

THE MESSAGE

Marriage

A COMPLETION OF HALF THE FAITH

"And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your hearts. Verily in that are signs for those who reflect." (Qur'an 30:21)



Search for... Marriage in Islam

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Abbreviations Used:

Pbuh/S: Peace be upon him

Sw: Subhaanahu Wa Taa'la, meaning: The Most Exalted/Glorified.

R: May Allah be pleased with him

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EDITORIAL... Marriage: Completing half of my heart

When marriage is spoken of during these "modern" times, Muslims become horrified, picturing images of an arranged marriage, trying to find that "perfect" companion, how much of a financial burden it will become, and so on. The reality is that Islam came to solve these problems, not make them worse. Yet unfortunately we have integrated our local traditions and customs with Islam so that marriage has become a major concern for both men and women rather than a delightful experience.

When living in a sexually free Western society, the Muslim male youth finds many temptations and tests, as a result of mixing with females, which he must face and overcome. He must constantly resist these temptations, which are thrown at him in the streets, in the media, and at work. And so the wisdom of the Prophet (S) echoes on, when he said: "O young men, those among you who can support a wife should marry, for it restrains the eyes from casting (evil glances), and preserves one from immorality..." When seriously considering marriage, you must pose the question to yourself as to just what kind of partner you want and what her qualities should be in order to establish an Islamic and peaceful household.

Marriage is a serious step, and requires the right attitude. A woman married for the wrong reasons can only weaken the Muslim household. Consider that she will be your life-long companion, the rearer of your children. Don't marry her for her worldly wealth, but for her wealth in Islamic wisdom and knowledge. Her status in this life is but illusionary, so choose her for her status in the sight of Allah. Physical beauty is but superficial, but the beauty of Iman is transcendent.

The reverse is also true. A man married for the wrong reasons can only create unforeseen discontent and sheer frustration that may carry on for the rest of the couple's marital lives. Seeking qualities like an established professional, or a handsome man who is "well off," yet with no character or Islamic ideals is against the Sunnah prescribed by our beloved Prophet (S). By having the attitude of "fixing him" or "changing him later" is a big misconception that many women (and men) hold. By starting off with choosing a man who has character, religious convictions and manners is indeed a blessed beginning which can flourish and weave a truly blissful relationship, warts and all! When asking Allah for a spouse, call upon Him by His beautiful names, as He has commanded us: "For Allah are certain and dignified names: therefore call upon Him by them"[7:189]. Ask for a companion who is devout, pious, patient and so on. Be among those who say: "Our Lord, may our spouses and our offspring be a joy to our eyes and make us leaders of the righteous"[25:74].

I cannot provide a better conclusion other than saying that you must put your trust in Allah. You must have trust in His concern for us, and His ability to help us. Allah says: "Put your trust in Allah, for Allah loves those who put their trust in Him"[3:159]. May Allah help us in our sincere efforts in following His commandments and the way of His beloved servant, and provide us with wives and husbands whom He loves. Furthermore, Allah says, "When my servants ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I respond to the prayer of every supplicant when he calls on Me: let them also, with a will, listen to my call, and believe in Me: that they may walk in the right way"[2:186]. Indeed, we can easily deduce from this verse Allah's mercy, so we should seek Allah's help, as he is the Sustainer for every believer. Note that you also have to do your part to seek "the one," and not simply rely on dua without doing anything else. You must endeavour to combine the power of dua, as well as your own actions to fulfill your duty towards marriage.

So go ahead and delve into our latest issue of The Message Magazine, dealing with the topic of Marriage. I also pray to our Almighty Lord to help every brother and sister out there in choosing a spouse that will help complete half of their iman.

Mohammed Adra
Chief editor



SHEIKH'S CORNER

SPECIAL FEATURE

WHY GET MARRIED ?

Assalamu alaikom brothers and sisters

All praise is due to Allah, and peace be upon his prophet Muhammad (S), and his companions, and their followers.

Allah Almighty says, "And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are Signs for those who reflect." [30-21]

Marriage in Islam is a noble practice. This is evident due to the fact that the Prophet (S) disliked for any of the companions or the believers to live life as a single man or woman. He also regarded marriage as part of his sunnah, which is shown in the following hadith, where he addresses the youth by saying, "Oh the nation of teenagers, whoever of you has the ability to get married then they shall get married and who ever cannot, then let them resort to fasting.' Therefore, for all the youth who would like to get married but cannot for whatever the reason may be, you should fast, since fasting dampens the desires.

Islam has also made marriage as a way to please Allah Almighty. He (Swt) made the best of people as those who are the best to their families. Furthermore, the best dollar spent as a Muslim is a dollar to be spent on the family, as it was narrated by the Prophet (S).

There is another major purpose from behind marriage, and that purpose is the same thing that every person seeks, whether it is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. What is it you ask? It is true happiness as a result of marriage.

Happiness is a great goal that mankind has being fighting to achieve for a long time, and marriage is a path in which all believe leads to happiness. However, many people do get married and experience things a lot worse to what they previously perceived about marriage. So what is the problem?

Let us hear the answer from Allah in his holy book. Allah describes the life of those who turn away from his orders and religion:

"But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment."



He will say: "O my Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, while I had sight (before)?"

