

SHAYKH NAWAWI AL-BANTANI ON *ZUHD*: A SPIRITUAL REMEDY FOR COMPULSIVE CONSUMERISM

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Abstract: This study explores Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani's concept of *zuhd* as a framework for addressing compulsive shopping behavior. Rooted in materialistic tendencies, shopaholism reflects excessive and uncontrolled consumption, leading to psychological and social concerns. This qualitative research employs a literature review of Shaykh Nawawi's works on Sufism and *zuhd*, analyzed through an analytical-descriptive approach. Findings indicate that, according to Shaykh Nawawi, *zuhd* is a psychological and spiritual state in which worldly possessions are perceived as insignificant. His concept of *zuhd* effectively mitigates compulsive shopping through three key principles: (a) true inner peace derives from devotion to the God rather than material wealth or status; (b) excessive attachment to possessions fosters anxiety and depression; and (c) *zuhd* promotes ethical wealth management in line with Islamic teachings. This study argues that Shaykh Nawawi's *zuhd* provides a transformative paradigm for reducing materialistic tendencies and fostering a spiritually conscious approach to consumption. Integrating *zuhd* into contemporary consumer ethics can enhance financial discipline and psychological well-being, ultimately countering the detrimental effects of consumerism.

Keywords: Shopaholic Lifestyle; Shaykh Nawawi; Sufism; *Zuhd*.

Introduction

In Modern civilization experiences an elevated standard of comfort as a result of scientific and technological advancements. People's everyday lives have recently become more reliant on the

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internet, social media, numerous mobile applications, and other digital communication gadgets.¹ This expansion in the realm of communication has consequences for the development of applications in its contents. One of these changes is the accessibility of internet-based buying and selling services, which are also known as online stores.² In particular, advancement has an inextricable connection to both positive and negative consequences.

Online shops do offer considerable benefits to society. Users may be apprehensive about purchasing online at first, but they soon realize how convenient and even enjoyable it is.³ However, there are substantial lifestyle changes that have a detrimental influence on life. One of them is the emergence of the habit of continuing to buy. The need to purchase does not care if the commodity is beneficial and necessary or not.⁴ This conduct is referred to as shopaholic.⁵ This shopaholic would later give rise to an addiction defined by anxiety and an insatiable need to spend both time and funds. Furthermore, relationships with relatives are likely to decline as the person responsible becomes increasingly consumed with buying. Shopaholics are also more likely to give inaccurate estimates to others about how much money they spend and how much time they devote to them.⁶

Considering the negative implications of shopaholic behavior, solutions must be explored. Aside from the reasons mentioned above, Sufism has been demonstrated to help reduce shopaholic

¹ Andrew T. Stephen, "The Role of Digital and Social Media Marketing in Consumer Behavior," *Current Opinion in Psychology* 10 (2016): 17.

² Lok Yee Hwei, "Are You a Shopaholic? A Case Study of Customer Satisfaction of Shopee," *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality in Asia Pasific* 6, no. 1 (2023): 71.

³ Thabang Excellent Mofokeng, "Antecedents of Trust and Customer Loyalty in Online Shopping: The Moderating Effects of Online Shopping Experience and e-Shopping Spending," *Heliyon* 9, no. 5 (May 2023): 4.

⁴ Raihanah Daulay, "Analysis of the Effect of Shopaholic Behaviour and Promotion on Impulse Buying Through E-Commerce on Students in Medan," *IJERLAS: International Journal of Educational Review, Law and Social Sciences* 2 (2022): 240.

⁵ Else Brilianaza and Arief Sudrajat, "Gaya Hidup Remaja Shopaholic dalam Trend Belanja Online di Shopee," *Jurnal Sains Sosial dan Humaniora* 6, no. 1 (2022): 46.

⁶ Mandeep Kaur, S K Maheshwari, and Anil Kumar, "Compulsive Buying Behavior and Online Shopping Addiction among Health Science Teachers," *International Journal of Nursing Care* 7, no. 1 (2019): 79.

behavior. Sufism offers several ideas that, when studied further, may provide an answer to this problem. Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani's nine records include the concept of *zuhd*.⁷ *Zuhd*, according to Shaykh Nawawi, releases a person from dependency on worldliness. Pleasure and despair are no longer based on worldly possessions.⁸ As a result, Shaykh Nawawi's concept of *zuhd* may hold the key to solving this problem.

The author is interested in Shaykh Nawawi's thoughts as a counterpoint to the shopaholic lifestyle for the following three main reasons: First, as a Nusantara well-known scholar, Shaykh Nawawi contributed significantly to theological foundations and ethical norms in the scientific tradition in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools.⁹ Various well-known Indonesian Muslim leaders were born under his guidance. Furthermore, Shaykh Nawawi is a scholar who makes significant contributions to the intellectual realm, both in Indonesia and worldwide. His contributions to a variety of fields have been recognized, including Sufism. Previously, Egyptian intellectuals referred to him as "Sayyid ulama al-Hijāz," meaning the leader of Hijaz scholars.¹⁰ In addition, even though Shaykh Nawawi lived during the Dutch colonial period, his thoughts on *zuhd*, which evolved into a guide for seeing the world and its contents, may still be relevant and beneficial for addressing some of today's behavioral disorders.

Several additional variables influenced the decision to use the *zuhd* idea as well. Initially, Shaykh Nawawi's concept of *zuhd* was more extensive. This is because the knowledge provided is similar to the terms *tawakkal* and *riqā*. Additionally, Shaykh Nawawi believes that *zuhd* shares certain parallels with al-Ghazali's model *zuhd*, implying strong scientific backgrounds between the two. Following that, Shaykh Nawawi outlined the particular steps required for obtaining this *zuhd*. Shaykh Nawawi's publications provide practical procedures to accomplish this degree.

⁷ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Salalim al-Fuḍala' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzūmat Hidāyat al-Adhkīyā' ilā Tariq al-Awliyā'* (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), 20.

⁸ Ibid., 21.

⁹ Saifudin and Neni Triana, "Pendidikan Islam, Hukum Islam dan Tasawuf Pemikiran Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani," *Man'uzah: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 13, no. 2 (2023): 53-65.

