfaces?

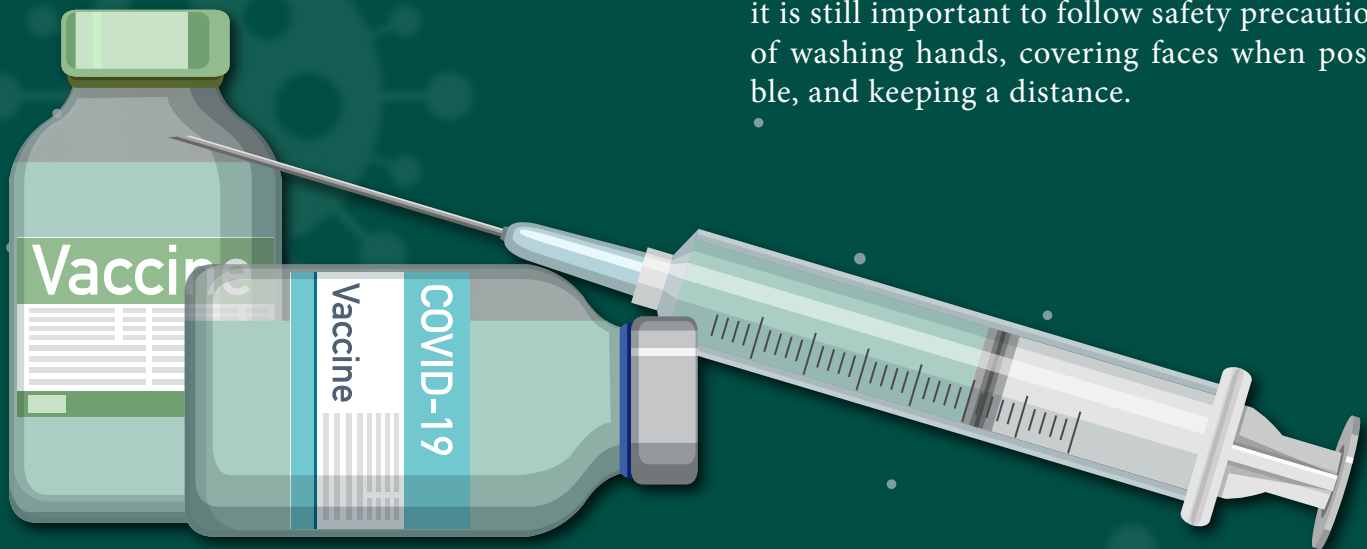
1

The virus survives the longest – up to three days – on plastic and stainless steel. On certain surfaces, such as copper, the virus survives for hours rather than days. No functional virus was found on cardboard after 24 hours. In aerosol form – tiny particles floating in the air – the virus can survive for up to three hours.

Do I need to wear a mask even after I am vaccinated?

2

Yes, you should, it is a good practice. You can still get COVID-19 even after the vaccine and you can still pass the virus to others, therefore, it is still important to follow safety precautions of washing hands, covering faces when possible, and keeping a distance.



How does the vaccine affect my ability to fight the virus?

3

The first time a person is infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, it can take several days or weeks for their body to make and use all the germ-fighting tools needed to get over the infection. After the infection, the person's immune system remembers what it learned about how to protect the body against that disease.

The body keeps a few white cells, T cells, called “memory cells”, that go into action quickly if the body encounters the same virus again. With all types of vaccines, the body is left with a supply of “memory cells” that will remember how to fight that virus in the future. Since your body knows how to fight off the infection, it greatly decreases the severity of disease and increases your chances for survival.

How long will I be immune after recovering from COVID-19? Is it possible for me to get infected for the 2nd time?

4

For those persons who recover from COVID-19, immunity to the virus can last at least 3-6 months and maybe longer. Immunity can occur naturally after developing COVID-19 or from getting the COVID-19 vaccination. Unfortunately, the varying new strains of the virus can complicate and reduce this immunity.

While the length of immunity after developing COVID-19 or getting the vaccine is unknown, we are certain that it will not be a lifelong immunity. For this reason, practicing physical or social distancing and wearing a mask is needed to continue to stop the spread.

DID YOU KNOW?

Exercise v/s a Chocolate Bar

A common belief that a lot of people hold on to - is that in order to lose weight, all you have to do - is work out. The idea being that as long as you complete your jog, you can spoil yourself afterward with a little sugary treat. On the contrary, some modern studies show that while exercise is essential to keep the body fit, it might not be the most effective way to lose your weight. Weight loss is usually measured by the number of calories burnt per work-out. Burning calories is not easy. The following chart shows how much exercise it would require (for an average weighted person) to burn an average-sized 100g chocolate-bar worth of calories:



QUOTES SECTION



The planting of trees is a most beneficial act for they lend beauty to the earth and bring about a downpour of Allah Ta'ala's blessings.

A WORD FROM OUR READERS

My Love for Plants

We had the *azeem sharaf* of ziyafat of Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin ^{RA} on our terrace with the theme of plants and birds in 1985. By his blessings, my terrace is full of plants to this date! Taking care of these plants stirred the passion in me for plantation which eventually turned into a fruitful business venture!

Whenever I am in my garden, near my plants, it is like a bond where I sense positive energy. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin's ^{TUS} love for plants and affection for the environment has inspired me to a great extent and my conviction for them has grown even more!

Shamoil Ezzy, Pune

The Benefits of Sports

I was keen in participating in all kinds of sports since I was a kid. You'd always find me in the garden playing something. Then when Maulana ^{TUS} encouraged outdoor activities for the improvement of health, my friends and I took up sports such as football and cricket again. We saw a number of benefits such as better focus in work and studies, better teamwork and coordination, and the most prevalent of all - Maulana's ^{TUS} *khushi*.

Mustafa Nabijee, Sanaa -Yemen