(Allah) will say: "Like this: Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) came unto you, but you disregarded them, and so this Day, you will be neglected..." (20:124-126)

This is a clear message from the Creator of happiness. We must all strive to observe the rules of Allah in all aspects possible. Consequently this also means an unhappy life for those who do not get married for the right reasons, which is to get closer to Allah (Swt), and to fulfill half of their faith whilst protecting their private parts.

On the other hand, let us learn what He described about the lives of those who obey and follow his orders,

"Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new Life, a life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions." [16-97]

This ayah is quite self-explanatory and unequivocal for those seeking happiness.

My brothers and sisters let us all turn to Allah and observe the sunnah (in this case, marriage) of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (S) to obtain true happiness in this world, and the here-after.

Sheikh Shady Alsuleiman

FINDING FAITH...FINDING

“ Marriage is part of my sunnah (example) and whoever keeps away from it is not from me. ”

Prophet Muhammad (s)

Marriage, one of the happiest days in the life of a believer, is a major milestone for young Muslims, especially those living in the West surrounded by *fitnah* and *fasaad* - evil and corruption.

If our young Muslims do not have a vast reserve of deep faith and high morals; if they are not constantly remembering Allah (Swt), staying away from doubtful matters, eager to do good and keen to establish the *nawaafil* (optional) and *'ibadat* (prescribed devotional rites), then they will inevitably be affected by the pollution of this society - where dating, courting and pre-marital relations are common.

Islam views marriage as a strong bond - *mithaqun ghaleeth*, a challenging commitment in the fullest sense of the word. Marriage is a commitment to life itself, to society, and to the dignified, meaningful survival of the human race. It is a commitment that two Muslims make to one another as well as to Allah (Swt). It is the kind of commitment in which they will find mutual fulfilment, love and peace, compassion and happiness, comfort and hope. All this is because marriage in Islam is regarded first and foremost as a righteous act, an act of responsible devotion.

Encouragement to marry

Islam values and treasures the institution of marriage. Marriage is encouraged, while celibacy and monasticism is discouraged. The Prophet (S) said: "Marriage is part of my *sunnah* (example) and whoever disdains my *sunnah* is not of me."

Story of Rabii'ah ibn Ka'b

For a profound example of how our beloved Prophet (S) encouraged marriage we should review the story of Rabii'ah ibn Ka'b (R). He was young and poor, with no family, wealth or a place to stay. He used to shelter in the *Suffah* (a raised platform) of the *masjid*. He was very fortunate to be in the service of the Prophet (S) and one day the Prophet (S) asked him: "Don't you want to get married Rabii'ah?" "I don't want anything to distract me from your service," he replied. "Moreover, I don't have anything to give as a *mahr* (dowry) to a wife nor any place to accommodate her." The Prophet (S) told him to visit one family requesting to marry their daughter. The Prophet (S) then instructed one man to collect some gold for Rabii'ah to give as a dowry and to buy a sheep for the *walimah* (wedding celebration). The Prophet (S) also asked his wife 'Aa'ishah (R) to give some barley for the family which she did, saying: "By Allah, we do not have any other food." After the wedding, the Prophet (S) gave Rabii'ah a piece of land to set up a home.

Look at the extent to which the Prophet (S) went to assist this worker of his to marry. Instead what we find today is the opposite. So many obstacles are placed in front of marriage – making it harder and harder for our young brothers and sisters to marry.

Foundations for happiness

Marriage plays an important role in the lives of all believers. It can either be a source of blessing or misery. In order to protect married life from falling into misery, Islam lays down the foundations to

NG YOUR OTHER HALF

By Zachariah Matthews

ensure the happiness of a marital home. The most important of these are:

1. Correct Intention (*Niyyah*)

Islam is keen to see that the first and foremost intention behind marriage is the perfection of one's *imaan*, as the Prophet (S) said: "Whoever is granted a righteous wife by Allah, Allah has helped him in half of his faith. So let him fear Allah in the remaining half."

Islam is also keen to see that the purpose behind marriage is to build a Muslim home that will become a sound brick and cornerstone in the structure of the Islamic society. The Quran describes this cherished wish of the believers as: *"And those who say: 'Our Lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the muttaqeen (pious).'"* (25:74)

2. Correct Choice

One of the first things that Islam emphasises is the correct choice of one's life partner. Islam stresses good character and *deen* (religion) as a basic condition for the correct choice and warns of the consequences of striving after beauty, wealth and social status. Islam explains that the beauty of character is more lasting than the beauty of physical appearance and that the wealth of the soul is greater than material wealth.

Beware those who are searching for physical beauty rather than character and wealth rather than quality. Let them submit to the commands of Islam and fight off the satanic desires in their hearts. Let them respond to the call of Allah (Swt) in the verse: *"And marry those among you who are single and (also marry) the saaliheen (pious) of your slaves and maid-servants. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them out of His Bounty. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knowing."* (24:32)

3. Correct Personality

A happy marriage depends on the free will, intentions and attitudes of the husband and wife. If both of them enter into marriage with the sole purpose of pleasing their Lord, Allah (Swt), the road ahead can only be pleasant and prosperous. (This is also discussed in Sheikh Shady's article.)

Both husband and wife have duties and rights - but the best of them are those who perform their duties without insisting on their rights.