¹⁰ Subaidi et al., "Sheikh Nawawi Al-Jawi's Sufism Thoughts of the Book Marāqil 'Ubūdyah," *Religia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 26, no. 1 (2023): 76-91.

Several pieces of research on Shaykh Nawawi's views and work as Nusantara's great scholar appear throughout the author's research on him. Two of the published studies are about his role in promoting Islam throughout Nusantara's archipelago.¹¹ Then there are six articles concerning his views on Islamic disciplines, including jurisprudence,¹² *tafsir*,¹³ and *hadith*.¹⁴ Additionally, there are three articles about this topic, particularly in Shaykh Nawawi's Sufi philosophy. The issue highlighted was the link between Sufism and jurisprudence,¹⁵ followed by Sufi substance in his *tafsir*¹⁶ and talks about *maqāmāt*, according to Shaykh Nawawi.¹⁷

This study employs a qualitative literature-based approach, utilizing documentation procedures to collect materials and data from a range of primary and secondary sources.¹⁸ Primary sources in-

¹¹ Moh Abid Mabur, "Pengaruh Karya Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani dalam Tradisi Kajian Kitab Kuning (Kitab Klasik di Pesantren Buntet)," *Tamaddun: Jurnal Sejarah dan Kebudayaan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2016); Mamat Slamet Burhanuddin, "K.H. Nawawi Banten (w. 1314/1897) Akar Tradisi Keintelektualan NU," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 34, no. 1 (2010): 121-140.

¹² Suwarjin, "Transformasi Pemikiran Hukum Keluarga Islam Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani ke dalam Kompilasi Hukum Islam," *Qiyas: Jurnal Hukum Islam dan Peradilan* 5 (2020); Khusaeri, "Pemikiran Syekh Nawawi al-bantani dalam Bidang Hukum Islam (Tentang Taklif Dan Mukalaf)," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat* 11, no. 1 (2014): 15-35.

¹³ Anas Mujahiddin and Muhammad Asror, "Telaah Tafsir Marah Labid Karya Nawawi Al-Bantani," *Ulumul Qur'an: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 1, no. 1 (2021); Tsalis Muttaqin, "Khazanah Tafsir Nusantara: Kajian atas Penafsiran Nawawi Banten terhadap Surah al-Fatihah dalam Marah Labid," *MAGHZA: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 1 (2017): 85-92; Robby Zidni Ilman, "Menjawab Kontroversi Tafsir Murah Labib Ke-Nusantara: Analisis Kritis Kitab Magnumopus Syaikh Nawawi al-Bantani," *Kontemplasi* 7, no. 2 (2019): 299-336.

¹⁴ Arwansyah Kirin, Siti Marpuah, and Muhammad Masruri, "Hadis Da'if dan Mawdu' dalam Kitab Nasa'ih al-'Ibad oleh Nawawi banten: Analisa terhadap Konten Hadis," *Hudan Linnas: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora* 2, no. 1 (2021): 1-19.

¹⁵ Suwarjin, "Transformasi Pemikiran Hukum Keluarga Islam Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani ke dalam Kompilasi Hukum Islam."

¹⁶ Kartubi, "Pemikiran Tasawuf Syekh Nawawi Banten Dalam Tafsir Marah Labid," *Kontekstualita: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 22, no. 2 (2007): 76-93.

¹⁷ Eko Zulfikar, "Khazanah Tasawuf Nusantara: Telaah atas Pemikiran Maqamat Tasawuf Nawawi Al-Bantani dalam Kitab Salalim Al-Fudhala," *Spiritualita* 4, no. 1 (2020).

¹⁸ Kaelan, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Bidang Filsafat* (Yogyakarta: Paradigma, 2005), 4.

clude Shaykh Nawawi's publications, such as *Qāmi' al-Ṭuḡyān 'alā Manẓūmat Shu'ab al-Īmān, Naṣā'ih al-'Ibād, Tanqīḥ al-Qawl al-Ḥathibh Sharḥ al-Manẓūmat al-Adhkiyā, Miṣbāḥ al-Zulam 'alā al-Nahj al-Atam fī Tabwīb al-Ḥikam, Marāqī al-'Ubūdiyyah, and Sharḥ al-Bidāyat al-Hidāyah. While not all of these works specifically focus on Sufism, they discuss *zuhd* and related topics. Secondary sources, including major Sufi texts, further enrich the research. The gathered information is analyzed using an analytical-descriptive method to interpret Shaykh Nawawi's Sufi views, particularly his concept of *zuhd* as a therapeutic approach to mitigating shopaholic behavior and its relevance in contemporary society.¹⁹*

Despite the extensive scholarship on Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani's contributions to Sufism, there remains a lack of comprehensive studies examining his concept of *zuhd* in the context of compulsive shopping behavior. As consumerism and materialistic tendencies increasingly shape modern lifestyles, shopaholism has emerged as a psychological and social concern. However, existing literature has not explored *zuhd* as a potential therapeutic approach to mitigating excessive consumption.²⁰ This study aims to address this gap by analyzing Shaykh Nawawi's perspectives on *zuhd* and its applicability in fostering financial discipline and psychological well-being in the contemporary era.

A Brief Biography of Shaykh Nawawi Al-Bantani

Abū 'Abd al-Mu'ṭī Muḥammad Nawawī b. 'Umar al-Jāwī al-Bantani al-Tanarī,²¹ or more famously Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani, was one of the most prominent scholars of Nusantara's archipelago in the 19th century. He was born in Tanara, a sub-district in the city of Banten, in 1815 and died in 1897 at the age of 84 years.²²

¹⁹ Feny Rita Fiantika et al., *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Padang: Global Eksekutif Teknologi, 2022), 2.

²⁰ Nur Syam and Wahyu Ilaihi, "Institution of Islam Java: Coastal Islam, Local Culture, and the Role of Sufism," *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 17, no. 2 (2023): 189-213.

²¹ Khusaeri, "Pemikiran Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani dalam Bidang Hukum Islam (Tentang Taklif dan Mukalaf)."

²² Mamat S. Burhanuddin, Muh. Syamsuddin, and Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, "Kajian Kontemporer Terhadap Karya Nawawi Al-Bantani," *Dinika: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2019): 83-102.

