

muslim mums



**How To Bully-Proof
Your Children**

**Who should our
Youths Speak to?**

**The Gift
of Patience**

**To Feed
or Not to Feed**

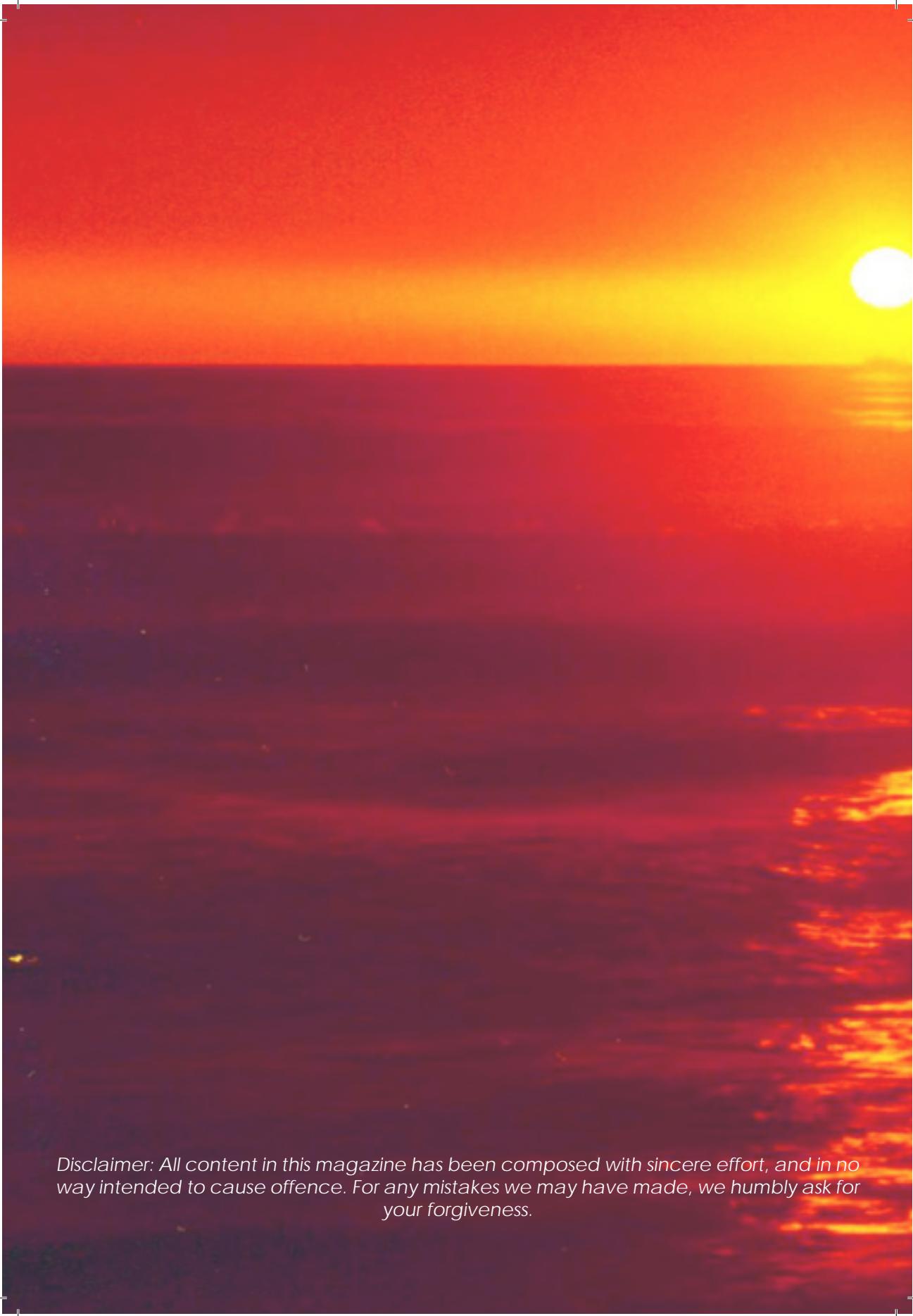
**The Children who
Carry Guns**

NEW

**Your Questions:
Answered by Sheikh
Mohammed Al-Hilli**



A righteous child is an aromatic plant from Allah which He has distributed to His servants



Disclaimer: All content in this magazine has been composed with sincere effort, and in no way intended to cause offence. For any mistakes we may have made, we humbly ask for your forgiveness.

Imam Husayn (AS)

As soon as we hear his name there is feeling,
remembrance, of the day of Ashura, the land of Karbala
Tell me, who can bear to hear of the death of their loved one?

Once so vibrant, alive, then suddenly gone?
And more still, what if their loved one is so pure and good

Then is unjustly killed, soaked in blood?

This happened to not just one, but many of Imam Husayn's (AS) dearest soul mates
His brother, sons, nephews, companions, all attacked in horrific hate

Yes, it is true, that enemies of truth

Rage out at the righteous, old or youth

Even Imam Husayn's infant child's throat, pierced with an arrow

Couldn't quench the thirst of those who follow

The evil, the devil, the dark

But the light shines on forever, it cannot be drowned

And across the world, love for Husayn (AS) is found

And it is Allah (SWT) Himself who has planted this love

It will continue to spread, as it rightfully should

Blooming and giving guidance, for all eternity

To those open to truth, and accept their destiny

And take the lesson of patience from our beautiful Imam

Who lived his life like a living Qur'an

Patient through all the suffering

Giving allegiance to none but the One true King

He well pleased with Allah (SWT), and Allah (SWT) well pleased with him.

And thou, O soul at peace. Return to thy Lord well pleased with Him and He will be
pleased with thee. Holy Quran 89:28 (Surah Fajr, ayah 28)

By Saqib Hussain
Author of Contemplate

muslim *what's inside?* mums

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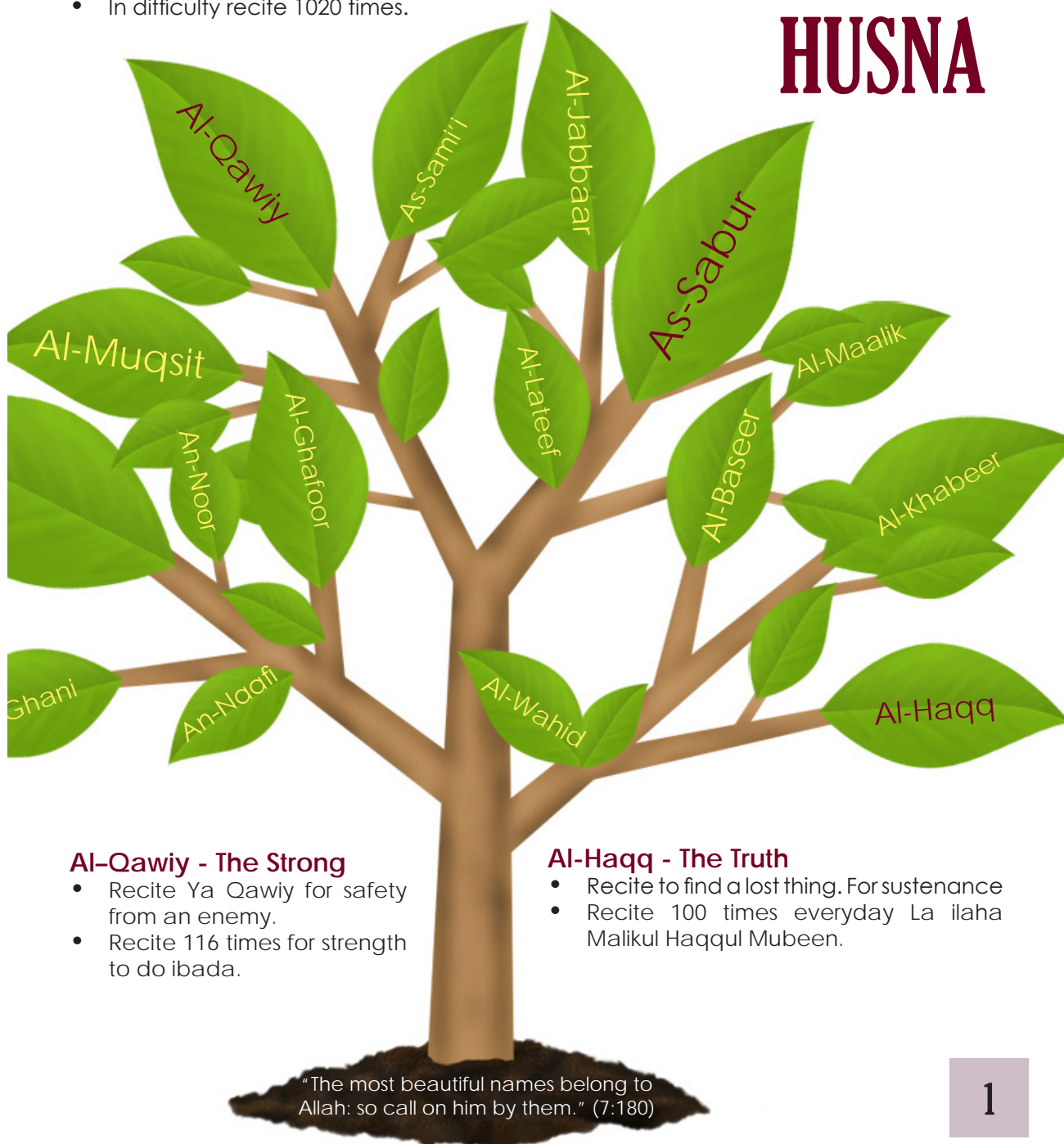
Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction. (13:28)

This issue of Muslim Mums is centred on three of the Asma ul Husna:

As-Sabur - The Patient

- Repeat Ya Sabur 33 times for relief from troubles, difficulties and sorrow.
- Recite 100 times before sunrise for safety from calamities and 'tying' the enemy's tongue.
- Repeat 298 times for physical pain.
- Repeat frequently if unjustly accused.
- In difficulty recite 1020 times.

ASMA UL HUSNA



Al-Qawiy - The Strong

- Recite Ya Qawiy for safety from an enemy.
- Recite 116 times for strength to do ibada.

Al-Haqq - The Truth

- Recite to find a lost thing. For sustenance
- Recite 100 times everyday La ilaha Mallikul Haqqul Mubeen.

"The most beautiful names belong to Allah: so call on him by them." (7:180)

MEET THE TEAM

Welcome

Salaamun Alaykum

The Muslim Mums team would like to thank all of our readers for their support and encouragement. We would also like to thank you all for your donations to this project. All donations received for the magazine have gone towards the Dar-ul-Muslimeen orphanage – you can read more about the orphanage in this issue.

We would also like to thank the S I Madressa for their backing and continued support. Last but not least, a huge thank you to our advertisers and contributors.

We hope you enjoy this issue and we welcome feedback at: Muslimmums@hotmail.co.uk

Muslim Mums is looking for a new team with fresh ideas to take this magazine forward. If you are interested to get involved, please email Sukaina Mukhtar at Muslimmums@hotmail.co.uk

Jazakallah



Sketch by: Zamena Jaffer

Fatema Alimohamed, Sameera Merali, Fatema Ladak,
Farah Ebrahim, and Sukaina Mukhtar,

Design/Graphics: Rumina Hashmani

It was Friday morning as I sat on the bench under the shade of a drooping tree. I felt the cool breeze and heard the laughter of children around me. As I captured these memorable moments through the lenses of my eyes, I realised that it had been approximately 5 minutes since I heard anyone calling out, "Mummy!"

I am a mother of a 6 year old, 3 year old and a 20 month-old. It was only a year ago when I felt I was swimming in an ocean where the end was nowhere in sight. From nappy changing to uncontrollable tantrums, cleaning, homework and school runs.

The list became forgotten in those few moments as I realised how it took only 1 year for my children to acquire this independence and how they will continue to change as the years pass. As I stood up from the bench, after finishing my cup of coffee, I felt a moment of peace and gratitude. It was a gentle, yet quaint reminder to enjoy the echo of being called, "Mummy!"

Sukaina Mukhtar

Dar Ul Muslimeen Orphanage

The Dar ul Muslimeen Orphanage started off as a personal hobby back in 1995. Initially there were just 4 young male children and a caretaker in a rented thatched hut in the outskirts of Morogoro. All the boys were poor orphaned kids who were thrown out of their homes. After raising some funds, we managed to rent a 3 bedroom house that still stands in the present orphanage compound. The orphanage was mainly run through funds by well-wishers and donors, and it slowly expanded in capacity to 45 orphaned children aged 3-18 years and of course, we acquired more land in the surrounding area and expanded the home.

Since starting, two of our boys are now happily married with children living nearby, totally independent. Upon finishing their time at the orphanage, they leave and pursue their career and some boys come back and help out at the orphanage. All boys have a special bond, a brotherhood, where they all stand up for each other, and protect one another. They rarely fight and have a very giving nature.

All kids receive religious and secular education. There are a few self-sustaining projects at the orphanage such as a bakery but most of the funds to run the orphanage come from donations.