Duties of a husband

The husband's personality plays a vital role in married

life. He must be the ideal model from whom his wife feels determination and affection. He must be wise – capable of weighing matters in the Islamic perspective and giving them their rightful place.

The way a husband treats his wife is a test of his moral worth. The Prophet (S) said: "The best of you are those who are best to their wives."

As a husband you have a duty to support your wife. You should provide her with food, a home to live in, clothing to wear and most importantly with education. Educated mothers will produce an educated nation.

You have the overall duty to manage the house. The Prophet (S) said: "Each one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock... A man is the *mas'ool* (responsible person) in his family, and will be questioned about those under his care. A woman is responsible for the household of her husband and she will be questioned about those under her care..."

The Prophet (S) also helped with household work. There is nothing in Islam, which says that men do not have to help out at home.

Duties and rights of a wife

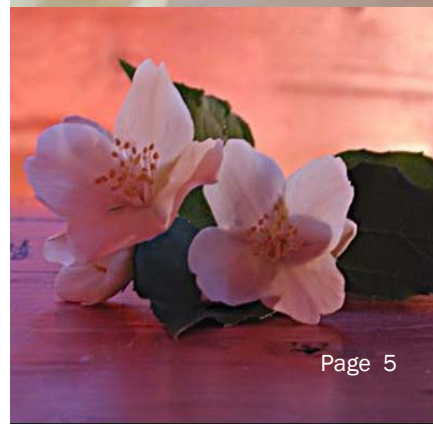
A wife has a duty to obey her husband. The Prophet (S) said: "If a woman performs the five daily *salaah*, fasts in the month of Ramadaan, preserves her chastity and obeys her husband, say to her: 'Enter *Jannah* through whichever of its gates she pleases'." There is of course no obedience in what Allah and His Messenger has prohibited.

She has the right to be consulted and express her views. The leadership responsibility given to the husband is not a position of dictatorship. The principle of *shura* (mutual consultation) applies just as equally in the family as it does in the Islamic parliament.

The golden rule should always apply - she must recognise that the husband is responsible for running the family while she has responsibility for those under her care.

She has the right to retain her own name. She also has the right to own, inherit and use property as she wishes.

Finally, marriage is one of the most crucial turning points in the life of believers, and they should present (for the Islamic cause) model examples of a successful married life.



Public Affection:

Islam is a religion of peace, mercy and love. Not surprisingly, the well-regarded institution of marriage would also carry similar overtones of love and tranquility. Indeed, Allah (Swt) says: "He created for you mates from among yourselves so that you can seek comfort in them and He has placed between you affection and mercy." [Sûrah al-Rûm: 21] Marriage provides a stable avenue for the satisfying of a person's procreational instinct, and this fulfillment plays a large part in their overall health and well-being.

However, the impact of Western media upon society's perception of marriage cannot be ignored. TV shows like *Desperate Housewives* portray marriage as being dull, restrictive and monotonous. Although our noble Deen refutes such ridiculous assumptions, Muslims are also part of society's thoughts, sentiments and values, so we as a community are affected by this negative stereotype. Affection between married couples is an exception to the rule. Why? They are mainly arguing about petty domestic issues, or their partner's latest extra-marital affair. To be fair, there are shows that promote happy marital relations such as *Seventh Heaven* and the like, but it is safe to say that family-friendly shows aren't the most popular. Pre-marital relations such



as illicit boyfriend-girlfriend relations are shown to be far more exciting and full of passion, whereas marriage comes along and deadens the otherwise adoring relationship.

Islam rejects this notion of love being at its peak before marriage, and then inevitably sinking to a pitiful decline as marriage progresses. Rather, love is nurtured and increased within the secure boundaries of marriage. A successful marriage, as with any other relationship, takes hard work, but the results are well worth the effort. A defining factor in the success of a marriage is the amount of affection given and received.

Affection between Muslim couples can occur either within the public sphere or the private sphere. Some cultures frown upon married Muslim couples holding hands in public, but Islamically this gesture of tenderness is allowed. Blissfully happy newlywed couples bear the brunt of this disapproval, when they have every right to show their love for their partner! Bearing in mind, of course, that Muslims place the concept of modesty (*haya*) in high esteem, Muslim couples should therefore refrain from behaving inappropriately in public. Overt expressions of affection such as kissing and the like are best left behind closed doors. Walking side by side with one's spouse arm-in-arm

Behind and Beyond Closed Doors

or holding his or her hand, however, are within the guidelines of Islam.

Within the privacy of their homes, Muslim couples are encouraged to be affectionate and tender towards one another. The Prophet himself was very loving towards his wives – he did not hit any of them, nor did he verbally abuse them. On the contrary, he encouraged Muslim men to be tender towards their wives. It has been narrated from the Prophet that he said: "The best amongst you is the one who is best to his wives and I am the best of you to my wives". The Beloved Prophet also had a close relationship with his wives, to the extent to which he would play with them, be mild-mannered toward them and even race with 'A'isha (ra), the mother of the believers! She said: "Allah's Messenger raced me and I beat him; that was before I gained weight. Later I raced him when I had put on some weight, so he beat me and said: "This was (in return) for that (time when you had beaten

to cry because she had a slow camel to ride on, and could not keep up with him. The Prophet did not belittle her for crying – rather, he simply brought her another camel, comforted her, dried her tears, and gave her his knee to stand on, so that she could climb upon the camel. This incredible display of affection and gentleness came from the best of men, as an example to the generations that have come after him.