His father, KH. Umar was a dynamic ulama who came from a religiously orthodox family. His mother, Zubaidah, was a housewife, but she was regarded as effective in teaching her children, all of whom went on to become recognized religious leaders. The genealogy of Shaykh Nawawi is also connected to Sunan Gunung Djati, who later reached the Prophet Muḥammad through the path of Imām Ḥusayn.²³ It can be said that Shaykh Nawawi represents the descendants of scholars as well as nobles.

Shaykh Nawawi's journey in studying began at home, where he studied religion with his father and several scholars in the Banten area as well as Purwakarta. As a teenager, Shaykh Nawawi performed Hajj and lived in Mecca for three years. He then returned to Indonesia, where he assisted his father in teaching. However, pressure from the Dutch ruler made Shaykh Nawawi feel that the condition of the archipelago was not conducive, so he decided to return to Mecca and settle there.²⁴ Shaykh Nawawi was popular as a person who thirsted for knowledge and took it from many teachers so that he became a complete scholar both in memorization and understanding. Among his teachers were Ahmad al-Nahrawi, Ahmad Dimiyati, and Hasbullah. In addition to studying in Mecca, Shaykh Nawawi also made several trips to Egypt and the Levant to study with great scholars. Shaykh Nawawi's lifetime revolved around learning, teaching, publishing, and worshipping the God alone.²⁵

Shaykh Nawawi was also known in Mecca as "al-Bantanī" or "al-Jāwī," according to his written works. Nawawi was originally from Banten, which was stated by "al-Bantanī," while the mention of "al-Jāwī" denotes someone from Java, a nickname attributed to archipelago immigrants. At the time, the word "Indonesia" was nonexistent. Shaykh Nawawi subsequently received the honorary title "Sayyid Ḥijāz," which translates as the authority of Muslim academics from Saudi Arabia's area, which encompasses Mecca,

²³ Aan Parhani, "Metode Penafsiran Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Tafsir *Marah Labid*," *Tafsire* 1, no. 1 (2013): 1-22.

²⁴ Kambali Zutas, "Literacy Tradition in Islamic Education in Colonial Period," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 1 (2017): 16-31.

²⁵ Abdullah Mirdad, *al-Mukhtaṣar min Kitāb al-Nasr wa al-Zubr fī Tarājim Afaḍil Makkah* (Jeddah: 'Alam al-Ma'rifah, 1986), 504.

Jeddah, and Medina. Today, he is commonly referred to as Shaykh Nawawi in the Indonesian Islamic boarding school tradition.²⁶

As a scholar, Shaykh Nawawi was one of the most prolific figures. His works range from brief writings in the form of worship procedures to essays in the form of Qur'anic exegesis.²⁷ Among his writings in the field of jurisprudence are *Sullam al-Munājāh Sharḥ Safīnat al-Ṣalāh*, *Bahjat al-Wasā'il bi Sharḥ al-Masā'il 'alā al-Risālat al-Jāmi'ah*, *Kāshifat al-Sajā Sharḥ Safīnat al-Najā*, *Nihāyat al-Zayn Sharḥ Qurrat al-'Ayn*, and *al-Thimār al-Yāni'ah Sharḥ al-Riyād al-Badī'ah*. Then, in the field of *tawḥīd*, he wrote several books, including *Sharḥ Tījān al-Sarārī 'alā Risālat al-Bajāri fī al-Tawḥīd*, *Qāmi' al-Tuḥyān 'alā Manẓūmāt Shu'ab al-Īmān*, and *Qaṭr al-Ghayṭh fī Sharḥ Masā'il Abī al-Layṭh*. There are also his works in Arabic grammar (*naḥw*), namely *al-Riyād al-Faulīyah*, *Kashf al-Marūṭiyah*, and *al-Fuṣūṣ al-Yāqūṭiyah*.

While in the science of history (*tārīkh*), Nawawi also gave birth to several works, including *al-Ibrīḡ al-Zāmi fī Mawlid Sayyidina*, *Faṭḥ al-Ṣamad Sharḥ 'alā Mawlid al-Nabawī*, and *Buḡhyat al-Anām*. Furthermore, in the field of interpretation, namely, *Tafsīr al-Munīr li Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl*. Furthermore, in the field of Ḥadīth, he wrote *Naṣā'ih al-'Ibād fī Bayān Alfāḡ*, *Munabbihāt 'alā al-Isti'dād li Yanm al-Ma'ād*, *Tanqīḥ al-Qawl al-Ḥathbīth bi Sharḥ Lubāb al-Ḥadīth*. Finally, in Sufism, he has several works, namely *Salālim al-Fuḍalā' Sharḥ 'alā Manẓūmāt al-Adhkiyā*, *Miṣbāḥ al-Zulam 'alā al-Nahj al-Atam fī Tabwīb al-Ḥikam*, and *Marāqī al-'Ubūdiyyah Sharḥ 'alā Bidāyat al-Hidayah*. In total, then his works can reach 115 books in various disciplines.²⁸ Thus, it can be said that he was a prolific and multi-disciplinary scholar (*mutafannin*).

He has a large number of students in addition to his numerous works. He taught at home and had around 200 students. Regardless of how many students he taught, Shaykh Nawawi remained modest. His students from Indonesia were Khalil Bangkalan, Hasyim Asy'ari, Tubagus Asnawi, and Asnawi Kudus. Shaykh

²⁶ Ahmad Sanusi, "The Contributions of Nawawi Al-Bantani In the Development of National Law of Indonesia," *Al-'Adalah* 15, no. 2 (2018): 415-436.

²⁷ Muttaqin, "Khazanah Tafsir Nusantara."

²⁸ Arwansyah and Faisal Ahmad Shah, "Peran Syaikh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Penyebaran Islam di Nusantara," *Kontekstualita* 30, no. 1 (2015): 69-87.