We recently received 2 young brothers aged 4 and 6 - Malik and Ibrahim. They were brought in by the Police with the social welfare officer in Morogoro. They did not have a mother, and their dad had just been jailed for physical abuse and he had burnt their lips. The kids used to get whipped and on this particular occasion, the poor children had taken little groundnuts from their father without permission to have dinner as they were hungry. When their father returned, he beat them and burnt them. They were scared and traumatised with marks on their backs and burn marks on their mouths. They were in very poor health, malnourished and had fungus growing on their face and scalp. It took a lot of special care, attention, medical treatment and good nutrition to put happy smiles on their faces. Today 4 months on, they are almost like the other boys, lively and ready to love.

Starting and sustaining an orphanage just needs times, love and dedication. It is rocky in the beginning but the sense of peace that comes along with it is definitely worth every bit of struggle in attaining success with the orphans.



Lessons from Muharram: The Gift of Patience

By: *Marziah Panju*
Learning and Teaching Consultant

There is one emotion that has the ability to change our life – one that we all desire to have. It does not have the transcendent quality of awe and wonder; it works more quietly to soothe our anxiety, and helps us to see ourselves and our surroundings with more clarity. It is the mouse that roars. Yes, it's patience. It is also the emotion that we all associate with Muharram through the sacrifice and the speeches narrated by the women in Imam Husayn's [AS] camp after Ashura.

These women were entrusted with the special mission of keeping the message of our Imam alive. They had to spread his message even while undergoing huge ordeals and sorrows. Such was their self-control and their motivation that they remained focussed on their mission of propagating the truth.

Had they succumbed to sorrow, the mighty sacrifice would have been in vain, for without today's media resources Yazid's men could have narrated their own version of events and politicians could have twisted the story as they wished to make Yazid a hero. It was their patience, and their speeches that helped spread the facts of the tragedy. Their words shook the people to the core. They were a supreme example of how ordinary people can become extra-ordinary beings by demonstrating patience.

But what is 'patience'? Patience is "the art of intelligent waiting" – waiting with purpose and positive intention. The Arabic equivalent 'sabr' also comes from the root word meaning to stop, control or refrain – we must stop ourselves from despairing, refrain from complaining and control ourselves in times of sadness and worry. Patience is an aspect of our emotional intelligence - a barometer of how we recognise and manage our own emotions and those of others around us.

We are all impatient with certain things or to a certain level, especially when we are young; think for example of the familiar refrain of "are we there yet?" from young children on a long car journey. But as we grow older, we become more patient; we know that certain things cannot be rushed: our patience indicating our level of emotional intelligence.

We can test children for their level of emotional intelligence by the so-called 'Marshmallow test', a study where children are asked to delay their gratification by giving them a choice – one marshmallow now or two if they wait. This study measures and predicts self-control, alerting us to our natural tendencies towards patience or impatience. The children who can wait patiently at age four for the two marshmallows become far superior academically to those who had to eat the one marshmallow immediately, suggesting that academic achievement depends on our ability to exercise patience.

But patience does not mean passivity or resignation; patience is power. It is an emotionally freeing practice of waiting, watching, and knowing when to act.

"Patience is a virtue." We are all familiar with this cliché, and patience is also mentioned in many verses of the Qur'an. As believing Muslims therefore, we should all aim to be patient:

"O you who believe, seek help through patience and prayer; indeed Allah is with the patient ones." (2:153)

Then again:

"Allah surely loves those who are the Sabireen (patient)." (3:146)

We are not born with patience – we need to develop it. Think of a hungry infant, screaming impatiently for its feed! But we can train ourselves to cope with little pains and irritations; in time we will have developed the patience we need for coping with adversity.

Children's experiences of waiting during their early childhood years are the foundation for all future learning. Waiting until they get home to open the sweets they bought from the shop or waiting until the guests have left to unwrap the presents they received are small examples.

We must learn to recognize the addictive quality of the opposites of patience - anger, irritation, blaming and shaming. Usually it starts with a slight discomfort and tensing in the stomach area that goes along with the interpretation that things are not going our way. We all have them but we must recognize and control them.

We must also learn to accept that the responsibility for our anger or irritation is ours alone and should not blame or change the person, situation or thing that we think is causing our discomfort. We need to train ourselves to reduce the pain and suffering that our impatience gives us and to increase our ability to act in a way that will lead us to achieving our goals. Pain has its purposes: it pushes us to find solutions.

Our parental responsibility is to lead by example. This is the most difficult and most important thing a parent can do to help their child develop emotional intelligence. Our children learn from everything we do. If we react by becoming flustered and irritable when we are stressed, our children will pick up on that. If we think failure is the end of the world, our children will believe that too. If we are calm, introspective, empathetic and persistent, there is a good chance that our children will learn to be the same way.

As parents we must also listen to our children's feelings, view the sharing of feelings as an opportunity for intimacy, and validate our children's emotions. We must help our children verbally label all the emotions they are feeling. Our attitude towards emotions can have a big impact on the way our children learn to cope with their own feelings.

As Muslims, we can learn to create some space between impulse and action by reciting Salawat or Asma-ul-Husna. This not only creates that distance but also connects us to Allah (SWT), thus giving us instant peace and tranquillity.

Finally, when faced with temptations and trials, Allah (SWT) reminds us to be patient – a character building quality ensuring our happiness in this life and our salvation in the Hereafter. But it is important to understand that although we are encouraged not to thrash about in grief and anguish, or to complain about our stresses and problems, we are allowed to turn to Allah (SWT) and supplicate to Him and to ask Him for relief.

So let us all make a pledge to Bibi Zainab (AS) that this Muharram we will inshallah take-away her gift of 'patience' as we recognize its benefits and know that Allah (SWT) will be pleased with us too.

How to Bully-Proof your Children

By: Tahera Kassamali

Raising strong Muslim children means making children proud of their Islamic identity. It means helping children feel confident about who they are. Confidence and self-esteem are great assets for a child, and are crucial as an adult. Not over-confidence which borders on pride, but a sense of satisfaction with oneself, along with a knowledge of the flaws that need improvement. Healthy confidence is a vital ingredient for the progress and success of a human being. The roots of this important quality are often built, or destroyed, in childhood.

The child who lacks confidence gives in to wrongdoing more easily. He is easily swayed by others as it is difficult to be firm on your own principles when you don't believe in yourself. The views and opinions of others will carry greater weight. There is a higher risk of succumbing to peer pressure, being negatively influenced by others, and even becoming the target of bullying in school.

Bullied children are becoming more and more common, with recent statistics revealing that more than 40% of children have experienced some type of bullying. Muslim children around the world are often vulnerable to bullying. Islamic values such as modesty, hijab, refraining from Muharramat, etc. all stand out in interactions with non-Muslims. Although most people show respect and consideration for different beliefs, these can sometimes become the target of negative attention, and even bullying. Parents and other significant adults need to teach children not to succumb to such unpleasantness and learn to stand up for themselves and their beliefs.

To strengthen children so they can stand up for themselves, Islam encourages the following:

1. Respect the child. Every human being has an innate desire for respect. Religious scholars believe that within the human resides a Divine spirit. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'an: So when I have made him complete, and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down into prostration to him (15:29). This Divine spirit, with its greatness and nobility, propels the human being towards dignity and respect. He needs to be valued, and would not naturally put himself in a derogatory or lowly position. The Creator Himself has respected the human being when He says: And indeed we have honored the son of Adam. (17:70). Thus every child needs respect, and responds well to it. The Holy Prophet (SAW) has said: Respect your children and improve their manners.
2. Give children opportunities to speak in front of others. This could be formal presentations, or social encounters with others. These opportunities to communicate with others outside the immediate family help children become accustomed to speaking up, even with people who are older or not very familiar. Communication is a skill, and can be developed early in life through constant practice. It requires courage, but can soon become a pleasant habit, done almost without thinking. The child can learn to speak up in settings which may seem intimidating to others.
3. Foster leadership qualities in children. Show them the skills and talents that the Almighty has blessed them with. Each human being is unique, and has been granted special gifts by God to play a part in the tapestry of the world. Allow children to

see themselves as contributing members of society, and thus understand that they have a niche. This gives them security, belonging and responsibility. They are then less likely to succumb to others, and may instead be able to help and guide others.

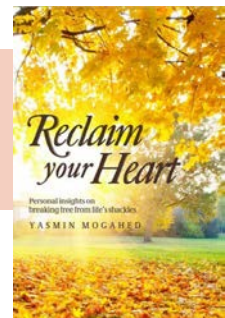
4. Help children respond well to positive criticism. Many parents today shower a lot of praise on their children, even when undeserved. This creates a false sense of grandeur which does not allow for any criticism. Let children know that every human being has good and bad qualities, and that the good should be enhanced, and the bad worked on. An awareness of the self is the root of spirituality, and a huge step forward in the journey towards God. The famous saying of Imam Ali (AS) says; "Whoever knows himself, knows God". When you know yourself, you are able to take criticism – hence you understand the need to work on yourself. At the same time you do not feel completely worthless because of it, as you know your good points also. This acknowledgement of one's strengths and weaknesses can be developed at a young age.
5. Talk to children often. Having a close relationship with children encourages them to be open with their parents. Talk to children about different things, and bring up sensitive topics too so children feel safe to talk. Children who are able to broach sensitive and awkward topics with their parents are more likely to reveal bullying incidents that they might encounter. Parents can then advise or intervene as necessary.

Helping children be assertive without being aggressive will go a long way in creating a community of strong and firm believers. These are the believers who will not be afraid to be upright and steadfast, having Istiqamah in all that they do. As the Holy Qur'an states,

"Be steadfast, the way you have been commanded". (11:112)

Book Reviews

By Fazleen Haji



Reclaim Your Heart

By Yasmin Mogahed

This book is comprised of a series of short essays where the author explains life in general by understanding and practising Islam. She speaks about her own experiences which really reflect on how one sees their life and how this affects their personality.

She speaks from the heart and helps to illustrate her points in such a manner that makes one think of their purpose in life. She talks about attachment, love, hardships and relationships in her book. Her main focus is on self-development through Allah (SWT)'s help. When discussing attachment, she states, "We cannot blame the law of physics if a twig snaps just because we leaned on it for support". The twig was never created to carry us. Our load was only meant to be carried by Allah (SWT).

Her essays are thought-provoking with different real-life scenarios. Readers will go away feeling a sense of comfort and will see life in a more joyful way. I realized after reading this book that we run after the 'dunya' so much that we don't see the bigger picture i.e.

Muharram in Gaza

Dedicated to the victims of the Gaza Massacre - 2008/2009

Muharram arrived with piercing screams
Playing children bombed to smithereens
Torn limbs shrouded in ash
Lost in the deafening blitz, blinding flash

I heard the echoes fade
As I sat in the mosque and prayed
Safe in His house of peace
Far from the blood and screams

Clearing my heart and mind
Of haunting images and cries
I willed myself to concentrate
On the tragedy of the Ahlul Bayt

I wept for my Imam's compassion
His sacrifice for justice, his passion
I heard his call to follow, to rise
Reject apathy, inertia, and strive
And in that moment, I cried,
'Labbaika Ya Husayn, I'll try!'

And so I strove, week upon week
To don black and mourn and weep
To hear the lamentations,
Attend commemorations
Join the processions
To fulfil my promise and pledge

Yet, as I sat longer and cried harder
My tears did not douse the flames in Gaza
Nor did they cool the burning, searing pain
Of lives destroyed and children slain

I tried to be a Husayni, I did truly
I loved and mourned my Imam duly
Yet love without vision, action - is weak
A candle without a wick
It does not burn, nor serve, nor give

How much more slaughter, oppression
From Palestine to Bahrain, Pakistan to Yemen
Before my tears smoulder and ignite
A burning love that acts, resists, fights?

Will I be a moth to Husayn's flame
Subsumed by the justice, light of Husayn
Or will I coldly turn away
And let humanity bleed and burn and decay??

By Fatema Valji



A Grandmother's Perspective

In order to instill the love of the Ahlul Bayt in your child, tell them stories of all these great personalities in such a way that they look up to them as their heroes!
(Grandmother from London)

The role of grandparents has seen much change as our traditional eastern societies moved west, and in today's world, with pressure on both parents to work in order to make ends meet; grandparents are once again becoming vital in the role of carers for our children. We look to the example of the Prophet (SAW) for guidance on what a grandparent ought to be:

Make the most of your children as they grow up too quickly. Do not argue or use bad language in front of your children. Don't compare them with others. Praise them on their achievement whatever it may be. Encourage them to work hard and have a goal in life.
Keep in touch with grandparents.
(Grandmother of 5)

- An Arab Bedouin once saw the Prophet kissing Imam Hassan (AS) and asked him why he showed all this love and affection towards the child. "I have over ten children", said the Bedouin, "and have never kissed any of them". The Prophet (SAW) replied, "What can I do for you when your heart is cut like a stone".

Enjoy your children. Don't compare them with others. Be aware of 'yourself'; meaning "watch your intentions of why you are doing what you are doing". To raise emotionally healthy and happy children, the parents need to be emotionally strong. Emotional intelligence cannot be taught. Parents have to be that to empower the child.
(Grandmother of 2)

Ensure that you treat your grandchildren equally without showing favoritism to one over the other as this will affect their emotional wellbeing
(Grandmother from London)

- Once the Holy Prophet (SAW) found himself in Sujood and he extended this. When he completed his prayer someone asked him why he had extended the time in prostration. The Prophet (SAW) replied that Imam Hassan (AS) was playing on his shoulder and he did not want to upset his grandson's enjoyment.