The importance of affection towards one's spouse cannot be overstated. Affection helps to sustain a marriage through difficult times. Life is full of trials and tribulations, and it is inevitable that a Muslim couple will argue. Marriage does not involve couples giving their whole-hearted agreement to every single issue. Such an approach is not only unrealistic, but potentially harmful. Couples who try their hardest to avoid upsetting their partner by insincerely agreeing to what their partners want will only breed feelings of resentment.



me)". In addition to this, the Prophet, after praying 'Isha would spend some of his evening chatting with his wives before sleeping, encouraging an environment of love and affection.

Following in the footsteps of the Beloved Prophet, Muslims should do their best to be loving towards their partners. Whether it be through physical acts of affection, or through using loving nicknames for their partners, it is the genuine desire to make them feel just that extra special that matters. Simple acts such as leaving a flower on your wife's dressing table, or cooking your husband's favourite dish, can lift up their spirits. Very often, married couples become caught up in the daily grind of caring for children and paying the bills, consequently neglecting to care for one another. Taking the time and effort to bring a smile to your partner's face is not only an act of charity, but can greatly enhance your marital relationship. A husband who does his best to be sensitive towards the needs of his wife, no matter how small, is truly following the example of the Prophet. The Prophet's wife, Sofia, began

Rather than avoiding conflict out of fear of upsetting the other party, developing conflict resolution skills is a must - and a healthy dose of tender loving care does wonders for a relationship. The ayah: [They (women) are your garments and ye (men) are their garments.] (Al-Baqarah 2:187) beautifully indicates the comfort and protection a husband and wife find in one another, and this is especially important during times of hardship. It is unfortunate that in some Muslim households, the only times when a husband and a wife directly address each other is when something goes wrong. In such scenarios, loving words are clearly not exchanged! This is not the way of the Prophet. Muslims should aspire to emulate his actions not only in acts of worship, but also in how he lived his everyday life as a loving spouse. Marriage is such an important part of a Muslim's life, and being more affectionate to one's partner will not only bring their pleasure, but the pleasure of Allah Almighty.

Narrated by Sahl Bin Sa'd: The Prophet (S) said to a man, "Marry, even with (a Mahr equal to) an iron ring." (Sahih Bukhari)

Yes, you have heard it all before from various friends, authority figures, and in some of the other articles in this magazine - get married (preferably young), or fast instead. That may have sounded quite blunt; however, the hadith above inspired me to compile an interview with a young Muslim couple, so that all the single ones out there can get a small taste of what marriage is like first-hand, and what is expected from it. Hence, **The Message Magazine** hit the road and found a young Muslim couple who were willing to spill the beans. For privacy reasons, our interviewees wish to remain anonymous, so we will refer to them as Ali and Aisha.

Q: As a Muslim youth living in this day and age in Australia, what drove you to search for "the one?"

Ali: Don't get me wrong, I loved living with my parents and more importantly living off them (laughs). But in saying that, I think there comes a time in everyone's life that you find yourself wanting and looking to share your inner thoughts, feelings and intimacy with someone on a really deep level, and I think I reached that stage in my life a couple of years ago.

Aisha: It would be surprising to most to say that I never really went out looking for the one at all. Most of my

friends around me were all extremely excited about meeting the one and would get upset if a close friend found their partner before they did. It somehow represented how beautiful, intelligent and attractive a girl was amongst her peers. I was looking forward to a career overseas in Lebanon or UAE, as my uncle lives there and I thought I might have a shot at being allowed by my parents to do something out of the ordinary. Maybe start designing a few things or even writing a book, but 'the one' came along, and I truly believe that once you stop thinking about the one, it will come right up to you when you least expect it, alhamdulillah.

Q: How did you meet your wife/husband?

Aisha: I was on my way to University. The girls that I knew would always catch the same carriage everyday. I used to get on at Yagoona and was always the first one to get on the train. At Wiley Park, a young guy gets on. He sat across from me because he knew all the girls from high school. He was reading a two week old newspaper which made me laugh. It was really strange, this guy I had never met before made me

laugh from Wiley Park until Redfern. I remember having a moment of serendipity and thought to myself *I'm going to marry this guy*. Then my conscious took over and said *yeah right*, as if I will ever get married. How Lebanese!

Ali: Yep, that's how it happened (laughs)! Adding to that, as I got off the train at Redfern station, I forgot about this girl thinking I would never see her again. That's until a couple days later, when I walked into one of my classes at uni, she was there... doing the same subject. Her first words were, "Aren't you that weird guy on the train who was reading that two week old newspaper?" To cut a long story short, soon afterwards, I found myself asking for her hand and today we find ourselves as husband as wife... Alhamdulillah.

Q: Were there obstacles faced (if any) on your quest for matrimony?