Nawawi's work spread throughout Indonesia and the Islamic world thanks to their efforts.²⁹

The Concept of *Zuhd*; Shaykh Nawawi's Perspective

Definition of Zuhd

The word *zuhd* is not a word that is often used in everyday conversation; therefore, there needs to be an explanation regarding the definition of *zuhd* so that it can be understood accurately. The word '*zuhd*' itself has Arabic roots, consisting of the words *zay* (ز), *ha'* (ه), and *dal* (د) which are interpreted by Zayn al-Dīn al-Rāzī as antonyms of love (*ḍidd al-rahbbah*). Murtaḍā Zubaydī, in addition to interpreting it as the antonym of love, also interpreted it as abandonment or denial (*tarak wa a'raḍ 'anh*). Ibn Fāris states that *zuhd* has an origin that denotes something little (*qillat al-shay*).³⁰ Thus, linguistically, *zuhd* in Arabic denotes at least three meanings. Firstly, the antonym of love; secondly, abandoning or rejecting something; and third, something little.

Then, regarding *zuhd* in terms of terminology, some Sufis have differences. But if they are to be grouped, they are globally divided into two. First, it defines *zuhd* through its purpose. The Sufis, who belong to the first group, put the formula of *zuhd* as a form of pleasure, *tawakkal*, and not much hope for the world. The second group, on the other hand, describes it through the behavior of a *zāhid* to achieve his goals and how they behave towards the world.³¹

Sufyān al-Thawrī and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbāl are Sufis from the first group. According to them, *zuhd* is the absence of wishful thinking about the world. On the other hand, Ibn Mubārak de-

²⁹ M. Afiqu Adib, "Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani: Kajian Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam Dan Relevansinya di Abad-21," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan* 16, no. 2 (2022): 444-466.

³⁰ Ibn Fāris, *Mu'jam Maqāyis al-Lughah*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), 30.

³¹ Leah Kinberg, "What Is Meant by Zuhd," *Studia Islamica*, no. 61 (1985): 27-44.

scribed *zuhd* as faith in the God along with poverty,³² while Fuḍayl b. ‘Iyāḍ said that the root of *zuhd* is gladness in the God.³³

While al-Ghazālī interprets *zuhd* more globally, he defined it as a change in love or inclination towards something better than him. In his explanation, al-Ghazālī said that *zuhd* over the world means changing the tendency towards it and replacing it with a tendency towards a better afterlife.³⁴ Al-Ghazālī’s views on *zuhd* were later followed by al-Dhimyāī.³⁵ This second view ultimately makes someone who has a *zuhd* nature naturally have less wishful thinking towards the world and focus more on pursuing the afterlife.

Fethullah Gulen, one of the contemporary Sufi scholars, explained that *zuhd* is the abandonment of the world with its enjoyment and resistance to bodily tendencies.³⁶ Although there are differences in understanding and focal points, all Sufi scholars in the first group do not come from the three points of the formulation above. They all interpret *zuhd* as a form of pleasure, *tawakkal*, and shortening of the world.

One of the Sufi scholars who belongs to the second group is al-Bayhaqī, when referring to *zuhd*, he refers to an *athar* from Ibn ‘Abbās, who said: “*Zuhd* is when your heart is not fixated on the things of the world and does not expect the things that are missing from it.”³⁷ According to al-Bayhaqī, *zuhd* signifies a consistent state of the soul and is not affected by the world. For him, *zāhid*’s heart must be empty of hope for the world.

Then, according to Zakī Ibrāhīm, *zuhd* is a condition where a person puts the world only in his hands, not in his heart. Thus, Ibrāhīm illustrates that a *zāhid* is not those who do not enjoy the world but still takes things that are lawful by the God Almighty as

³² ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī, *al-Risālat al-Qushayriyah* (Kairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, n.d.), 241.

³³ Ibn Qutaybah, *Uyun al-Akbbār*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1996) 385.

³⁴ al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā’ ‘Ulum al-Din* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, n.d.), 216-217.

³⁵ al-Dimyāī, *Kifāyat al-Atqiyā’ wa Minhaj al-Aşfiyā’ Sharḥ Manzūmat Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā’ ilā Tariq al-Awliyā’* (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), 20.

³⁶ Fethullah Gülen, “Zuhud,” September 07, 2015, <https://fgulen.com/id/karya-karya/tasawuf/zuhud> (accessed August 27, 2024).

³⁷ al-Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-Zuhd al-Kabīr* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyah, 1996), 61.

long as they do not hinder him from the God.³⁸ Thus, both al-Bayhaqī and Ibrāhīm have similarities in interpreting *zuhd*, which is the condition of the heart that is empty of the world.

There are also some scholars, such as Naṣr al-Dīn Awiḍah, who say that the meaning of *zuhd* can be drawn from the word itself. *Zay* (ز) means to renounce luxury (*tark al-zīnah*), *ha'* (هـ) signifies to renounce lust (*tark al-hawā*), and finally *dal* (د) signifies leaving the world (*tark al-dunyā*).³⁹ Although different in delivery, the whole second group has a common thread, namely that a *zāhid* always sees the world as something small and so does not turn to it. Their hearts are clean from all the affairs of the world and are always filled with affairs towards the God and the Hereafter.

Shaykh Nawawi himself interpreted *zuhd* as an attitude in which he considered that everything in the grasp of humans was not considered more reliable than what was on the side of the God. *Zuhd*, according to Shaykh Nawawi, does not mean abandoning halal things or wasting property, but an attitude to always feel sufficient with the sustenance shared by the God, and not the slightest expectation of sustenance owned by others.⁴⁰ From this, it can be concluded that Shaykh Nawawi belongs to the first group of Sufi scholars, who tend to define *zuhd* as a pleasure and *tawakkal* as what the God gives.

Characteristics and Objectives of Zuhd

Shaykh Nawawi emphasized that *zuhd* is a form of patience. Patience is essentially a broad circle that includes several principles. In simple terms, patience can be categorized into two categories: physical and psychological. In terms of the physical, patience is described as the ability to cope with stresses on the body through actions and emotions. Patience in the psychological field is divided into several branches and identified, such as *‘iffah*, which means patience in suppressing digestive and sexual shahwat; *qanā‘ah*, which is described as patience for only a small quantity of food;

³⁸ Muḥammad Zakī Ibrāhīm, *Abjadīyah al-Taṣawwuf al-Islāmī Ba‘ad Ma Labu wa Ma ‘Alayh* (Kairo: Mu‘assasat ‘Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-Ṣūfī (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), 26.