These stories demonstrate that a grandparent should not simply be a distant figure of powerful authority, but another source of love, grace and mercy in a child's life. Here are a few tips from the grandmothers within our own community.

From the moment your child is born, talk to the child all the time. Tell the child what you are doing, why you are doing what you are doing, where you are going etc. Your child will talk at a young age and become very intelligent!
(Grandmother from Tanzania)

As a grandmother, when playing with your grandchildren, come down to their level and talk about what interests them. You will win their hearts and your bond will be stronger.
(Grandmother from Portsmouth)

We have family dinners every Friday. I think it is very important for the family to come together and eat a meal without distractions like the TV or phone. Mother tongue is important. I would like it if my grandchildren could speak to me in Gujarati or kutchi. Grandmothers will always have time to hear their grandchildren's stories. I love listening to my grandchildren telling me about their day. (Grandmother of 3)

The Children Who Carry Guns

By: *Aliya Jessa (Canada)*
Neuroscience Student

In most parts of the world, childhood is the one stage in life that is equated with complete innocence and joy. A child sees his/her world as an oyster - full of possibilities and dreams. Parents, too, dream of their children becoming strong, successful individuals who will play crucial roles in the next generation of doctors, lawyers, scientists and leaders of the world.

But imagine if you will, a life where such possibilities and dreams are impossible. Envision your family living in a refugee camp, as so many Syrian families are today, surrounded by armed troops. Or one of your children being kidnapped right in front of you by armed soldiers in Congo.

Living in a war zone can also mean adjusting to the harsh reality of their environment in a different way - by joining the other side. For years now, Somali insurgents have recruited hundreds of children as fighters. According to a recent New York Times report, after the Somali government collapsed in 1991, "an entire generation was let loose on the streets".

Where most children spend their time in a classroom or on the soccer field, most of this generation has been afflicted by conflict-induced famines and psychological damage from all the killings they've witnessed.

In other words - hard beyond their years.

"What do I enjoy?" 12-year-old Somali child fighter Awil Salah Osman asks. "I enjoy the gun."

News accounts like these should come as a hard knock to most of us. For these children's parents, they do not dream of the day that they will graduate from university and begin their dream career. They only hope, in fact, to live until the next day. A child who lives in a war zone always hopes that when their mother leaves the home to buy food with what little money the family has, she will not be killed along the way.

In Deborah Ellis' widely-acclaimed book "Three Wishes", she explains that for many children, war has become a part of day-to-day life. So much so that "sometimes it means having friends blown up when they get on the bus." Can you imagine living in endless anxiety like that?

In her interview with Ellis, Mona, an 11-year-old Palestinian girl says: "It is hard to have a normal life because we are always holding our breath to see who will be shot next, who will be arrested next, when the next curfew will be. I can never plan to do anything with my friends because the Israelis are always ruining our plans. I can't even plan to go over to my friend's house after school, because the soldiers might make it impossible for us to do that." Mona is one of hundreds of thousands of children whose childhoods are robbed from them thoughtlessly.

It is so easy to get caught up in our every day affairs in life - but we must remember the plight of our brothers and sisters around the world.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once said, "One who gets up in the morning and his mind is not preoccupied with the matters of Muslims is not one of them".

Clearly, it is our duty as Muslims to be concerned with the welfare of our fellow Muslims, especially of innocent children. The first step is awareness. If the Media do not tell us about the day-to-day suffering of these children - it doesn't mean it's not happening. There are a number of great books about the plight of children in war zones available online and at local libraries.

The next step is to share what we have learnt about these children with our friends and family. We can use social media to do this, or study circles in the mosque or in your home.

Finally - help out. There are a number of organizations, including Free the Children and Save the Children that are always looking for volunteers and people to help fundraise for their programs. Any small effort we make goes a long way to improve the lives of children living in war-torn conditions. After all, what is a little effort that will earn us a lifetime of reward from Allah (SWT)?



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Your Questions



You asked...

I find my husband and I seem to have many disagreements and go days without communicating with each other. Sometimes it feels very petty but I feel like the main reason is the interference of a third party that's causing it (in-laws). I am really confused and depressed as I see my marriage being affected. Please help.

We answered...

Marital conflicts are part of many such relationships, and it is important that we put all our efforts into reconciliation and a healthy setup. Disagreeing with each other is normal - accepting differences of opinion and controlling our emotions then becomes vital. Our scholars have emphasized the importance of settling differences as soon as possible and not letting matters escalate; and hence ideally any problem should be resolved on the same night. Sometimes either the husband or the wife needs to exercise patience and forgiveness, as well as show empathy and compassion. In most cases, what is missing is effective and honest communication between the husband and wife, whereby they both listen to each other's opinions and concerns. At the same time, the involvement of other family members can sometimes help, by persuading one side to reconcile for example. However, if it's having an adverse impact, there should be an understanding between the husband and wife for the involvement to stop.

We need to remember that the Shaitan loves to cause enmity between husband and wife, and thus trusting Allah (SWT) in combating the satanic thoughts is crucial.

Answered by: Sheikh Mohammed Al-Hilli

You asked...

How can one go about restoring faith after a miscarriage when having recited all the recommended supplications from day 1 of pregnancy for the prevention of miscarriage?

We answered...

The Qur'an instructs us to submit to Allah (SWT)'s will, and this is a sign of true believers. We are mortal beings with limited knowledge of what is best for us, and by exercising patience and submission our spiritual status will be elevated, Insha'Allah. Allah (SWT) always knows best, and we need to keep reminding ourselves of this. It may be painful and difficult, but this could be an examination for us, and by being pleased with Allah's decree we become better believers and stronger followers. Let us not forget that the Prophets and Imams went through much more difficult challenges, yet they remained resolute and strong in faith. The recitation of duas will have impacted us positively, as we

would have attained thawab, but for reasons that Allah (SWT) knows, sometimes what we desire does not materialise. Ultimately, let us affirm this belief: Allah (SWT) only gives us what is best for us.

Answered by: Sheikh Mohammed Al-Hilli

You asked...

How should a mother respond when her teenage son says he is moving out to live with his Muslim girlfriend?

We answered...

Muslims parents needs to develop a close and loving relationship with their children from a young age. If this does not happen, the child grows to disobey his/her parents and may not worry about doing so. In the above situation, the mother should sit down and discuss the matter calmly with her son.

The mother should explain, using rational deduction as well as Islamic teachings, the problem of such a relationship outside marriage. What is more, teenagers (as well as children) almost always want the happiness and satisfaction of the parents (although they may not show it); and hence by explaining that this would inflict some suffering and would be painful for the parents may make the son aware of the gravity of the situation. At the same time, the parents should have an understanding of who the close friends are and attempt to communicate with them in the hope of influencing the decision. There should be an agreed plan of action by both the mother and father in helping their son make the right decision. In addition, this could be a sign that the son is looking to get married, and this option should be facilitated if the parents feel this is the right time.

Answered by: Sheikh Mohammed Al-Hilli

You asked...

I am finding breastfeeding extremely difficult, so much so that I am considering giving up. I know it is highly recommended in Islam to breastfeed for two years and am hoping you will be able to help. I get recurrent infections and discomfort whilst feeding. I just don't know what I am doing wrong.

We answered...

Extensive research suggests that breastfeeding is the best and most natural way to feed your baby. Admittedly it is not easy, but with patience, perseverance and support, most mothers who want to breastfeed can. Breastfeeding is nutritionally superior to formula milk and meets the needs of each individual baby. It helps to build a strong bond between the mother and baby, and for many mothers it has proven to be a fulfilling and natural way to nourish their little ones. Research has also suggested that it helps with brain development.

However, a common problem new mothers face whilst breastfeeding is mastitis. It usually occurs within the first three months. Not feeding the baby regularly due to conditions such as jaundice, cracked / sore nipples or a baby refusing to feed can lead to mastitis. Mastitis occurs when milk remaining in the breast becomes infected. This can lead to breasts becoming hard and red. Subsequently mothers can experience typical flu-like symptoms such as a high temperature, shivers, aches and pain.

Some suggested ways to prevent mastitis are as follows

1. Make sure the baby is latched on correctly so they feed efficiently, and empty the breast as much as possible
2. Feed frequently and adjust your feeding routine so breasts are emptied regularly. (In the early days a baby should be breastfed every 2-3 hours throughout the day and woken for these feeds).
3. If you feel the breasts become too full, try expressing some milk. (If your breasts are overly full, the baby will find it difficult to latch on. Try to massage the breast and let out some milk first. If this proves difficult then have a warm shower and try to expel some milk in the bath).
4. Always drink plenty of fluids and try to rest. Mastitis can be very painful and in severe cases antibiotics may be required to alleviate the infection. If you think you have mastitis visit your GP as soon as possible. It is generally safe to continue to feed and your GP or Midwife will advise you further.

Breastfeeding support counselor



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Personal Moments

By: Tahera Chatur



I was born in Uganda and came to London with my family in 1972. I studied in a special school for the blind and partially sighted because I have an eye condition called Lebers Congenital Amaurosis. I am able to see a distance of 1 metre. I can only see outlines and I have no colour vision. I am unable to see facial expressions and am totally blind in sunlight.

After I finished my "O" Levels I went on to study in a fully integrated college. After college I worked in London for two years and then married and moved to Stockholm, Sweden. I lived and worked in Sweden for 13 years and returned to London. Currently I am working in the

Civil Service as an administrative assistant. I carry out my duties with the aid of assistive magnification software. I am also studying part-time for an open degree in Law and English Language at the Open University.

I have one daughter who is 15 years old. Maleeha has no specific diagnosis except a global developmental delay and co-ordination problems in all her limbs. The global delay affects her thought processes, responses and maturity. The co-ordination problems impact on her balance and ability to manipulate objects, writing and movement.

When my daughter was born, I was under the impression that she had no complications and that she would grow up to be a fully able individual and would have an ordinary life. I found myself looking at the development milestones and thinking everything is fine. I remember trying to find strategies to help myself with bathing, nappy changing and feeding her. I bought a special baby-shaped bath sponge that she could rest on as I was afraid that because I couldn't see she might go under the water and drown. I challenged myself to take her out unaccompanied two weeks after she was born. I took a cab to the shopping mall and walked around the shops with her in her buggy. I needed to be sure that I could use a white cane and push a baby buggy and not have any accidents, and at the same time build self-confidence. I had to make sure I was fully able to carry out all these tasks as I had come to London to have Maleeha, but I had to return to Stockholm. My greatest fear as a visually impaired person was that I would endanger my child whom I had waited so many years for. I flew back to Stockholm wondering whether I would make it. Upon my return I encountered snow and ice in Marsta. My first trip out with her was in a snow storm when I had to take her to the medical centre. I had a ten-minute walk through hills, apartment complexes and car parks, and all the time wondering whether I would be ok as I could barely see in the white snow that covered the paths.

I overcame the challenge of transporting her and took her to Masjid in her pushchair every week after that. I would take her to playgroups as she grew up and hoped that she would integrate. At the time there were no signs of any medical conditions. She played happily and at the age of one and three quarters I had to go back to work as a Receptionist in Stockholm, and Maleeha started going to daycare. When she was two years old I decided I wanted to return to London, as I wanted Maleeha to be near my nephews and niece so that she would bond with them. I brought her to London, and on my first visit to the health centre, the health worker raised concerns regarding Maleeha's

development. Maleeha was referred to The Child Development Centre and then to Neurology. The investigations came back with no real diagnosis and no cause relating to either the global delay, or the tremor in her limbs and poor co-ordination.

The next few years were very challenging as I had to try and teach her colours, and to read. I needed to teach her to speak in English and also read Qur'an. I have no colour vision and cannot read Arabic. My sister and I found creative ways to help Maleeha. We bought a shape sorter with different colours, and labelled the colours with Braille so that we could identify the colours and then teach her. We bought books in large print which also had Braille so that we could teach Maleeha to read. I had to ask sighted members of the family to assist with learning Qur'an.

During the early school years an Educational Psychologist and Clinical Psychologist assessed Maleeha and concluded that she needed a considerable amount of support. Maleeha was granted a Statutory Statement which provided support in the classroom along with other medical provisions.

Sending Maleeha to Madressa and school was only part of the challenge. I had to ensure that she understood what she could eat outside and how she should dress as a Muslim girl. Whilst she does not observe full Hijab due to her difficulties, she does the best she can. I have been teaching her Salaat, and pray with her as her memory is very short and she cannot retain the whole salaat process.

My family and friends have been my main source of support in the day-to-day care. Whilst there are some people in the community, especially in Madressa, that have been supportive - unfortunately the society as a whole have not been helpful and instead critical. Muharram and especially Ashura day are always difficult, as the volunteers do not seem to appreciate the difficulties we face. They insist that we sit in places that are inconvenient. We would climb four flights of stairs when it was really crowded. The fact that both of us are virtually blind and my daughter has difficulties with physical mobility does not seem to register with the volunteers, despite our explanations.

The attitudes of society to disability have been made clear. I was informed that it was not appropriate for me and my husband to have a child as we are both disabled. The prejudice continued after I became a mother, as people would scrutinise and messages would be sent through a third party about how I should feed my baby and dress her.