Ali: To be honest, I didn't see that many major obstacles. What I did see however, was this whole process of marriage and asking for a girl's hand quite a daunting experience. I will never forget the thoughts

that went through my head the day I went over to ask for her hand. Things like: I bet you her father had a baseball bat tucked away somewhere just waiting for the right moment to use it or I wonder whether her mum had cooked something for me because I'm really hungry, and other really stupid thoughts. Looking back at it all, I think I made it seem like such a daunting thing. It was all in my head, it wasn't really the case at all.

Aisha: Before we got engaged it was very difficult for me to ever imagine myself getting married; especially to my husband. He was a great guy, but just a friend. He had thought of other girls, and likewise for me. I had had numerous suitors that just made me laugh and also a few serious encounters that made it difficult to move on. Once we decided to go through with it, it was pretty much smooth sailing. Two of my sisters were already married, so my parents were not new to the concept. I think his parents 'expected' him to marry within the family. His older brother had just fought long and hard to marry outside of the family and for my husband to do the same was a major blow. When we got engaged, my fiancé left for Hajj, this was both the most difficult period, and the best. I was distraught when he left but did not want to show my emotions. Because we had mutual friends, we did not want to announce our engagement to everyone until we were settled, so I did not even get to go to the airport; this was difficult. The best part of this was when he returned. I remember sitting with my mother at his place waiting for him to come and greet us. I was so nervous. Our mothers were not getting along which made it worse, but when he walked into the room, I had a

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strange feeling of butterflies in my stomach. It was the third time I had felt this since I had met him and now I knew that I had actually missed him. It was a great feeling to know that he made me feel that way.

Q: What were the ideal qualities that you looked for in your wife/husband?

Aisha: I knew the qualities that my father had and he was the type of man I admired. When I met my husband, he really did begin to build the qualities that I wanted in my partner; piety, humorous, he was care-free but also serious in the times it was needed. When we were getting to know each other, I was very worried that we were just not going to get along with each other. Did this guy have a deeper side that I was not seeing? We were talking about our dreams and I told my fiancé about my wish to work overseas; to my surprise he reciprocated and told me he had always dreamt of this too. I had never known this about him and it was a side of him I was getting to know slowly that I really enjoyed. One thing I learnt from the beginning and through Istikharah was not to assume anything about anyone; there is much more to a person than they first let on. Being engaged and Katib lktab is a great way to know more about a

person. I realised we meshed on a different level that made me learn more about myself and what I expected in a person. My husband possesses great qualities; honesty, he is trust worthy and has no pride whatsoever, he is strong, sensible and the funniest person I have ever met. These are most definitely the qualities that are ideal.

about their situation. I was only 23 when I got married. A lot of my school friends were married by the time we hit year 12; to them I was too old to get married. My university friends were married by third and fourth year. One of my elder sisters married at 27, and my 29 year old sister is not married. All of my non-Muslim friends are still single. Being Muslim indicates a different lifestyle. If young men feel they will commit haram, they should get married no doubt about it unless they can learn self control and discipline which is extremely difficult. Younger girls should look at their own maturity, as most chaste females will not face this difficulty unless they have been married and divorced. *Nasib* or destiny will happen at any age, but it is best to talk to a parent or friend who is married, or speak to a Muslim counsellor or sheikh who can tell you a little more about marriage before you jump into the deep end. The way marriage is portrayed on TV is very different to the way a Muslim marriage is implemented. The best thing is to keep your options open, do not go searching for marriage alone, but do not close any doors on it either.

Q: Have you attended or undertaken any sort of pre-marital preparation course? What are some of the responsibilities of marriage that are essential to be

then; women should know this and respect this part of their husband. Similarly, in order for men to receive this respect, they should understand that women are highly emotional (no man will understand this until they are married, and women may not know this about themselves until they get married). Allah (Swt) created women highly emotional, to be able to tend to their baby in the middle of the night and wake up without a flinch. Finally, women and men alike should treat each other with respect as Islam tells you to, never degrade your partner in public, and make sure you fulfil each others needs in every way possible. Both parties have left a home and need time adjust, therefore patience is the key.

Q: Describe the setting for your wedding.

Ali: The day of our marriage didn't really go to plan. I knew it was going to be a long day when the photographer dropped his camera and broke it. He had to drive back to his shop and get his spare. That meant we were about two hours behind schedule. It gave me time however, to watch the end of the cricket on T.V. (laughs)

It didn't get much better at the wedding reception. They served us things we didn't order, and they were quite rude about it all as well. However, even though the day didn't go to plan, I still wouldn't change a second of it. Just standing there next to my new wife made all these things just disappear...it's all part of

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person. I realised we meshed on a different level that made me learn more about myself and what I expected in a person. My husband possesses great qualities; honesty, he is trust worthy and has no pride whatsoever, he is strong, sensible and the funniest person I have ever met. These are most definitely the qualities that are ideal.

Ali: As for me, in my entire life I only had guy friends, where everywhere weekend I was with them. I was having so much fun with them that I never really saw the need to think about getting married, settling down or what qualities I was looking for in a wife. I guess, you can't really help who you fall for. Your heart either opens up to them or it doesn't. The only real quality my wife needed to have was to be a pious Muslimah with Islamic ideals; the rest I left up to my heart to decide.

Q: With the rising rate of divorce, do you advise the young people to get married early?