³⁹ Muḥammad Naṣr al-Dīn Awiḍah, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fī al-Zuhd wa al-Raqa‘iq wa al-Adab*, vol. 5 (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), 484.

⁴⁰ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Kāshifāt al-Sajā Sharḥ Safīnat al-Najā* (Surabaya: Toko Kitab Al-Hidayah, n.d.), 15.

and furthermore. *Zuhd* also belongs to the second branch, which is defined as patience in the face of overwhelming desires.⁴¹

That is, *zuhd* is a condition where a person only takes something limited to his needs and does not exceed the limit. Shaykh Nawawi's explanation above is in line with al-Ghazali's explanation when explaining the virtue of patience, which is half faith.⁴² From this, it can be concluded that Shaykh Nawawi, in describing the characteristics of *zuhd*, drew inspiration from al-Ghazali.

Shaykh Nawawi then observes that those who have acquired the level of *zuhd* have at least three personality characteristics. First, they are neither pleased with what they have gained nor are they concerned and saddened when they lose something. On the contrary, those who feel annoyed as soon as they receive an award are thankful when they lose it. In addition, always remain constant and unaffected by insults or accolades. *Zuhd* towards money, as well as status, is one of the two qualities listed above. Furthermore, their happiness comes from loyalty to the God.⁴³ Thus, the person who achieves *zuhd* must empty his heart of materialistic concerns and fill it with loyalty to the God.

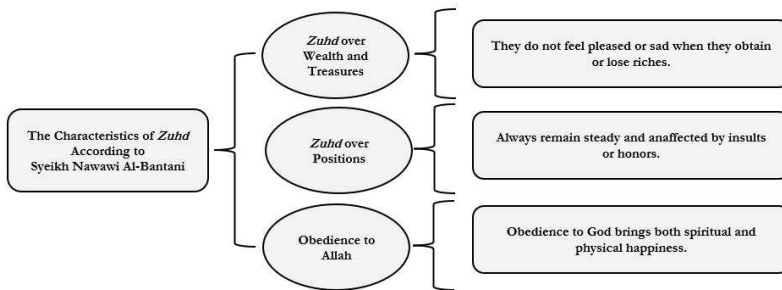


Figure 1. The Characteristics of *Zuhd* According to Shaykh Nawawi

In addition, Shaykh Nawawi demonstrated that *zuhd* attempts ways of protecting oneself from numerous illnesses resulting from loving the world, which would eventually reduce sincerity in giving

⁴¹ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Qami' al-Ṭuḡḡyan 'alā Manzūmat Shu'ab al-Īmān* (Surabaya: Dār al-'Ābidīn, n.d.), 14.

⁴² al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 4, 66.

⁴³ al-Jāwī, *Salālim al-Fuḍala' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzūmat Hidāyat al-Adbkiyā' ilā Ṭariq al-Anlīyā'*, 21.

to others. Various disorders can be driven by *riyā'*, or a hunger for the attention of human beings and the enjoyment of the world, which alters deeds.⁴⁴ As a consequence, *zuhd* serves to preserve the excellence of practice from external forces that could potentially destroy it.

Furthermore, Shaykh Nawawi stated that valuing the world is the source of all wrongdoing. This is because when a person adores the world, he becomes imprisoned in *shubhab* and eventually falls into *makerūb* to *ḥarām*.⁴⁵ Holding the essence of *zuhd*, which is the opposition to enjoying the world, enables one to escape the fundamental cause of sorrow despite walking on the root of virtue.

Zuhd also promotes mental and physical well-being. This is because admiring the world causes depression and anxiety. Their experiences are similar to those of a drunk or drowning person who is unable to find his way out.⁴⁶ According to Shaykh Nawawi, individuals who seek peace through greed will only discover the *zuhd* of the world.⁴⁷ In simple terms, *zuhd's* purpose is to assist people to prevent falling into the trap of blaming and to achieve peacefulness in every aspect of their lives.

The Levels of Zuhd

Shaykh Nawawi presents *Ṭarīq al-Awliyā'* (the Way of the Guardians) as nine testaments for those pursuing to reach the God,⁴⁸ different from other Sufi figures who use *maqāmāt* to express a servant's position in worship and *riyādah*.⁴⁹ The nine testaments begin with forgiveness and finish with the fulfilment of time. The last six in sequence are *qanā'ah*, *zuhd*, understanding the

⁴⁴ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Miṣbah al-Zulam 'alā al-Nahj al-Atam fi Tabwīb al-Ḥikam* (N.p.: Dār al-Ḥikmah, n.d.), 61.

⁴⁵ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Marāqī al-'Ubūdiyyah 'alā Matn Bidāyat al-Hidāyah* (Surabaya: Toko Kitab Al-Hidayah, n.d.), 84.

⁴⁶ al-Jāwī, *Salalim al-Fudalā' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzūmat Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā' ilā Ṭarīq al-Awliyā'*, 21-22.

⁴⁷ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Naṣā'ih al-'Ibād 'alā al-Munabihāt 'alā al-Isti'dād li Yanm al-Ma'ād* (N.p.: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyah, n.d.), 73.

⁴⁸ al-Jāwī, *Salalim al-Fudalā' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzūmat Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā' ilā Ṭarīq al-Awliyā'*, 14.

⁴⁹ Aris Priyanto and Harapandi Dahri, "Konsep Maqamat Menurut Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani Dalam Kitab Salalim Al-Fudala," *Jousip: Journal of Sufism and Psychotherapy* 1, no. 1 (2021): 32-50.

teachings of sharia, following the Prophet's sunnah, *tawakkal*, sincerity, and uzlah.⁵⁰ *Zuhd* was the initial three of the nine wills that had to be created.