Maleeha is now fifteen years old, and I must have been doing something right despite the attitudes and judgements made by society regarding my abilities as a parent. People think they know best and are very quick to advise, but I would recommend stepping back and thinking about the person they are judging and consider how that person is feeling. I feel that parents and children with special needs should build a network to support one another. I know this is hard to do as we still have a stigma about disability, and people are in denial mostly. This stereotypical ideology that we should all be perfect has to be overcome before we can establish a support network. This can only be achieved through awareness and acceptance by the community that nobody is perfect. There is no such thing as the moral high ground - whether one has wealth or education or beauty; in the end everyone has some imperfection.

The leaders of our community which include the elected representatives, volunteers and those who educate the community in Islam need to raise awareness. The network would have to be organised by disabled people for disabled people.

To Feed or Not To Feed...

By: Ali Canani
Registered Holistic Nutritionist (Canada)



"No mummy, not this again!" says the child when offered a lovely carrot to eat. Parents often tell me that as their children get older, they get increasingly fussy about their food, and why should they not be. Our supermarkets and grocery stores are filled with all sorts of treats including chocolates, cookies, pretzels, candy, etc. wrapped in brightly coloured and attractive packaging which, apart from enticing their primary target (our children), often gets the better of our judgement too.

As father to an energetic toddler, I can completely relate to the food dilemma. Every parent wants what is best for their children but today's fast-paced world often restricts the time parents can put up with fussy eaters, and so we often end up providing the quickest solution to resolve their hunger pangs, which may not always be the healthier solution.

Allah (SWT) in His Infinite Mercy has blessed us all with a nutritionist within ourselves, since we know when we are giving our children something healthy or not; for example, when we offer an apple, our hearts know it is good for them, but when we give a treat like ice cream or chocolate, we often justify it to ourselves by saying "it's ok once in a while," while deep down we know it is not.

So with lack of time and fussy eaters against us, what is on our side? Here are a few tips that I have learned and successfully tried out on my son:

- **Be the change:** Children tend to eat what they see parents eating. So if you would like them to have more veggies, then we need to be the first to have them. We probably need them more anyway, considering the current trend of diseases.
- **Use the ship-wreck model:** If you were shipwrecked and stranded on an island surrounded only by healthy food, would your children starve to death just because no cookies and crisps were available? All children eat when they are hungry and they are very adaptable. Make healthy food the ONLY option, rather

than one of the options. Don't battle with your child in regards to food. Ensure you keep only healthy food at home and the battle will be won easily.

- **Fast Food:** Pre-cut small pieces of veggies such as carrots, cucumber and celery and various fruits ahead of time. Kids love simple snacks when they are hungry and having healthy food easily accessible helps to ensure that they go for it.
- **Sweeten your fruit selection:** Children tend to prefer sweeter foods. Sweet fruits such as mangoes, cherries and grapes can replace candy and chocolate without much resistance. Drinking fruit juice is not the same, and is not a habit that I would personally encourage.
- **There is hope in our taste-buds:** The human tongue has 2000-8000 taste buds and their average life is 10 days. Therefore, the good news is that if we manage to hold on to our family health strategy for about 20 days, their taste buds will take over and their food preferences will begin to change. Support them through this phase with the steps above and we will see plenty of improvement in the health of our family.

Being a Single Mother

"When one door closes, many others open."

Interview:

Salaamun Alaykum. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to gain an insight into your experience as a single mother.

Brief profile

I got married at the age of 29 and was married for 4 years. My son was 5 weeks old when my divorce took place. He is now 9 years old.

We live in a tough world, where some people take the first opportunity to judge. Did you face this and if so, how did you handle it?

I was lucky not to face it alone as I have a very supportive family. I had excellent emotional support. My parents realised that there were problems in my marriage and they prayed that if a divorce was to happen, they wanted it to be when they were alive so I was able to have their support.

I also had the support of my community, as I grew up around them.

I was lucky - I knew I had a way out and I had a long life ahead of me and I did not want to live it this way; constantly on edge wondering what was going to happen next.

It is not as hard as it seems. The most difficult decision is leaving the marriage and a lot of women who have been divorced would agree.

My faith gave me the strength to move on. And I also wanted to stay strong for my parents. I did not want to give up.

Did you seek external help?

I spoke to people who went through a similar situation and I found it easier to speak to someone who did not know me. I also had a counsellor who was skilled and helped me through the divorce.

I would suggest all women to have counselling. It helped me immensely. I don't think people should stay in a bad relationship. It is not worth it.

Someone also gave me a good book called, "Stop Thinking, Start Living" by Richard Carlson. I would recommend people read this.

How was his family?

I was staying with my in-laws and I would not advise it, especially at the early stages of marriage. My ex mother-in-law created many issues for me.

I realised this marriage would not work because of the negativity surrounding me. After the divorce, they did not want to know my son much.

Did you ever imagine you would have to raise your child on your own?

No. It was a huge shock when I made the decision. But it gave me some peace and I knew my son was going to be fine.

Did the divorce have an impact on your son?

My son is a much loved child. He was only a baby when it happened. My ex-husband has chosen not to see my son. It made it a lot easier for me as I did not have to see my ex-husband again and there is no interference in my or my son's life.

My son has good role models within the family, so I don't think he has missed out much.

What challenges do you face?

It is making decisions on your own. It is a worry to make sure your child is provided for. Making provisions for him is also vital because I am his main guardian.

You must have to play the role of a mother and father. Can you describe a typical day?

Get myself ready, and then get my son ready. I finish work at 4:00pm and then I bring my work home, but spend time with my son first. We do his work together and then I do my work when he is asleep.

We have a big social circle as well. Every holiday is very active.

There are mothers who just about manage to take care of one child with help. What advice would you give them?

If they have a good support circle, I think you should use them.

I know you have taken up other responsibilities. How do you manage to balance your time?

It is very difficult, and I work full time. But I am quite fortunate that I have my parents who drop and pick up my son. My work place is very understanding and accommodates to my needs.

There are households where the husband and wife are not on good terms but remain with each other solely for the children. What are your thoughts on this?

If it is not a good relationship, you are not doing any favours for your children. It is not a healthy environment. Have a better relationship with your children and focus on them and be a good role model for them. Show them what is not an acceptable relationship.

Kid's Corner

Revolution by a Four Year Old

A visit to Damascus, Shaam, is not complete unless one visits the shrine of the four-year-old daughter of Imam Hussain (AS). You see grown men and women clinging to the zarih of Sayyada Sakina (also known as Rukayyah and Sukaina) with tearful eyes asking for her intercession in fulfilment of their wishes. Many mothers come to Sayyada Rukayyah to present their homage to this little daughter of Imam Hussain (AS) in the form of clothes and earrings.

The role played by Sayyada Sakina in spreading the message of truth, the message of Imam Hussain (AS) and bringing about a revolution, is extremely significant.

In addition to bringing a change in the course of Yazid's plans, Sayyada Sakina has, in her short life, taught us many lessons.

In Karbala she is an embodiment of love and devotion. It is very rare in history that we see such expression of fondness between father and daughter, and uncle and niece. On the other hand, the grief experienced by Sayyada Sakina on the loss of her uncle is so strong that she refuses to cry 'al' atash' - the cry of thirst after the shahadat of Hazrat Abbas (AS). The intensity of Sayyada Sakina's love towards her father is expressed when she clings to Zuljanah as Imam Hussain (AS) gets ready to leave for the battlefield after bidding farewell to the ladies; but then she lets her father go which demonstrates her understanding of the obedience to the commands of Allah (SWT) at this young age.

From Shaam-e-Ghariba onwards, Sayyada Sakina handles every trial with patience while dealing with the atrocities of Yazid's army. While the accounts of her treatment by the army reduce the listener to tears, they simultaneously expose the malicious nature of the supporters of Yazid.

She is an embodiment of truth, innocence, patience, love, and kindness. It is these virtues of Sayyada Sakina that bring about uprisings among the people of Kufa as she is paraded through the streets with the ladies of her family.

Whilst in the prison of Shaam, it is the innocent questions of Sayyada Sakina that draw the attention of the people of Shaam to the atrocities committed against the grandson of the Prophet (PBUH).

It is Sayyada Sakina's cries that steal Yazid's sleep and it is Sayyada Sakina's death that brings about a change in peoples' opinions. It is the death of Sayyada Sakina that finally prompts Yazid to release the prisoners.

Have you ever seen in history such a great revolution brought about by a four-year-old child?

http://www.muhammadshiasisters.net/articles/lessons_learned_from_a_four_year_old.html

***Congratulations to Mohammedraza Rashid,
WINNER of the Young Poets' Competition.***

Ya Mawla Ali
The lion of Allah, Ameerul Mu'mineen
The strongest protector of Allah's deen
You served the prophet throughout your life
And always remembered Allah throughout your strife

You are vicegerent of Allah, and truly inspirational
And to reach your lofty position is not attainable.
But this does not stop us from copying you
For surely to that is what you want us to do.

I wish I was alive during your reign
So I could stop those who caused you and your family pain
I hope you will intercede for me on the day
When all of my deeds will be on display

I hope my actions please you, Ya Mawla Ali
So that you can be happy with me.

**By Mohammedraza Rashid
Age 13**



Muharram 1435



1	New Islamic Year Shias commemorate battle of Kerbala	2	Imam Hussein (as) enters Kerbala & establishes a camp	3		4		5	
6		7	Access to water was banned to Imam Hussein (as) by Yazid's orders	8		9		10	Day of Ashura Martyrdom of Imam Hussein (as) & his companions took place
11		12		13		14		15	
16		17		18		19		20	
21		22		23		24	Martyrdom of Imam Zainul Abideen (as)	25	Yawme Samarrah the golden dome of Al-Askari mosque was destroyed by bombs
26		27		28		29		30	



ca
YAHUSS

Safar 1435

1	2	3	4	5
	Battle of siffin & shahadat of Ammar-e-Yasir 27AH			
6	7	8	9	10
	Shahadat of Imam Hassan (as) 50AH			Death of Bibi Sakina daughter of Imam Hussein (as)
11	12	13	14	15
	Death of Salman Farsi			
16	17	18	19	20
				Arbaeen- the fortieth day after day of Ashura
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30
	Martydom of Prophet Yahya	Death of Holy Prophet (pbuh)	Shahadat of Imam Reza (as) 203AH	

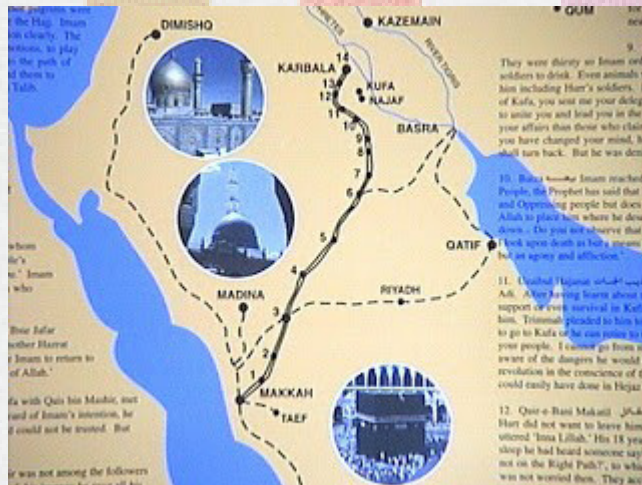
calendar

SAIN

Created by Aliya Mukhi

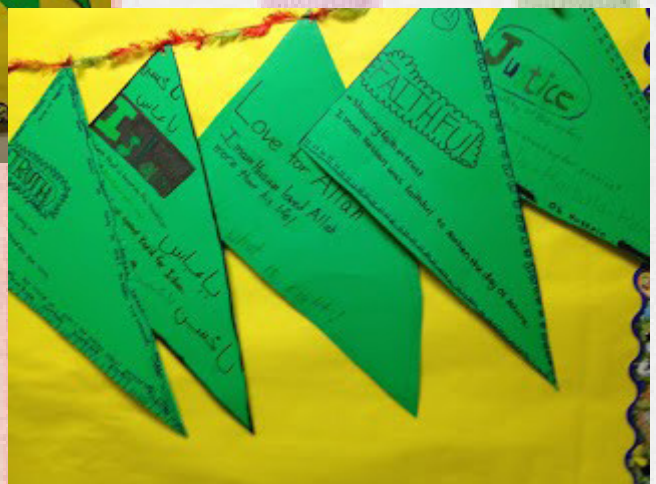
MAKING MAPS

These make it a lot easier for kids to understand the events, since they spanned several cities and countries. A quick google search will lead to many helpful images. If you project it onto the board, you can draw a line showing the journey of the family of the Prophet (P). Here is an example:



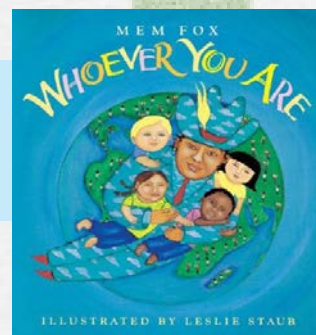
MAKING FLAGS

Each flag has a word/phrase such as: strength, importance of salaa, helpful, sacrifice, truth, Islam, love for Allah, faithful, justice. Include the "dictionary definition" of each word/phrase. After that, write an example of how this trait was shown in Karbala. The flags are then strung against a bulletin board.