Ali: Since getting married, I never really thought much about divorce. In every marriage there is a chance it might end up in divorce. However, you should never get involved in a marriage thinking it will end up that way. Remember, our lives were written for us 50,000 years before the creation of Adam, so what is written for us cannot be changed. All we can say is Alhamdulillah and move on.

Aisha: I can not advise a person unless I know more

taught to the Muslim Youth?

Aisha: My husband and I did not undertake any pre-marital course. On our engagement one of our friends gave us a whole lot of Islamic books about marriage in Islam which was one of the best gifts we received. We read through these books which gave me an outline of the way Islam perceives marriage. Marriage is not easy and nobody I know warned me of this. It really does require a lot of patience. For the youth who live at home with their parents, moving out of home is a major life change in itself. Being patient has to be the most important aspect of marriage that I can think of: being patient with each other and in the way we live. Even though we may have the same background, each person's way of life is different and we have to keep that in mind. A person who reads the Quran and follows Hadith will never have a problem in marriage life; but being realistic, nobody is perfect.

Ali: Yeah, I guess that you have to try your best to be patient with your partner. The husband and wife have rights over each other; it's a two way relationship no matter what anybody tells you. Islam is fair and just. My advice is to read the Muslim marriage guide. It is the best way marriage can be explained. Read it before you get married, and then read it six months after you get married. You will be surprised at how little you implement and how hard it is to do such things. Another important factor that I will briefly mention is the difference between men and women. Men will need time to themselves every now and


the experience of getting married.

Aisha: Our wedding day was a little different. My family did not mind the way we chose to do our wedding; although my mother did want to have my wedding dance. My husband's mother and family preferred a mixed wedding. Being quite religious my husband originally wanted a female only wedding. As not all parties agreed, we had to think up something different. We had dinner at a restaurant, and invited close family and friends (about 100 people). There was only anasheed and no dancing was permitted. We had a three course meal, my husband read some Quran, my brother-in-law gave anasheed, my sisters made a great PowerPoint presentation, we cut a cake, exchanged wedding bands, gave speeches and left. It was a very romantic occasion but we tried to make it as Islamic as possible. We did everything we dreamed of for a wedding, as we knew that if we did not do so, we might regret it later. We just had to be creative with the way we planned it. I still got to make my own favours and stationary and we planned everything to detail. I feel it is important to celebrate, but in an Islamic atmosphere.

Many thanks to our interviewees for sharing a part of their lives together. Let us know what you think of this interview by emailing us at:

magazine@uma.org.au

Your brother in Islam
Hesham Mourad



The Wedding of Fatima (r)

THE MARRIAGE OF THE PROPHET'S DAUGHTER

In Madina, she became 18yrs old, so the men starting coming to her father requesting Fatima in marriage. They all wanted to be related to the Prophet (S). Abu Bakr, then Umar ibn alKhattab, then Abdul Rahman ibn Auf all came asking for Fatima's hand in marriage; however, the Prophet turned them back in a nice way.

The Ansar then started telling Ali, "Why don't you request Fatima." He said, "I don't have much." They said, "But the Prophet loves you." So he went and sat in front of the Prophet peace be upon him and did not say a word. The Prophet peace be upon him asked, "Why are you silent O Ali?" He did not say anything. The Prophet peace be upon him said, "Maybe you came to ask for Fatima's hand in marriage?" He said, "Yes that is it, that is it." The Prophet peace be upon him said, "Do you have anything to marry her with?" He replied, "No O messenger of Allah." The Prophet peace be upon him answered back, "Do you not have a shield that I gave you once?" He said "Yes, but it is not worth more than 250 Dirham." The Prophet peace be upon him finally replied, "I will let you marry her with it."

Ali then brought the shield to the Prophet peace be upon him, and the Prophet (S) sold it for him and came with 250 dirham. He then gave a portion of it to Bilal and said, "O Bilal, buy with this some perfume for Fatima." Afterwards, he gave the rest of the money to Ummu Salama and said, 'Buy for Fatima the clothes and necessities of a bride.' See how the Prophet peace be upon him was dealing with this, his daughter was going to be a bride!

Ali came after a day or two and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I paid the mahr, so when am I going to marry Fatima?" (He was embarrassed). The Prophet peace be

upon him replied, 'Today if you want.' He said, 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah.' So they invited the people and slaughtered an animal for a feast. The Prophet peace be upon him said, "If a person comes to you of whom you are satisfied with his deen and his character then get him married, if you do not there will be fitnah on the earth and great fasaad (evil)'. This is in our time now.

Fatima was riding on a camel, and Uthman was directing it. The sahaba had their swords raised up as a form of celebration, and the women were surrounding Fatima, whilst some anasheed were being sung. Afterwards, Ali and Fatima entered their simple house which was further out from the Madina (not in the city center), because that was all Ali could afford. As they were about to enter, the Prophet said, 'O Ali don't get up to anything (don't get close to her) until I come to you.' Ali said, 'So I sat on one side of the house and Fatima sat on the other side.' The Prophet came and placed his hand on her hand, and he began to make dua. He said, "O Allah, Fatima is a piece of me. O Allah, Fatima is beloved to my heart. O Allah, Ali is my brother and the most beloved to me. O Allah give them Baraka (an increase in all that is good) and place on them baraka and unite them on good. O Ali place your hand on Fatima's head and say, 'O Allah I ask you for the good in her, and for the good that she was created for, and I seek refuge in you from her evil, and the evil that she was created for,' O Ali, may Allah place baraka among you." The Prophet peace be upon him then got up to leave and before closing the door, he said to them, 'How about you both get up and pray two rakat together.'