Just as virtually all Sufi scholars consider repentance to be a maqamat that must be departed through every *sālik*,⁵¹ the majority of Sufi scholars regard *zuhd* as one of their stages in reaching the God. Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj included *zuhd* in his seven *maqāmāt*,⁵² al-Qushayrī in his six *maqāmāt*,⁵³ and al-Ghazālī in his five *maqāmāt*.⁵⁴

As stated by Shaykh Nawawi, the patience of a *zāhid* comes after that of believers (*al-ṣiddiqīn*) and those who repent (*al-tā'ibīn*). Shaykh Nawawi describes *zuhd* (*al-zāhidīn*) as patience with happiness for what one has.⁵⁵

Concerning the degree of *zuhd* itself, Shaykh Nawawi merely argues that the highest level of *zuhd* is to see the earth and its whole as dwarfish and contemptible. *Zāhid* senses no value in the world; therefore, he is neither pleased nor sad, regardless of the circumstances. *Zuhd* forced them to accept a small sum in exchange for allegiance to the God and to focus on God and the Hereafter.⁵⁶ In short, the highest peak of *zuhd*, according to Shaykh Nawawi, is the condition of consciousness in which a *zāhid* no longer values the world and considers the God and the Hereafter as the ultimate destination.

Al-Ghazālī agreed with Shaykh Nawawi on the peak of the state of *zuhd*. He continued further to say that during the highest point of *zuhd*, one leaves the world the same way as one leaves

⁵⁰ Asyari Hasan, "Relevansi Pemikiran Tasawuf Syekh Nawawi Al Bantani dengan Ekonomi Islam," *Syifa Al-Qulub: Jurnal Studi Psikoterapi Sufistik* 6, no. 2 (2022): 125-138.

⁵¹ Erwin, "Konsep Tobat Menurut Imam Al-Qusyairi," *Gunung Djati Conference Series* 23 (2023): 893-913. Retrieved from <https://conferences.uinsgd.ac.id/gdcs> (accessed August 27, 2024).

⁵² Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Tasawuf Dulu dan Sekarang* (Yogyakarta: Ircisod, 2002), 146.

⁵³ Ahmad Subakir, *Pemikiran Tasawuf Imam Qusyairi* (Depok: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2021), 52.

⁵⁴ Adib 'Aunillah Fasya, "Konsep Tasawuf Menurut Imam Ghazali," *Jousip: Journal of Sufism and Psychotherapy* 2, no. 2 (2022): 153-166.

⁵⁵ Muḥammad Nawawī al-Jāwī, *Bahjat al-Wasā'il bi Sharḥ Masā'il* (Kairo: Maṭba'ah al-Bab al-Ḥalabī, 1907), 33.

⁵⁶ al-Jāwī, *Salalim al-Fuḍala' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzumat Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā' ilā Ṭariq al-Anlīyā'*, 20.

pottery for jewels. He also presented two layers below him. First, there is the fundamental level of *zuhd*, in which one's mental state is still predisposed toward enjoyment of the world, but one makes an effort to oppose and overcome that propensity. Second, the middle degree of *zuhd* occurs when the heart loses interest in the world in favor of something more important. That is, the person still perceives the earth as valuable but not superior to the hereafter.⁵⁷ Al-Ghazālī compared him to a person who gave up one dirham for two dirhams.⁵⁸

In line with Shaykh Nawawi and al-Ghazālī, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī also placed such *zuhd* as the highest level of *zuhd* and referred to it as *zuhd haqiqī*. The difference is that al-Jīlānī only limited *zuhd* to two levels. The latter level is called *zuhd surī*, which is defined as the rejection of the world, but the heart still has the desire to possess it.⁵⁹

Shaykh Nawawi further split the *zuhd* according to what was left behind. The first is the *zuhd* of the ‘*arifīn*, which is defined as reducing something that is considered halal based on necessities. Shaykh Nawawi's notion refers to *zuhd*. The second is *zuhd* layman, which means to abandon all that is haram. This second *zuhd* is obligatory for everyone, without exception.⁶⁰ This degree of *zuhd* shares commonalities with Ahmad Bin Hanbal's presentation. The difference is that he separated it into three halves. Shaykh Nawawi's ‘*arifīn* has a second-degree *zuhd*, known as the *zuhd* of unique individuals (*al-ḵhawāṣ*). And he placed the *zuhd* of the ‘*arifīn* at the top of the *zuhd* level, which is interpreted as being described as abandoning all things that occupy or distance themselves from the God.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Ratna Dewi, “Konsep Zuhud Pada Ajaran Tasawuf dalam Kehidupan Santri pada Pondok Pesantren,” *Mawaizib: Jurnal Dakwah dan Pengembangan Sosial Kemanusiaan* 12, no. 2 (2021): 122-142.

⁵⁸ al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, 225.

⁵⁹ Muhammad Hafidun, “Zuhud dalam Ajaran Tasawuf,” *Hisbab: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling dan Dakwah Islam* 14, no. 1 (2017): 77-93.

⁶⁰ al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Qamī’ al-Ṭuḡḡyan ‘alā Manẓūmat Shu‘ab al-Īmān*, 14.

⁶¹ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Madārij al-Sālikīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Arabī, 1996), 14.

Approaches to Reach Zuhd

Shaykh Nawawi's writings contained multiple recommendations for achieving *zuhd*. According to Shaykh Nawawi's book *Naṣā'ih al-Tbād*, there are several approaches to obtaining the *maqām* of *zuhd*, including:

From Ibrāhīm b. Adham when he was asked, "How did you get *zuhd*?" He replied, "With three things. First, I saw the grave so deserted when I had no companion; second, I saw a road so far away that I had no provisions; and third, I saw the Almighty being a judge, but I had no argument."⁶²

From the words above, it can be concluded that *zuhd* can be achieved through three things: first, remembering death and the grave. Second, considering that the afterlife realm is so long again eternal, Third, remember the day of reckoning on which the God Almighty will reward every creature according to their practices.

Additionally, remembering the three substances mentioned above, Shaykh Nawawi provided actual approaches to achieving the *zuhd*. He said that *zuhd* has five habits: believe in the God, the One True God; give kindness to creatures; be honest in charity; oppose despotic; and do conviction on all that has been acquired.⁶³

Then Shaykh Nawawi added that *zuhd* can also be attained by abandoning *ḥarām* matters, both big and small, fulfilling all obligations, both simple and difficult, and ignoring the world and its contents, whether much or little.⁶⁴ In addition to relinquishing the haram triggers, the Sufis decided to leave anything that raised worries concerning *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*.⁶⁵

According to Shaykh Nawawi's book *Marāqī al-'Ubūdīyah*, sitting alongside *ḥabīb* improves the quality of the *zuhd*. Shaykh Nawawi further cautioned about relating to greedy people, comparing them to deadly poisons.⁶⁶ With the above explanation, it is possible

⁶² al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Naṣā'ih al-Tbād 'alā al-Munabihāt 'alā al-Isti'dād li Yawm al-Ma'ad*, 14.