Book Reviews

By Fazleen Haji



Whoever You Are

By Mem Fox

This beautifully illustrated children's picture book can be enjoyed by all ages. It talks about multiculturalism and how people may be different than you, live in various places, speak their own languages and go to variety of schools all around the world. The message in this book is one of diversity - that even though children live in different parts of the world and may have different nationalities, races, ethnicities, languages or faiths, they still have the same hopes, dreams and daily needs. When you grow up, you will be different, but remember, the joy, love, pain, smiles and hearts remain the same and everyone will have the same feelings and needs to acquire hopes and dreams.

The book uses very simple language and has pictures to define children's thoughts. It helps by embracing diversity in the world and helps one recognise and celebrate differences and similarities. There is a message of unity and humanity that we all hope to instil in our children. A truly heart warming and inspiring children's book!

Book Reviews

By Fazleen Haji



Purple, Green, and Yellow

By Robert Munsch

This is one of my favourites by Robert Munsch - from one of his live storytelling sessions which inspired me to read to every class I teach. The loudest of classes sat down and enjoyed this story with a good laugh.

This book shows how Brigid is a creative girl who wants to draw the best of pictures using the best colouring markers. Her love for colours is intense and she begs her mother to get her colouring markers that are washable, that smell good and the super-indelible-never-come-off-markers. She promises her mother that she would never dirty the walls or make a mess. At the end she gets bored and thinks of a creative idea and decides to draw on herself with the permanent markers. However, after messing around, she also finds a creative solution to her problem.

This book can be used for a maths lesson by counting all the markers and seeing that Brigid used a large number of markers - children can practise addition using large numbers. This can also be a science lesson on senses. For example, what colours can she see? What does it smell like? What would the fruits she has drawn taste like?
I enjoy reading this book because it brings out the creative side in a child!

YOUR WORLD – STAY ALERT

GLOBAL NEWS FOR KIDS

By Arifa Ismail

EUROPE

60 people have been injured in a 130-vehicle pile-up on the Sheppey Crossing in Kent. The crash came after thick fog inhibited driver visibility. [September 2013]

Denmark's Lego is officially the world's second biggest toymaker after the US toy giant, Mattel. Lego is often encouraged amongst children who struggle to write as it can help to build fine motor skills necessary in life. [September 2013]

NORTH AMERICA

48% of Americans think that the U.S should not launch airstrikes against Syria, according to a recent survey by Pew Research Centre. 29% of Americans favour the strikes, with the rest being unsure. [September 2013]

On August 27th 2013, American Muslims joined in commemorating the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King's historic 'I have a dream' speech, made 50 years ago. It was a speech in which King inspired Americans to dream of a day in which people would be judged for the content of their character rather than the colour of their skin; which echoes the message Prophet Muhammad (SAW) preached.

SOUTH AMERICA

64 year old endurance swimmer Diana Nyad has become the world's first person to swim from Cuba to the U.S without a shark cage. The swim took 53 hours of non-stop swimming. [September 2013]

Chile has extradited former judge Otilio Romano for human rights crimes committed in Argentina during the 1976-1983 military rule. Mr Romano fled to Chile when the allegations emerged of his complicity in what human rights groups claim at least 30,000 were killed during Argentina's darkest times. [September 2013]

ASIA

Haroon Tariq has been billed Pakistan's brainiest youth after receiving 46 As and A*s in his O-levels, International GCSEs and A-level exams. Although finishing 10 GCSEs in his first year, his upbringing inspired him to spend his remaining GCSE years taking on extra subjects to expand his knowledge. Outside of his books he is often seen playing cricket and football. [September 2013]

Tensions between North and South Korea seem to be easing after Pyongyang agreed to reopen a hotline with Seoul. Whilst relations have always been difficult between the two nations since the 1950s civil war that led to their partition, tensions significantly flared in recent years after North Korea developed and tested military nuclear weapons. [September 2013]

MIDDLE EAST

President Hassan Rouhani has shifted responsibility for nuclear talks from the Supreme National Security Council, answerable to the Supreme Leader, to himself. In giving him direct control over negotiations with the international community, it is believed this will enable Iran to adopt a more moderate pose to ease tensions and sanctions over its nuclear programme. [September 2013]

Sushmita Banerjee, an Indian woman who wrote a popular memoir of her escape from the Taliban in 1995, has been assassinated by militants near her home in Paktika Province, Afghanistan. Police have accused the Taliban while the Taliban told the BBC they did not carry out the attack on Ms Banerjee. [September 2013]

AFRICA

The Hargeisa International Book Fair, one of the largest celebrations of the arts in East Africa, took place in Somaliland with success. Somaliland declared its independence in 1991, but remains internationally unrecognised as a sovereign state. The book fair was especially popular amongst women. [August 2013]

Kenyan MPs have voted to leave the International Criminal Court in an emergency debate. This is after both Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta and Deputy President William Ruto are charged with crimes against humanity at the court stemming from violence that broke out after the 2007 disputed elections. [September 2013]

Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first black president and anti-apartheid hero has died at the age of 95. The anti-apartheid leader and Nobel laureate was a beloved figure around the world, a symbol of reconciliation from a country with a brutal history of racism. Mandela was released from prison in 1990 after nearly 30 years for plotting to overthrow South Africa's apartheid government. In 1994, in a historic election, he became the nation's first black leader. (December 2013)

HERCULES AND ISLAM

Arabia, during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), was a country without any central authority. It was a country far from the civilised nations of those days.

At the time Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was spreading Islam; asking people to turn away from worshipping idols to worshipping Allah, the Almighty, the All-Knower, the Master.

The Prophet sent letters of invitation to Kings and Rulers of various countries in the world, inviting them to embrace Islam. Many of the letters were met with a favourable response whilst others were rejected. In many cases, the messengers of the Prophet were treated badly and abused. But the Prophet was not worried by these setbacks. He was inviting people to the right path and a few setbacks could not deter him from propagating Islam. Abu Sufyan a leader of the tribe of Quraish and the arch enemy of the Prophet was in Constantinople on a business trip, when the Prophet's letter of invitation reached Hercules, the Byzantine emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire. Hercules, at the time was in his court at Constantinople celebrating his victory over the Persians.

Hercules read the letter through an interpreter and then asked the people in his court, to find out if there was someone in the city, who knew the Prophet. Abu Sufyan and his companions were brought into the court.

The emperor asked Abu Sufyan, "What kind of family does Muhammad belong to?" "Noble", replied Abu Sufyan.

"Has there been a king in his family?" Hercules asked.
"No," said Abu Sufyan

"Are the people who have accepted his religion poor or rich?" Hercules questioned again.

"They are poor", replied Abu Sufyan.

Hercules was now becoming more and more interested and he went on asking questions. His next question was, "Are his followers on the increase or decrease?"

"Increasing", Abu Sufyan replied shortly.

"Have you known him to tell lies"? asked Hercules.

"No", admitted Abu Sufyan.

"Does he ever go against his convents?" Hercules once again asked. "Not so far. But we have to see whether he carries out the new agreement made between us and him", Abu Sufyan answered lengthily for a change.

"Have you ever fought him in wars?" Hercules questioned.

"Yes", answered Abu Sufyan

"What has been the result?" Hercules asked, getting more and more interested.

"Sometimes we have won, sometimes he", replied Abu Sufyan.

"What does he teach?" asked Hercules.

"Worship One God, join no partners with Him, carry out your prayers, be chaste, speak the truth and keep union with your relatives", answered Abu Sufyan, even surprised at his own answer as it sounded like he was preaching Islam.

Hercules stood up and said, "If all you said is true, then I am sure that this Prophet's Kingdom will reach here where I am standing. I was certain that a Prophet was coming, but I didn't know that he would be born in Arabia. If I were to go there, I would embrace Islam and wash the Prophet's feet with my own hands."

This was the way in which the Prophet spread Islam. He impressed them by his truthfulness, honesty, noble character and dedication in the service of Allah. He did not compel people to accept Islam under the threat of waging wars, nor did he compel people to accept Islam by the force of the sword. He fought only in defence, and only when the enemies waged war on him.

<http://www.al-islam.org/gallery/kids/Books/istories/index.htm>



MATCH THE PERSONALITIES ...TO THE QUOTES

1. Imam Hussein (AS)	A. Death to me is sweeter than honey
2. Edward Gibbons	B. By Allah, O Our Master! O Aba Abdillah! We shall never betray you!
3. Jawahirul Nehru	C. Although you have severed my right hand, I shall keep defending my religion as also my positively truthful Imam, who is the Son of the chaste and trustworthy Prophet (pbuh)
4. Hazrat Hurr	D. I shall weep upon my brother all through my life, who was born as the best of creatures after the Prophet (pbuh). The tears shall flow upon my cheeks similar to the flood and rain water and shall never dry up.
5. Hazrat Muslim Bin Aqeel	E. Prophethood and Imaamat have always been decreed for my fathers and ancestors long before you were even born.
6. Basheer Bin Jazlam	F. I have not seen a more harsh man than Yazid, nor have I seen an infidel and polythiest worse and more tyrant than him.
7. Sayyada Sakina	G. O People of Yathrib! There is no place for you to abide here, Hussein has been killed for which my tears flow, his body laid in Karbala smeared in dust and blood, while his head was being paraded upon a lance from place to place.
8. Imam Zainul Abideen (AS)	H. I do not desire to have anyone as my father-in-law after the Prophet (pbuh)
9. Sayyada Zainab	I. Praise be to Allah (swt)! If this water would have been destined for me, I could have drunk it.

10. Sayyada Rabab	J. We are the household of the Prophethood, the source of Messengership, the descending place of angels; through us Allah has begun (his favours), and with us He has perfected (His blessings); whereas Yazid is a sinful man, a drunkard, killer of innocent people, and one who openly indulges in sinful acts. A person like me can never pay allegiance to a person like him.
11. Hazrat Qasim Ibn Hassan	K. In a distant age and climate the tragic scene of the death of Hazrat Imam Hussein (as) will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader.
12. Hazrat Abbas	L. There is a universal appeal in this martyrdom. Hazrat Imam Hussein (as) sacrificed his all, but he refused to submit to a tyrannical government... the power of faith to him, is the greatest force, which regards all material force as nothing. This sacrifice is a beacon light of guidance for every community and every nation.
13. Companions of Imam Hussein (AS)	M. May I be your ransom O son of the Prophet of Allah! I am the one who had stopped you from returning back and had accompanied you all along and had forced you to alight here. Now O apologize to Allah regarding what I have done, then do you think that my repentance will be accepted?
14. Sayyada Umm Kulthum	N. Is this the custom of justice that you sit your women-folk and maids behind veils, while you captivate and parade the daughters of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh)?

You can find the answers to the above Matching puzzle on Page 53.

THANK YOU IMAM HUSSEIN (AS)

Children's Letters

I want to thank Imam Hussain (AS) for saving Islam for us - to thank him for sacrificing his family. I know how he felt about Hazrat Ali Asghar as I felt very sad and upset when I lost my little brother Muhammad. I feel very special that Imam Hussain (AS) sacrificed his whole family for Islam, and that means us. I will show Imam that I love him by starting to pray my namaz on time with my mummy. I will always speak the truth and tell my friends stories about how brave Imams are and also about Islam. I also do matam to show Imam that if I was in Karbala I would be there to help him.

Ali Rahemtulla (Peterborough, age 6)



Dearest Imam Hussain (Ibne Ali) (A.S),

Salaam Alaykum. I am writing to thank you for everything that you have done for the future, for humanity and for fighting for righteousness.

Every day is Ashura and every land is Karbala. Therefore I need to better myself and I plan to do this by learning to compromise and self-sacrifice if it is needed - as you showed us humility, equality and sheer selflessness. On the plains of Karbala you just gave up whatever food that you had to all the younger children.

Also I plan to improve myself by getting along with my siblings as Bibi Sakina's relationship with baby Asghar and love towards him was beautiful. Also you have taught me that there is nothing more important than family. Lastly, you and your family showed nothing but consideration and selflessness. You never ever, even in times of extreme suffering, put yourselves before others that were with you, even though you were descendants of the Holy Prophet.

Thank you Imam for the messages you have shown. I hope that you have understood some of the many things I have learnt from the sacrifices you and your family made.

Thank you again,

Sanaa Gulamhusein
(Age 14)



You Ask...Saida Answers!

**Do boys need to wear caps as girls need to wear scarves?
(Rayyan Musa: 4 years old)**

Salaam Rayyan

The rulings are different - girls need to wear the Hijab (scarf) whereas boys do not have to wear the cap. It is Mustahab (recommended) for boys to wear a cap during Namaz.



**Why do girls have to wear hijab from the age of 9?
(Maryam Dossa: 9 years old)**

Salaam Maryam

The reason a Muslim girl needs to wear hijab at 9 is because her body starts to mature, and as a result of that her mature body needs to be protected and Hijab is the best of dresses for modesty.

**Why do we need to recite Qur'an?
(Abid-Hassan: 5 years old)**

Salaam Abid,

Your question reminds me of a story I read:

An old Muslim lived on a farm with his young grandson. Each morning Grandpa was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading his Noble Qur'an. His grandson wanted to be just like him and tried to imitate him in every way he could.