This was the start of their blessed marriage.

Reference:

Translation of a talk by Amr Khalid in Arabic by Mona Soueid



“WHY DOES DADDY KEEP HITTING MUMMY?”

An Islamic Perspective on Domestic Violence

She lays on the ground, bleeding, broken. The shadow of her attacker recedes in the darkness, followed by the tattered remnants of her security and honour. Blood has replaced her tears, and harsh pain has choked the cries from her throat. Bruises cover her body, but none scar her so deep as the one on her heart. There she lays, your sister, a Muslimah. She is alone, and when the strength to rise returns to her she will pull herself up, alone. She will wash and bandage her wounds. Then humbly, meekly apologize to her attacker, her husband.

She is your sister, my people, and she is shunned by us all. She is the victim of an Ummah that does not understand: the prey of a man that feels baseball bats is the Sunnah of our Beloved Prophet (s). "Men are the maintainers and protectors of the women, because Allah has given more (strength) to one than the other, and because they support them from their means." (4:34)

There is a great injustice that has reared its head in the homes of many Muslims. It is an injustice that destroys people like the worst of tyranny. Oppression, suppression, and ultimately repression are the result of this horrid fact, and it is a fact. However, more often than not, we find ourselves forgetting its very existence and eventually denying its reality. This tyranny is not just the battery of women; rather, it is a precursor to that abuse. It is the blatant disregard for the foundation of marriage that The Most Wise has pre-

scribed.

It may seem that the above statement is contradicted by reality. We are bombarded by letters, articles, speeches, and books about marriage and the rights that the parties receive as a result of this union. However, more often than not, there is a conspicuous lack of emphasis placed on the rights that a wife is entitled to receive due to the marriage. This void in our understanding, or in the understanding of some men, readily translates itself into the gruesome accounts that we hear regarding battery from all over the Muslim world. Perhaps then, it is more our fault that this tyranny is occurring. Perhaps, we are the ones to blame for not disseminating the knowledge, the freedom. Perhaps, rather, when we spread the word of our Lord we will see a change, "Men are the maintainers and protectors of the women, because Allah has given more (strength) to one than the other, and because they support them from their means." (4:34)

In confronting the question of what responsibilities men owe to women, it is found that this ayah embodies the Islamic answer: "Men are the maintainers and protectors of the women." It is so simple. In marriage, it is the OBLIGATION of the man (the right that the wife can legally enforce on her spouse) to take care of her. He must provide for her food, clothing, education, and all other physical needs for herself and the household. He must protect her in the face of danger. He must act as a father to the children. If he does not do these things, then it is a more than sufficient grounds for a divorce. These are the basic rights that are

conferred upon the individual when entering a marriage.

It goes deeper.

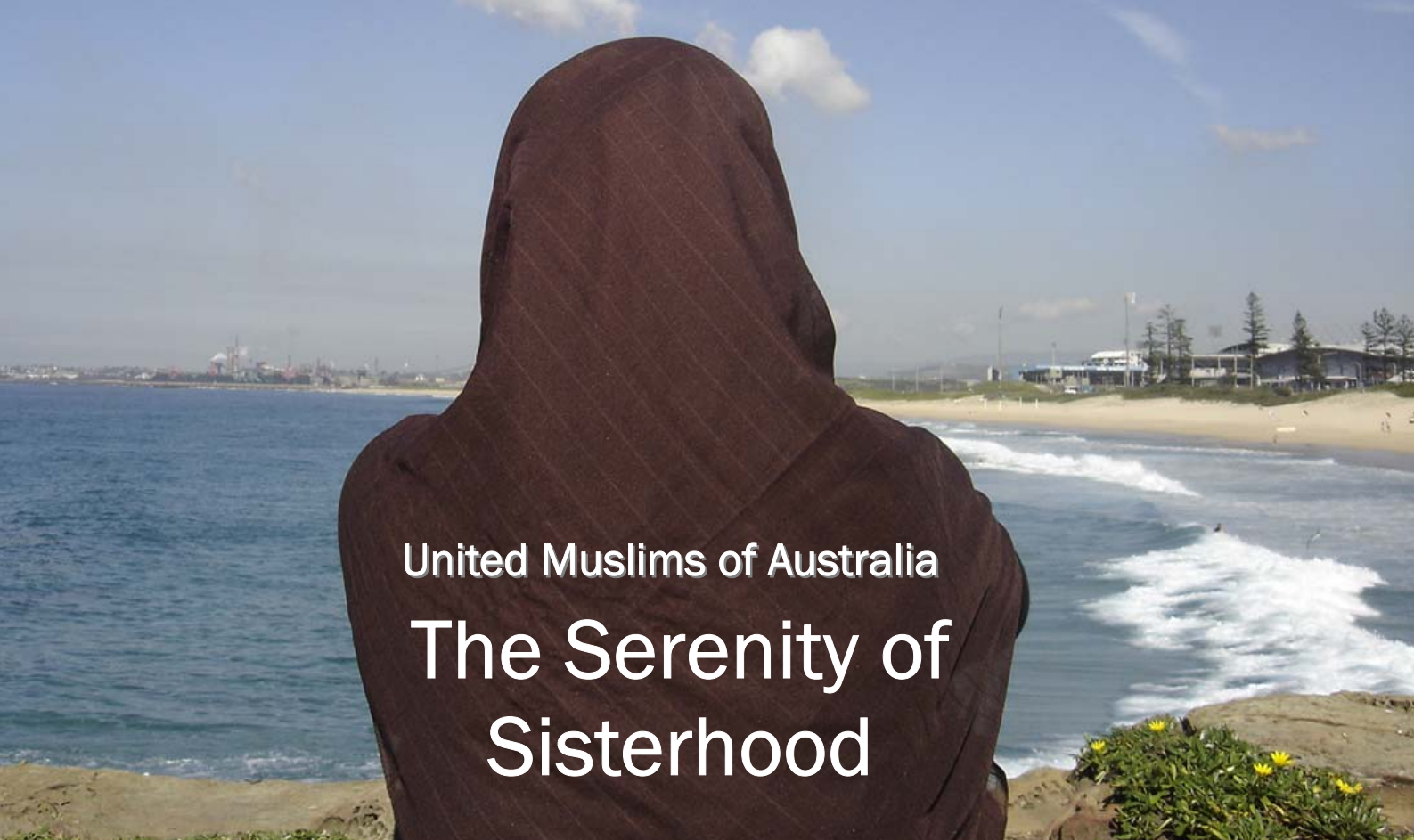
The Prophet (s) once described women as a delicate ornament vase, and treated them accordingly. This does not mean that he looked down on them. Rather, he maintained them in a deeper sense than the superficial one that we are so familiar with. Maintaining is more than the immense responsibility of providing for the physical needs; rather, it is the great obligation to provide for the emotional ones.