⁶³ Ibid., 40.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁶⁵ Yedi Supriadi, "Dzikir, Spiritualitas Dan Intuisi: Studi Tentang Pembentukan Jati Diri di Majelis Dzikir Rijalullah Majalengka," *Iryad: Jurnal Bimbingan, Penyuluhan, Konseling, dan Psikoterapi Islam* 8, no. 3 (2020): 235-254.

⁶⁶ al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Marāqī al-'Ubūdīyah 'alā Matn Bidāyat al-Hidāyah*, 92.

to assume that people who go through the hallways of *zuhd* will develop at least four aspects of their spirituality. First, be conscious of the world’s temporal reality. Second, concentrate on the business of the hereafter. Third, submit only to the God. Fourth, follow all *shari’ah*-compliant practices and avoid those who dispute him or his offenders.

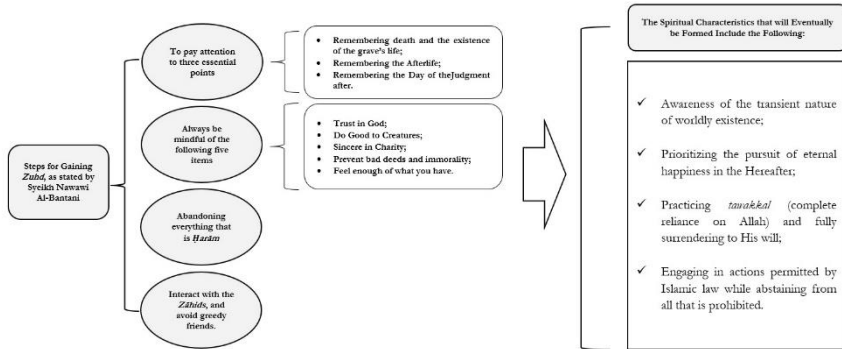


Figure 2. Steps for Gaining *Zuhd* according to Shaykh Nawawi

***Zuhd*: A Solution for Avoiding Shopaholic Behaviors**

Shopaholic behavior, characterized by compulsive spending on unnecessary items, is often driven by the consumerist culture that emerged alongside capitalism. This phenomenon is not just an economic issue but also a psychological and social one.⁶⁷ Industrial globalization continues to modify consumer goods to maintain public interest in material consumption, making shopaholism a byproduct of an industry designed to encourage excessive spending.

Various factors contribute to shopaholism. Internally, shopaholics often struggle with insecurity and low self-esteem, using shopping as a coping mechanism. The fleeting satisfaction derived from purchases temporarily alleviates anxiety. Family upbringing plays a crucial role, as parents with poor financial discipline may unintentionally instill a consumptive mindset in their children,

⁶⁷ Daud Abdul-Fattah Batchelor, “Reducing Wasteful Consumption Towards Sustainability by Waste Avoidance Using Self-Improvement (*Tazkiyah*) and Contentment (*Qana’ah*) Approaches,” in *Islamic Perspectives on Science and Technology* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2016), 6.

leading them to associate material wealth with happiness. Social influence is another significant factor; exposure to peers who frequently shop can create pressure to conform and maintain status by acquiring similar possessions.⁶⁸

The long-term consequences of shopaholism are profound. Financial instability is a primary repercussion, as many shopaholics accumulate debt to sustain their spending habits. Beyond financial consequences, this behavior fosters a materialistic mentality that equates happiness with luxury and high-value items. Over time, individuals may develop chronic dissatisfaction, anxiety, and even depression, becoming trapped in a relentless cycle of consumerism.⁶⁹ On a societal level, excessive spending contributes to social inequality, reinforcing wealth-based hierarchies. Environmentally, rampant consumption accelerates global warming, biodiversity loss, and pollution, further exacerbating the planet's ecological crisis.⁷⁰

In light of the severe implications of shopaholism, the Islamic concept of *zuhd*, as articulated by Shaykh Nawawi, offers a viable solution. Contrary to the misconception that *zuhd* requires total renunciation of worldly possessions, Shaykh Nawawi advocates for a balanced approach—engaging with material wealth without allowing it to dominate the heart. He emphasizes that detachment from materialism fosters genuine inner peace, in contrast to the fleeting gratification offered by consumerism.⁷¹

Zuhd offers a concrete mechanism to counter excessive consumerism in the modern era. One critical aspect of *zuhd* is the promotion of mindful consumption. This approach encourages individuals to assess their needs critically, avoiding impulsive purchases and focusing on acquiring only what is essential. By adopting this principle, individuals can break free from the cycle of

⁶⁸ Husainatul Jazilah and Siti Azizah, "Online Shop dan Tren Gaya Hidup Shopaholic di Kalangan Mahasiswi," *The Sociology of Islam* 5, no. 1 (2022): 1-20.

⁶⁹ Gloria A. Makalew, Olga Rorintulus, and Sarah Kamagi, "The Shopaholic Lifestyle in Sophie Kinsella's *The Secret Dramworld of a Shopaholic*," *JoTELL: Journal of Teaching English, Linguistics, and Literature* 1, no. 2 (2022): 235-39.

⁷⁰ Batchelor, "Reducing Wasteful Consumption Towards Sustainability by Waste Avoidance Using Self-Improvement (*Tazkiyah*) and Contentment (*Qana'ah*) Approaches."