One day the grandson asked, "Grandpa, I try to read the Noble Qur'an just like you but I don't understand it, and what I do understand I forget as soon as I close the book. What good does reading the Noble Qur'an do?"

The grandfather quietly turned from putting coal in the stove and replied, "Take this coal basket down to the river and bring me back a basket of water."

The boy did as he was told, but all the water leaked out before he got back to the house. The grandfather laughed and said, "You'll have to move a little faster next time," and sent him back to the river with the basket to try again.

This time the boy ran faster, but again the basket was empty before he returned home.

Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was impossible to carry water in a basket, and he went to get a bucket instead.

The grandfather said, "I don't want a bucket of water; I want a basket of water. You're just not trying hard enough," and he went out of the door to watch the boy try again.

At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could, the water would leak out before he got back to the house.

Again, the boy dipped the basket into the river and ran hard, but when he reached his grandfather the basket was again empty. Out of breath, he said, "See Grandpa, it's useless!"

"So you think it is useless?" The Grandfather said, "Look at the basket."

The boy looked at the basket and for the first time realized that the basket was different. It had been transformed from a dirty old coal basket and was now clean, inside and out.

"Son, that's what happens when you read the Noble Qur'an. You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read the Noble Qur'an, you will be changed, inside and out. That is the work of Allah (SWT) in our lives."

There is a hadith of the 6th Imam for the youths on reading the Qur'an:

Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (AS) said:

"One who recites the Holy Qur'an and he is a young believer, then his body and blood will be blended and mixed with it."

Nine great benefits of reciting the Holy Qur'an

1. Reading and reflecting over the Noble Qur'an fulfils an Islamic duty.
2. The Noble Qur'an will be a proof for us on the Day of Judgment.
3. The Noble Qur'an will intercede for us on the Day of Judgment.
4. Your status in this life will be raised.
5. You will be from the best of people.
6. There are ten rewards for each letter you recite from the Noble Qur'an.
7. The reciters of the Noble Qur'an will be in the company of the noble and obedient angels.
8. Your position in Paradise is determined by the amount of Noble Qur'an you memorise in this life!
9. The Noble Qur'an will lead you to Paradise!

Children's Recipes By Fatema Jessa

Crispy Cornflake Chicken

Children can get involved by helping to crush the cornflakes and also dipping the chicken strips in the batter. You can also freeze them before cooking.

Ingredients

- ¼ kg chicken strips
- 3 heaped tablespoons cornflakes, crushed
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 ½ tablespoons butter, melted or cooking spray

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees C
2. Line a baking tray with parchment paper or grease the tray
3. Whisk the egg and milk together in a bowl
4. Dip the chicken into the egg wash first then into the cornflakes. Place onto the tray.
5. Drizzle the butter over the chicken or alternatively coat with cooking spray.
6. Bake for 20 minutes, turning the chicken halfway through the cooking.
7. When making for adults, you can add seasoning and chilli flakes to the egg wash to make it spicier.



Easy Pizza Subs

When children are hungry, this is easy and fast to make and you can use any leftover vegetables you have.

Ingredients

- 1 baguette
- Tomato sauce or pasta sauce
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 onion
- 1 courgette
- 1 cup button mushrooms
- ½ cup sweetcorn
- 1 cup grated cheese

Method

1. Slice the baguette lengthwise and place under the grill till it turns golden brown
2. Heat oil - sauté onions, courgette and mushrooms. Cook till vegetables are soft, approximately 3 minutes.
3. Stir in the sweetcorn to the vegetables
4. Spread the tomato sauce over the baguette, and spoon the vegetables on top
5. Sprinkle the cheese on top
6. Place under the grill and remove once the cheese has melted



Eton Mess

This is a very easy dessert that requires no baking and very quick to assemble hence perfect for kids that love to help in the kitchen

Ingredients

500g strawberries, hull removed and chopped into small pieces. Leave a handful aside for garnish
400ml double cream
4 meringue nests (ready bought from the supermarket)
Mint for garnish

Method

1. Whisk the double cream until it's stiff and peak form
2. Crush the meringue
3. Fold the meringue and the strawberries into the double cream
4. Spoon into individual glasses/ dessert bowls
5. Garnish with remaining strawberries and a sprig of mint



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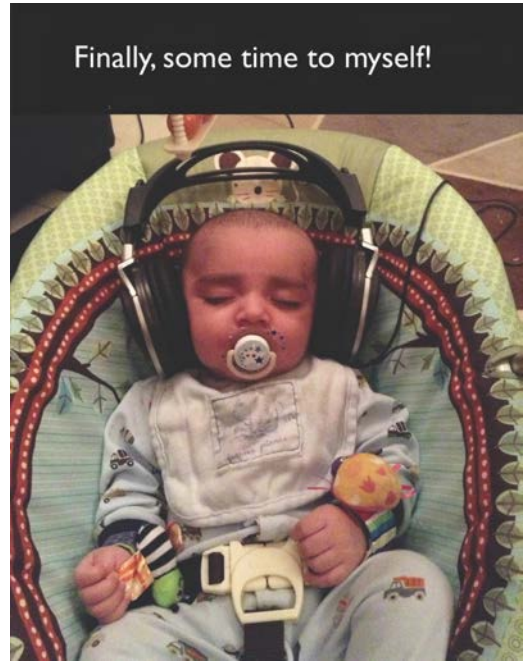
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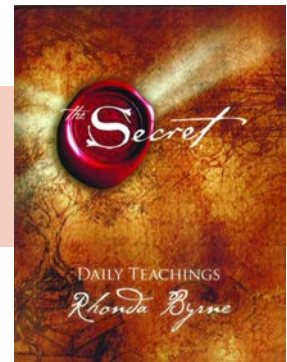
Finally, some time to myself!

Book Reviews

By Fazleen Haji

The Secret

By Rhonda Byrne



This book emphasises the importance of gratitude and how it can change one's life. Byrne focuses on the law of attraction where she believes that whatever you think about or put your attention towards, becomes reality. When you believe in the focus of the direction, the energy flows in that direction. She states, "Everything that's coming into your life, you are attracting into your life. And it's attracted to you by virtue of the images you're holding in your mind". It is about what is in your mind that you are attracting towards you.

This book made me strengthen my faith in my Creator as well. The more I 'asked' from the Almighty, the more I 'believed' He has the power to bestow on me His bounties which have already blessed my life. It is all about focus and a positive attitude, as is apparent in this book with its numerous examples. We don't have to know 'how' it happens, but we must 'believe' it will happen and it does. A movie sequel follows the book. A must watch!

Mums Top Tips!

By: Aiman Poptani, Safia Tharoo, Samiha Hamir and Zainab Asaria

POTTY TRAINING

Are you counting down the days to the toilet transition? Or maybe you've already dabbled in a few less-than-successful attempts? Either way, we've heard one thing again and again: your child has to be good and ready. And don't worry, he will be some day. We asked a number of mums to give us their top tips on potty-training.

It's important to make sure that the child is ready to be trained. It's best not to compare ages with other trained children. I waited until my child was 2 years old. Also I had lots of treats/stickers ready for her.

Give your little one lots of practice on the potty or toilet before you start training them, and give them lots of opportunities to watch and learn.

Go for broke. Pull-ups will only confuse and give your toddler a false sense of security. Put them in pants from day one. Be prepared for accidents and work alongside your child's nursery teachers. Be patient with your child. Reward them depending on their age. Stickers on a reward chart work well or small treats if the child is older. You will know when your child is ready when they express an interest in toileting habits or tell you what they've done in their nappy!

Buy pants with your toddler's favourite character on them – pricier than plain ones but worth it so you can say "Thomas/Dora/Sam doesn't like to get dirty, so let's try and keep them clean".

I stayed at home for 5 days. I put my child straight into underwear. I bought about 25 pairs of cheap underwear and switched her. I took her to the washroom every 20 minutes even if she didn't want to go. There were a few accidents but after day 2 she got the hang of it.

Don't be surprised if things are great initially and then suddenly go wrong. Our first two days were a dream with only one accident, and then on days 3 and 4 we only had accidents! I nearly gave up but day 5 turned out so much better and then it was only forwards from there. But little ones need some accidents to make them realise the consequences of their actions.

I found the 'cold turkey' method worked best – once you start, use pants only - unless it's sleep time - and no slipping back to nappies/pull-ups just for convenience. It does mean you need to find a quiet week to do it but it's quicker and less confusing in the long run.

Both you and your child have to be ready. Don't feel pressurised into forcing it before your little one is ready, otherwise it just causes unnecessary distress to them. Make sure there's no major upheaval or stressful events around then. Also a few weeks before starting, read books and watch videos on toilet training so it doesn't just hit them out of the blue. This really worked for us.

HANDLING TODDLER TANTRUMS

However liable your child is to tantrums, you can prevent many by organising your toddler's life so that frustration stays within the limits of her tolerance most of the time. Try to remember that your child's tantrums aren't a reflection of your parenting skills: they simply mean you've got a frustrated little kid on your hands. Here are some tips on how to handle them without losing your cool.

Distraction

works wonders.

Although only if you do it at the outset! Talk about something else (preferably something your child enjoys or is interested in) and sometimes they forget what they were getting worked up about and are happy to move onto the next thing.

Pick your battles.

If it really doesn't matter if they wear blue socks or green socks then don't bother arguing about it.

Inject some

comedy. My son starts jumping up and down and waving his hands about when he is unhappy. My dad will start copying his actions and my son will burst into laughter at how funny his Nana looks that he forgets to be angry. It works even better if you then distract him with something else whilst he is still laughing.

If you cannot ignore, especially if they turn violent then introduce a time out.

Warn the child first...if you don't stop screaming then I will send you to the naughty step. If he persists, then without talking, take him to the designated space and get down to his level and tell him what you are doing. Leave him there for a minute per age. After he has done the time get down to his level. Explain why you put him there. Ask for an apology. Give hugs and carry on as normal.

To avoid them in public places - before you go into the shop or wherever, get down to your child's level and explain the purpose and the rules of the outing. Involve your child in the activity e.g. grocery shopping.

Get him or her to hold the list or bag the veg.

Try and stay

calm. Much easier said than done and hard to follow even when you know it works. But I find that if I stay calm then I can soothe and calm my son easier than if I am also stressed and annoyed.

Don't give your tantrum - throwing toddler the benefit of an audience. Ignore them and most times they will get bored and stop.

My little ones have tantrums when they are tired or when they need a bit of mummy time - I normally ignore the tantrum (as long as they are not hurting themselves or others) and deal with the cause e.g. a few cuddles if they are feeling a bit overlooked/left out. I also try to stick to their normal meal/ snack and bedtime routines to minimise tantrums.

When all else fails, take a time out. I don't quite like the idea of putting my son on a 'naughty step', but if we are both getting angry with each other, then often I just walk out of the room and recite 10 Salawaat. It gives me a chance to catch my breath and calm down, and gives my son a break too as he is often so curious as to where I have gone that he stops shouting. Then we can both deal with whatever the cause of the tantrum was in a calmer frame of mind.

Product Reviews

By Mehjabeen Mamdani

Baby Cubes

This baby product came in very handy when my baby started solids. It's dishwasher-safe, microwave safe and freezer safe. They stack easily in the freezer, saving valuable space. I would puree whatever foods we were eating that day into my blender and pour it into these little cubes for freezing. The portion sizes (40ml) are ideal and can be taken out of the freezer to thaw prior to feeding or traveling for the day. If you squeeze the sides lightly, the frozen food easily pops out. Cleaning is a breeze since the opening of the cube is wide enough to fit a baby brush or cleaning sponge. This was definitely worth the price of £4.99.



Fisher-Price Kid Tough Digital Camera



My daughter first discovered this camera at a play gym and fell in love with it ever since. It keeps her occupied for ages and has helped develop a creative eye in taking pictures. It's easy to use and has grips so that her little hands can grasp the sides and she can simultaneously press on the orange button which captures the picture. There is a colour LCD display screen (1.5 inch) for her to view the pictures and a front and back arrow to scroll through her creative captures. This camera is suitable for 3-6 year olds, stores up to 500 pictures, 0.3 megapixels and can withstand many falls to the ground. The only con to this camera is that it drains the battery life like crazy! Definitely worth getting rechargeable batteries for this!

JJ Cole Diaper and Wipes Caddy

I've had this product for three years - since my daughter was born, and I'm now using it for my son who is 18 months old. This is a very handy product that I use daily. It is useful since it can store all the essential items you require and it looks very trendy wherever you have it in your home. It stores several nappies and wipes. It has a drawer where I store nappy rash cream and nappy sacks. It also comes with a matching change mat that has a plastic surface that's very practical when it comes to cleaning. The handle makes it easy to carry the caddy from one room to another.



NO CHOICE

By Fatema Valji

When she first opened her beautiful, innocent eyes
And her tiny, fragile fingers clasped mine
With all my heart, I pledged
My child's spirit, I would protect

I knew she was not truly mine
She was a gift, an amanah from the Divine,
To nurture, raise, and guide
In her journey towards the Sublime

So as days and sleepless nights blurred
I struggled undeterred
Until she grew into a little girl who assimilated
Some of the values I lovingly integrated

And so I felt all would be fine
When her hand slipped from mine
To run to school, friends, clubs
Adapting, blending, to fit in and have fun

I had taught her He saw everything
Even when no-one was watching
And so I believed she would not be prey
To secularism, immodesty, moral decay...

I would drop her to school and pick her up everyday
I would allow no other to take her to parties and cafes
And of course, I made sure, every Sunday
She went to Madressa to learn and pray...
So how could she possibly go astray??

Little did I know, little did I understand
How quickly I would be surpassed
By friends, peers, crowds and norms
By the desire to belong, pressure to conform

I wanted her to be always God-conscious
Yet I educated her in a system that was godless
I wanted her to live for Him, prioritise spiritual success
Whilst her teachers and peers stressed
Success was academic and material progress

I wanted her to value character, integrity
Develop it through self-respect, modesty
Yet I expected her to also integrate
In a 'liberal' world with little shame

I wanted her to be His servant true
Yet the world in which she learned and grew
Neither loved and served Him, nor cared to
Why was I surprised when her spiritual passion died too?

***Why did my community and I not have the vision,
To unite faith and education
Providing parents with an Islamic choice
Of education for their young girls and boys?***

Who Should Our Youth Speak To?

The Importance of Mentoring

By **Imran Chatoo**

The definition of a mentor per the Oxford dictionary is as follows:

*“An experienced and **trusted** adviser”*

Today's child is a product of the age of the internet and the need for mentoring is greater now than it ever has been. Facebook, Twitter, MSN, BB Messenger, Whatsapp to name just a few of the new advances in technology - these were merely in the beginning stages of ideology when I was growing up not more than a couple of decades ago. The advancement in technology, whilst having a number of positive influences such as online lectures, podcasts and Skype to name but a few has also brought with it a raft of negativity.

An example of this was demonstrated in the form of a study carried out in Germany asking 600 adults about their feelings whilst using social media. About a third of the participants said they experienced mainly negative feelings, such as frustration. And, as the researchers determined, the central cause for feelings of frustration was 'envy'. The social media users also revealed the contexts in which their last experience of envy had taken place. Just over 70% said it was in real life, but about 20% said it was while using Facebook (FB). They also describe what they call the “self-promotion – envy spiral,” in which users who feel envious of their social media friends beef up their own profiles in response, creating a vicious cycle, in which “the envy-ridden character of the platform climate can become even more pronounced.”

Bearing in mind that this study was carried out on adults, we can only imagine the impact that such social networking sites are having on children who may be at a stage in life where image is everything, and such negative feelings can have a much more detrimental effect.

Tributes from across the world were recently being paid to a 15-year-old girl from Canada who killed herself after being bullied online. It came five weeks after she uploaded a video to YouTube describing years of bullying that she said drove her to drugs and alcohol.

In the nine-minute video she told her story with a set of handwritten notes. The recording, described as “haunting”, showed the teenager going into detail about what happened to her.

Mentoring can help ensure that the youth of today are well equipped to deal with the trials and tribulations that they face on a daily basis from social media. In order to mentor, it is imperative that you are aware of how social media works. It is a concern that many parents have – the impact that social media can have on our children - and many expressed an interest for it to be covered in Madressa. However, it was disappointing to learn that only a minority of parents were actually part of the social networking sites that they were so worried about. If you are not aware of the positives and pitfalls of the internet sites that your child is visiting, how can you expect them to have the confidence to approach you when they may be facing issues such as cyber bullying?

The ideal mentor for a child is his or her own parents, where they can discuss issues without judgement, openly and frankly.

This is the fundamental characteristic needed to be a strong mentor. It is important for a child to have confidence in their mentor so that they can be free to tell you their issues knowing they will be listened to.

After discussing the meaning of a mentor with some of the boys in our community, I asked how many of them felt that they had a mentor in their life. Only three of the sixteen boys put their hand up. When discussing why some of them did not feel that they had someone that they looked to as a mentor, the main reasons given were the following:

- Fear of judgement by the potential mentor
- Fear that the potential mentor will discuss the sensitive topic with another party

This is cause for concern. It is vital for us all as a community to firstly acknowledge the situation and fears of our youth, and collectively as a community and individually as families tackle the situation head on and make sure that our youth are able to come to us when they most need it.



Bringing Out The Best in Your Teen

Tips on maintaining a rapport and bringing the best out with our teenage children!

By Abbas Merali

Certification in 'Parents as Teen Coach' and co-author of *The Heavenly Path*

Before I dive into the main body of this article, I think it is well worth me putting up my disclaimer upfront - I am writing this not as an expert or a guru in the field or world of Teens, Parenting or Parenting of Teens, but from the following three angles:

1. Having worked closely with Teen folks over the last 10-12 years in various capacities including a mentor at summer camps, speaker at various events and a workshop facilitator.
2. Having worked closely with families in mediating Teen/Young adult – Parent issues.
3. Being a young adult not so many years ago and reflecting on what could have been done differently.

My objective is to focus on three key elements:

1. The best gift we can give our children, especially our teenage children.
2. 3 ways we can make the transition with our teenagers from being a 'child' to a 'vizier' (comrade/peer/confidant) in accordance with the following beautiful Hadith from Our Holy Prophet PBUH:

"The Child is a master for 7 years; Slave for Seven years and a Vizier for 7 years. If he grows into good character, well and good, otherwise leave him alone because you have discharged your responsibility."

3. Building a support network – not to suffer in silence!

Let us take a look at each of these three in more detail:

The best gift we can give our children, especially our teenage children:

If I was to ask you this question: 'If there was only one gift you could give your child/ children what would that be?'

Whenever I have asked this question at the various 'Parents as Coach' approach workshops, very often the responses I get tend to focus on the qualities they can harness in our children, of which the top 5 qualities tend to be:

1. Honesty
2. Grounded in faith
3. Being loving and compassionate people
4. Intelligence and book smart
5. Strong character

The more I think about this question, the more I keep coming back to the following answer which I think probably encompasses all the above 5 qualities (and many more) we would probably like to harness in our own child.

The best gift that a mother can give to her child, both son and daughter is: "To deeply and openly respect and love their father". The best gift that a father can give to his child, both son and daughter is: "To deeply and openly respect and love their mother"

If there was only one gift you could give – why would this be the single most important gift you as a mother/father can give your child?

(i) The foundation of being a parenting team is to have a healthy adult-adult/peer to peer relationship with your own spouse

(ii) The best way to instil any quality in your children be it love, respect, honesty, happiness, contentment, tenacity, resilience - is to live it and model it for them. If our actions are in line with our words, they will naturally mirror this in their own lives.

(iii) One day they will get married – how do you think they will be as husbands/wives and future parents in their own marriages? They will imitate/continue the same patterns they watched their own parents model as husband and wife, and as mum and dad!

Finally, what you do give your child when they see a loving and healthy adult to adult relationship between mum and dad, is a sense of self worth, security and groundedness that they then don't need to seek from outside.

3 ways we can make the transition with our teenagers from being a 'child' to a 'vizier'
This is probably the easiest thing to write and discuss in theory but the hardest thing to put into practice and day to day action, as what you are essentially asking of yourself is to start to consciously recognize that 'child' in front of you, that you have nurtured and watched grow up and had so much 'power' and influence over is now an 'adult' and an independent entity separate from you.

This needs three key things:

(i) Self awareness as a parent

(ii) Consciously choosing a different way of doing something you were so used to doing for the last 10-12 years with your child

(iii) A lot of practice (and self compassion to not be too hard on yourself)

The three tips to make this transition are:

1. To genuinely begin to 'RESPECT' that person as an adult:

- Actually saying/writing this to them: 'I RESPECT you for the following qualities'

- Seeking, acknowledging and most importantly implementing their opinions and judgments: 'What do you think?' 'What is your view?' then affirming those views.

- To say 'sorry' to them when you have made a mistake, which is a very subtle and beautiful way of displaying respect and a 'peer to peer' relationship, like between two friends.

2. To LISTEN to them WITHOUT giving them advice:

- Trying not to give ANY solutions/opinions when they come and open their hearts to you but instead flipping it back to them: 'What would you like from me?'

- Trying to listen from their shoes (to actually transport yourself and picture yourself in their shoes, and what they are going through).

3. Move from a TELL-based approach to an ASK-based approach when discussing matters and issues however big or small. Here is the difference:

Tell based approach (lecturing/advising/scolding/admonishing):

(i) Listener becomes passive; the teller is the only active one speaking. Listener begins to switch off.

(ii) Sense of imbalance where the 'teller' is superior/position of power to the listener

(iii) Telling is easy – only takes two minutes! Job Done!

Ask based approach:

(i) A two way process, the listener is forced to think and be active because a question has been posed to him to which he has to respond to.

Examples:

- (i) What is your view?
- (ii) What do you think?
- (iii) What is your opinion?
- (iv) What would you do differently going forward?
- (v) How can you make it better?
- (vi) How is this going to impact your future?
- (vii) What made you choose that career?

(ii) The sense of imbalance is removed and it is a two way process.

(iii) The listener feels in control of his own issues and feels empowered to take action.

Building a support network – not to suffer in silence!

The last point I would like to add is that too many parents suffer in silence with the issues we face with our teenagers growing up in a very very different world, not only to the one we grew up in, but even from just five years ago, as technology and social media has knocked down all borders and barriers and the world is now flat – a global village.

In the workshops that I have run in the various parts of the world, I have often found a very common theme: we as parents suffer in silence with the issues of Drugs, Music, Alcohol, Hijab, Marriage, Sexual activity, and have nowhere/ no one to turn to for fear of being judged!

The best gift we can give ourselves is to join forces as parents to form support groups to be able to bounce best practice and tips between each other as there is so much wealth and experience that is unshared!

For more information on the workshops etc feel free to drop the author of this article an email:

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The Path To Leadership

Part 2

By Murtaza Manji
Business Coach

One of the three major influencers on our beliefs, values and opinions is religion. By 'religion' I don't mean the set of rules that govern us. The way I see it, religion is so much more than "Do's" and "Don'ts" that some people have reduced it to. One of the biggest benefits of following the religion of Islam is that it has preemptively closed the few doors that lead to trouble. The doors it has left open all lead – in their own way – to success and profit. The choice for us now should not be between "Good" and "Not good"; rather it should be between "Good" and "Great". The question I'd like to try and answer here is: Does Islam promote leadership, and what sort of (good or great) leaders would it want us to become?

When we think "Leader", there are many things that may come to mind around the characteristics and traits associated with leaders. One thing I mentioned in the last article was "the leader isn't always the one standing in the front", and I'd like to explain that now. Imagine a sports team, with a captain at the front. This captain is not the encouraging type, and is constantly shouting at the team members to do better. Another person in the team is not loud, doesn't shout and doesn't put people down. Instead, during the game she is continually saying quiet words of encouragement. After the game she spends her own time talking to other team members and encouraging them, and is always pushing herself to do better and is helping the team feel like they are improving and can still improve. The teams' performance improves tremendously over the season. Who was the "leader" in bringing this change; was it the captain or someone outside the 'driving seat'?

If the above example makes sense – and we see it around us all the time, if we observe – then there is an amazing quote I'd like to share here:

"We follow those who lead not because we have to, but because we want to"
Simon Sinek

In the above example, who "led" the team? And was she "followed" because the team had to follow her, or because they wanted to?

Coming back to Islam and Leadership, there are two types of leadership that we can identify:

- Divine leadership
- Non-Divine Leadership



Divine Leadership is that which is granted by Allah (SWT) alone, and nobody can acquire it for himself or herself. These leaders are the Prophets and the Imams. Non-divine leadership is that which we grant to ourselves and to each other. Yet, in both cases, the above quote holds true. No leader is ever truly followed unless the followers desire to be led by that individual. I'll come back to Divine Leadership soon - first I want to look at how Islam has encouraged us to raise ourselves up to the position of leaders.

We have two lives: one in this world and one in the next. The leadership pertaining to this world – be it in terms of wealth, popularity, fame or so on – will only have benefits in this world (and may even have negative consequences in the next!). The leadership in non-'worldly' matters, however, has great benefit in both worlds. These are the areas of knowledge, invitation to the Path of Allah, religious governance...and any area where the intention is the pleasure of Allah. I mentioned earlier that Islam has only closed a few doors, and that too for good reason. The many doors that are open are all areas of life that we can aim to be leaders in, and it will be a noble intention (with one risk, which I'll come to).

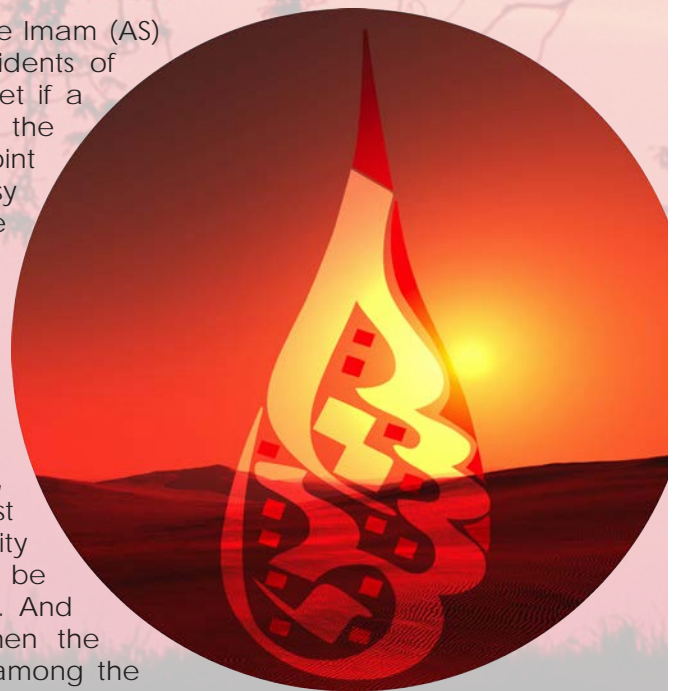
Where's the proof for what I just said? Let's begin by examining some sources.