⁷¹ al-Jāwī, *Salālim al-Fuḍalā' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzūmat Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā' ilā Ṭarīq al-Anlīyā'*, 21.

overconsumption. Financial responsibility also plays a pivotal role in *zuhd*, urging individuals to practice ethical spending and avoid wasteful expenditures. The concept of wealth as a means, rather than an end, shifts the focus from material accumulation to fulfilling basic needs and contributing to charitable causes.⁷²

Additionally, *zuhd* challenges the notion that happiness is tied to material wealth. Instead, it redirects individuals' focus toward spiritual and intellectual enrichment, cultivating contentment that is independent of material possessions. Shaykh Nawawi stresses that reliance on material goods for happiness is an unending pursuit, as desires are insatiable. He encourages Muslims to prioritize their relationship with the God, engaging in worship and self-improvement rather than seeking external validation through possessions.⁷³ By internalizing these values, individuals can experience a deeper sense of fulfillment that transcends the temporary satisfaction gained from consumption.

The influence of social networks and peer pressure is another critical factor addressed by *zuhd*. Shaykh Nawawi acknowledges the power of social circles in shaping consumer behavior and advises against associating closely with those overly attached to worldly pleasures. Instead, he recommends surrounding oneself with individuals who embody the principles of *zuhd*, as their influence can foster values of moderation and contentment. By cultivating relationships with those who prioritize spiritual and moral growth over material accumulation, individuals can reinforce their commitment to a disciplined, purpose-driven lifestyle.⁷⁴

The absence of parental guidance in financial management should not be an excuse for unregulated spending. *Zuhd* instills a sense of accountability regarding wealth, ensuring that resources are utilized in accordance with Sharia principles. Islam prohibits extravagance and encourages balanced spending, emphasizing that financial stability is closely linked with ethical consumption.

On a broader societal scale, embracing *zuhd* can mitigate the negative effects of consumer culture. Excessive consumption not only harms individuals but also exacerbates global economic dis-

⁷² Ibid., 20.

⁷³ al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Naṣā'ih al-'Ibād 'alā al-Munābihāt 'alā al-Isti'dād li Yawm al-Ma'ād*, 15.

⁷⁴ al-Jāwī, *Sharḥ Marāqī al-'Ubūdiyyah 'alā Matn Bidāyat al-Hidāyah*, 92.

parity. By shifting the focus from material acquisition to spiritual growth and intellectual development, *zuhd* promotes a healthier economic model that prioritizes sustainability and social responsibility. Shaykh Nawawi views wealth as a trust from the God, meant to be used for the collective good rather than personal indulgence. This perspective aligns with contemporary calls for ethical consumerism, advocating for mindful spending to reduce environmental degradation.

Furthermore, *zuhd* challenges the widely held belief that material success equates to true happiness. Shaykh Nawawi highlights that genuine fulfillment arises from devotion to the God and leading a meaningful life, rather than the relentless pursuit of possessions. By embracing this perspective, individuals can free themselves from the pressures of consumerism and attain a more balanced, contented existence.⁷⁵

In addition to its spiritual benefits, *zuhd* serves as an antidote to the psychological distress associated with shopaholism. Many shopaholics experience feelings of emptiness and dissatisfaction despite their material wealth. This inner turmoil arises from misplaced priorities, where external validation becomes the primary source of self-worth. *Zuhd* encourages individuals to seek contentment in simplicity, shifting their focus from transient pleasures to enduring spiritual well-being.⁷⁶

Beside that, the practice of *zuhd* promotes sustainable living, a crucial aspect in the context of overconsumption and environmental degradation. In an era where consumerism threatens the planet's resources, adopting a minimalist approach can significantly reduce waste and environmental harm. By prioritizing necessity over luxury, individuals contribute to a more sustainable economy that benefits both present and future generations. This aligns with Islamic teachings on stewardship (*kehalifahan*) over the Earth, emphasizing responsible consumption as a moral duty.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ al-Jāwī, *Salalim al-Fuḍalā' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzūmat Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā' ilā Ṭariq al-Anlīyā'*, 21.

⁷⁶ Ilham Defriono et al., "Zuhd and Minimalism in a Consumerist Society: Exploring al-Ghazali and Fumio Sasaki's Thoughts," *PJRS: Peradaban Journal of Religion and Society* 2, no. 2 (2023): 151-163.

⁷⁷ al-Jāwī, *Salalim al-Fuḍalā' Sharḥ 'alā Mandzūmat Hidāyat al-Adhkiyā' ilā Ṭariq al-Anlīyā'*, 20-21.

Finally, the teachings of Shaykh Nawawi on *zuhd* provide a transformative framework for addressing shopaholic behaviors. By redefining success and happiness, individuals can break free from the constraints of materialism and embrace a more fulfilling existence centered on spiritual growth and social responsibility. In a world dominated by consumerist values, *zuhd* offers a counter-narrative that empowers individuals to regain control over their desires, prioritize meaningful engagements, and foster a more harmonious relationship with both society and the environment.⁷⁸

Conclusion

In conclusion, Shaykh Nawawi's concept of *zuhd* offers a helpful way to deal with the pressures of materialism in today's world. It teaches that true peace comes from focusing on spiritual growth rather than material possessions. This is the opposite of the shopaholic lifestyle, where people often measure success by how many things they own. *Zuhd* encourages people to find contentment by prioritizing faith, inner peace, and discipline over the pursuit of material wealth.

When dealing with excessive consumerism, *zuhd* offers a solution by helping people shift their attention from buying things to developing spiritual well-being. While shopaholics often feel empty and anxious despite having many possessions, *zuhd* helps people find lasting happiness by focusing on spiritual fulfillment. By reducing materialistic habits and emphasizing spiritual growth, *zuhd* provides a way to escape the cycle of consumerism and live a more balanced and meaningful life.

However, applying *zuhd* in modern society can be challenging. In a world where consumerism is everywhere, it can be hard to break free from the pressure to buy things. Advertisements, social media, and peer influence often make it difficult to resist the temptation of material goods. Still, *zuhd* offers a powerful alternative by teaching that true happiness doesn't come from material possessions but from inner peace and spiritual growth. It calls for a shift away from focusing on what we own to focusing on what really matters.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 20.

In the end, the teachings of Shaykh Nawawi on *zuhd* provide both a philosophical and practical answer to the problems caused by consumerism. Although it may be difficult to fully embrace *zuhd* in today's world, its core ideas—avoiding materialism, living ethically, and focusing on spiritual growth—offer valuable guidance for people looking to live a more peaceful and purposeful life.

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