In Sura Furqan, Allah (SWT) talks about the people who will be rewarded with the highest place in heaven. Among the characteristics of such people are that they ask Allah "give us (the grace) to lead the righteous" (Verse 74). It is a good thing to want to lead the muttaqeen! Are the pious ones those who would willingly follow just anybody, or would they demand a great leader? What, then, is the level we need to be if we want Allah to accept such a prayer?

Secondly, in Dua Iftitah, we ask from Allah (SWT) what the Imam of our Time (AJTFS) is asking: "include us among those who invite people to the obedience to You and lead them to Your approved path". If we want to lead the people of the world to the Path of Allah, how far along the Path must we have walked ourselves? Logically, would you ever ask someone who can't run a mile to teach you to run a marathon?

Thirdly, paraphrasing a famous Hadith, the Imam (AS) talks about a city which has 70,000 residents of which only one person is a Shi'a, and yet if a traveler comes and asks to be guided to the best person in the city, everyone should point to the door of that Shi'a. This is not an easy task – and when we consider that the number '70' was often used to indicate a huge number, we understand that 70,000 might actually mean 700,000 or 7,000,000. Can any of us claim to be the best person in London?

The above three examples look at different areas of our lives, from the extremely pious, to guiding those who don't know, to just being a great person. The commonality in them is to urge us – you and me – to be the absolute best that we can be. And when we've done our utmost, then the prayer to Allah (SWT) to make us among the



leaders comes into play.

Before I go onto Divine Leadership, I want to highlight a major possible risk: the desire to attain a position for anyone other than Allah, known as 'Riya' in Arabic (the translation in English would be "ostentation"). This is a lethal disease, for it won't stop us achieving what we aim for, yet will destroy all the good in the actions we carry out. How do we protect against this? Two ways come to mind: one is to be extremely aware of our own intentions. The second is to ask Him for help, because there is nothing He will not help with, if we ask Him. In the daily Dua for the protection of the Imam (found after Dua Ahad in the Mafatih) there is an amazing line: "Oh Allah! Make us do all these things without any doubt or confusion, or ostentation or seeking reputation". When we are given positions of authority and greatness, our flaws which have been left uncorrected become apparent, as Imam Ali (AS) says "Wealth and power do not change a man, they reveal him". We need to continually work on ourselves to become better; better people, better Muslims, and indeed, better leaders.

The other leadership is the Divine Leadership, and given that this is the time of the year where we recall the heroes of Karbala, I'd like to look briefly at the Leadership of Imam Hussain (AS). If there is one thing that this entire family has done, it has been to create the most exemplary leaders that the world has ever seen. Imam Hussain (AS), from the time he left Madinah, helped person after person reach the highest points that could be achieved. He made Sulayman and Muslim leaders by sending them as his messengers to Basra and Kufa, respectively. He made Abbas a leader by giving him the command of the army. He made Hurr a leader by allowing him and his son to be among the first to go to the battlefield. He made Ali Asghar and Sakina (or Ruqayya, in some sources) leaders by making their martyrdom the ultimate expression of the cruelty of the opposing army. He made Zainab a leader by making her in-charge of guarding the widows and orphans. He even made the newly-converted Muslims Wahab and his wife leaders by making them examples of quality of belief over quantity of time spent as a Muslim. Even after his own martyrdom, he has made people leaders - people such as Ibrahim, grandson of Imam Musa Kadhim (AS), whose title today is 'Mujaab', the one who grants desires. Ibrahim got this station because of his dedication to visiting the shrine of Imam Hussain (AS), even though it meant losing every limb and eventually being killed.

These are all great leaders, yet there is an interesting commonality that is observed in all these people: Each one of them sacrificed whatever was required to keep the mission alive, and that is what made them who they were. If any of these great people had reserved something for themselves, they would not be revered as leaders today.

If we want to become like them, it is possible. The question is: how committed are we to building and developing ourselves? Even our Imam (AJTFS) is building leaders: he has 313 spots reserved for the best of people. Are we up to the challenge?

11. I 12. J 13. M 14. L
1. G 2. C 3. F 4. A 5. D 6. K 7. N 8. B 9. E 10. H

KIDS CORNER: ANSWERS TO MATCHING PERSONALITIES TO QUOTES:

Mother-Daughter Relationships

By Anonymous Teenager

'My daughter and I rarely see eye to eye...'

'- But my mother never understands where I'm coming from. She says she trusts me but the world out there is unkind. I'm a young adult and she needs to start treating me like one.'

During my adolescence I was fortunate to share the positive relationship I had with my mother. The foundation of our relationship was built on the bond we nurtured. I know, this may sound rather strange because we assume, naturally, that we bond with our children, but as I grew up that bond with my mother improved immensely. Be it making roti's together or even as simple as sitting together, there was a continuous sense of support and closeness - exactly the kind friends share. This was our time to talk and my mother's way of taking an interest in what was 'my life'. We didn't always agree and we had our own perspectives on life, but she reasoned with me and educated me through the teachings of Islam. It is quite sad, but for some teenagers, their relationship with their mother only goes as far as being an authoritative figure, or someone who needs to be informed of the necessary dues, as a result of conflicting interests.



There is a line often used by mothers '...but in my time, there was no need for this'. Yes, you know it. And it's known for discouraging certain behaviours or subtly saying 'no'. My mother always acknowledged that I, as her child, did not have to act or do the things which she did at my age but in fact, that I was created in a time which was different to hers.

Growing up, I wanted to do all sorts of things. That is not to imply my mother let me. She exercised her authority at times and firmly so, but was always open to what I was suggesting and didn't dismiss it simply because it was not the 'done thing'. She refrained from comparing me to what other girls my age were doing and treated me like an individual which made me feel important. She considered whether what I wanted to do was Islamic and based her judgement on that. Contrary to the popular belief amongst teenagers today; by placing restrictions on what you can and can't do and how you behave and how you should behave, are not because your parents don't want you to enjoy your life, but it is their duty to care for your interests and their way of doing so.

None of this would have been possible if my mother had not laid that foundation or thought it was important to do so. Together, we built that medium of communication. In my opinion, not having that connection is the most important cause of frustration between a mother and her daughter today. Neither one of you will know what the other persons' thoughts are if you don't learn to talk about them. And by dismissing those by saying 'she won't understand' will not resolve the aggravation for either one of you. My mother's aim was always to display more kindness towards me than the kindness which was displayed to her. At the time and perhaps she has waited patiently to hear this echo, I did not always understand her reasons, but today I am simply grateful for them.

Stanmore Jaffery's



SJ Sisters Sports - SJ Sisters sports currently runs netball and badminton on a Tuesday evening. Netball is played at Queens School or Bushey Grove, while Badminton is played at Vale Farm leisure centre. Don't worry if you don't play regularly or you're a beginner; we have ample talent to be able to teach and support you from the basics. We also arrange for a netball coach to come and train our girls, as well as Fatema Merali who shares her badminton talent. Future plans are to start Football and Saturday sports Inshallah, so do watch this space.

To register your interest, join the mailing list or if you want to help out, contact Nazira Shah on 07980 767866 or email sisterssports@jafferys.org - Nazira Shah | Head of SJ Sisters Sports

SJ Literary - The Literary team will continue to run the monthly Friday Community Program (FCP), where we will host innovative and inspiring speakers, with content that is engaging and relevant to our community. The team are also currently in discussions with a newly formed United Shia Group, consisting of up to 15 different Shia organisations in and around London, regarding the hosting of a large scale Shia Event at Stanmore in the near future. We continue to welcome ideas and suggestions, and would encourage all members of the community to put forward their thoughts on what they would like to see featured in future.

Qazim Sumar - SJ Literary - E: literary@jafferys.org | M: 07951969275

SJ Social - Stanmore Jaffery's Social have had an incredible few months. We've had record attendances, many people learning new, fun, and unique skills while creating bonds and memories that will last them a lifetime. However, our work is far from complete. The next few months are looking to take things to a whole new level. We will continue to keep the youth club for boys every Friday night from 8pm to 11pm until the month of Muharram. The girls' youth club will also be on every month, with more details of both on our Facebook and Twitter pages. A series of weekly Personal Development classes designed to equip boys and girls with the tools to discover their own strengths and weaknesses and 'know themselves in order to know their Lord' will be held. This will inshallah be happening under Madressa. More details of all the various events that we will be having throughout the year can be found on our Facebook and Twitter pages. Alternatively, if you'd like to sign up to the SJ Mailing List, please send an email to social@jafferys.org to get updates on all events every week.

Ammar Farishta

SJ Spirit - SJ Spirit aims to bring the community together, taking them on the road of increasing spirituality. Plans for the month of Muhurram and Safar include an Unspoken Words event and poetry teaching. This will be an excellent opportunity for the younger generation to learn and express their grief for the trials the Ahlul Bayt suffered. If you have any suggestions for the Spirit team, please don't hesitate to get in touch at sistersspirit@jafferys.org

Faiza Lalji

SJ Relief - During Ramadhan, our community collected approximately £25,000 for Ramadhan Relief, helping provide basic essentials to communities in 15 countries around the world, as well as Syrian refugees in Lebanon. We also collected 2041kg of food – that's over 2 tonnes! – for Sufra, a food bank serving Harrow and Brent. Even though we may no longer be fasting, for some the pangs of hunger remain – and so we ask you to carry on giving, even if it's only picking up one extra item on your weekly shop and depositing it in the labelled yellow collection bins at Mosque. See the website for a list of items required. During Muharram, we plan to run a campaign to help educate children in developing countries. Plans are still being finalised so watch this space!

If you have any ideas or if you would like to volunteer, email relief@jafferys.org
Shahid Jaffer

Recipes By Fatema Jessa

Spicy Baked Potatoes

Now who doesn't like potatoes?! This variation of your standard baked potato is a perfect accompaniment to a curry, or it pairs perfectly with barbequed chicken/meat.

Ingredients

- 6 medium potatoes
- 3 tablespoons of oil
- 1 teaspoon of garlic puree
- 2 teaspoon of mustard seeds (rye)
- 1 teaspoon of ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon of turmeric
- ½ teaspoon of chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon tamarind paste (optional)
- Juice of 1 lime
- Coriander for garnish

Method

1. Preheat oven to 160 degrees (Celsius)
2. Boil potatoes with the skin on. Remove from water when cooked. Skin and cut into big chunks and rinse under cold water. Drain.
3. Combine the rest of the ingredients except the coriander into a bowl and mix.
4. Add the potatoes to the bowl and stir till all the potatoes are coated with the mixture. Pour into a baking dish.
5. Bake for 30 minutes till the potatoes are golden brown. Garnish with coriander before serving.



Butter Chicken

Rich and creamy, it makes a great dish for when you are entertaining.

Ingredients

- 1 spring chicken, cut into small pieces.
(Alternatively, 1 pound of boneless chicken cubes can be used)
- ¼ cup of butter
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons of yoghurt
- 1 tablespoon of tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon of ginger
- 1 teaspoon of garlic
- 1 teaspoon of cumin
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- Chilli powder to taste
- 2 tomatoes, grinded
- 2 cups of double cream
- Pinch of garam masala (optional) Coriander to garnish (optional)

Twix Pudding

Perfect for all the chocolate lovers out there, the twix base and the cocoa custard make a lovely combination.

Ingredients

- 12 Twix chocolate fingers
- 1 pint milk
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons custard powder
- 2 tablespoons cocoa
- 4-5 tablespoons sugar
- 1 small carton whipping cream

Method

1. Break the Twix into small pieces and line them in a shallow heatproof dish
2. Now for the custard. Mix the custard powder, cocoa powder and butter together.
3. Heat the milk on a low flame
4. Take a few tablespoons of the warm milk in a separate cup and dissolve the cocoa mixture in it and mix till there are no lumps.
5. Gradually add the cocoa mixture into the milk - keep stirring whilst you do so, or the custard will become lumpy.
6. Add the sugar to the custard
7. When the custard has reached a medium consistency, remove from the heat and pour over the Twix. Leave to cool.
8. Whip the cream till it's thick and spread over the custard
9. Decorate with chocolate powder or chocolate chips



Method

1. Melt the butter in a saucepan and fry the onions till golden brown on medium heat.
2. Add the chicken, yoghurt, tomato puree, ginger, garlic, cumin, salt and chili powder. Cook until the mixture is dry, approximately 5-7 minutes.
3. Stir in the tomatoes and cook till the chicken is tender. This will take approximately 10 minutes.
4. Lower the heat and slowly add the double cream, stirring constantly whilst pouring.
5. Simmer until the mixture starts to boil. If more gravy is desired, more cream can be added or water will suffice. Sprinkle garam masala and stir.
6. Garnish with coriander. If you'd like to make it more rich, melt a tablespoon of butter and drizzle it onto the chicken before serving.





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