In addition, the Prophet (s) has said that the best Muslim man is the one who is best to his wife (Bukhari). The ordinance, therefore, is clear and needs to be emphasized. Men are meant to cater to the needs of the wife, and aid whenever possible. Kindness to the wife has been emphasized over and over by Prophet (s). It is even said that putting a morsel of food into the mouth of one's wife out of love may be viewed as charity.

This is exactly what women should expect of their men. This is what men should expect from themselves. It is the job of the husband to remember that they are indeed the captain of the helm; but who would argue that the ship is not of equal importance, if not more important?

If you would like to know more about domestic violence or any other related issue please contact Hanan Dover on 0422 908 323.

“A WOMAN IS BEATEN ONCE EVERY NINE SECONDS IN AMERICA ALONE— THE PERPETRATORS OF THESE ACTS ARE INCREASINGLY FOUND TO BE MUSLIM MEN”.



United Muslims of Australia

The Serenity of Sisterhood

"On the Day of Judgment, Allah, the Most High, will announce, 'Where are those who love each other for the sake of My pleasure? This day I am going to shelter them in the shade provided by Me. Today there is no shade except My shade.' (Muslim)"

Since its inception in 2001 the UMA Sisterhood has strived in its entire efforts to the cause of uniting Muslim Sisters to share, increase and strengthen a special deeper bond between one another based on the unyielding principles of Sincerity, Sisterhood and Sacrifice for the sake and pleasure of Allah (swt). In this current environment of heightened and compounding global Islamic awareness, our Muslimah easily gets trapped in seeking to only increase and perfect her personal Iman, Prayer, Quranic Recitation, Sunnan practices, Islamic Pillars, family duties, social obligations and the like but neglects another fundamental aspect, being Sisterhood.

This aspect goes beyond the face of Islam and ventures deep into the hearts of all that are united in their involvement. This relationship is unique to Muslim Sisters and the UMA Sisterhood is a medium to help experience what no other social relationship or connection on earth can claim to experience.

The UMA Sisterhood comes together every Saturday in growing numbers at the UMA Centre seeking Islamic knowledge and interaction under safe Islamic Sisters only environments.

The UMA Sisterhood is entirely run by dedi-

cated and tireless volunteers who are appreciative that Allah (swt) has given them an opportunity to work for him and uphold his great religion (deen). They meet and depart purely for his love, mercy, blessings and pleasure. We promote all Sisters to become involved, attend regularly, reach out to female family and friends and experience the true peace that only comes with being a Muslimah.

Forging life changing and lasting friendships amongst one another that extends to personal and family lives. The issue of Sisterhood for all involved has become practiced in all its facets even outside scheduled gatherings and has grown into a truly large and extended family whereby Sisters within the UMA Sisterhood constantly maintain their ties amongst each other extending to weddings, births, deaths, graduations, personal visits, coffees and public lectures just to name a few.

The gatherings have you acquire and utilise teachings, wisdoms and a greater sense of belonging which can only continue to enhance greater cohesion and strengthen the fabric of the Muslim Ummah. After all it is the strength of the Sisterhood that the Islamic Ummah gazes at as the yardstick to measure its future prominence. The UMA Sisterhood is located at the UMA Centre 69 Corydon Street, Lakemba NSW.

THE SISTERS WEEKLY PROGRAM ON SATURDAYS IS AS FOLLOWS:

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12.00:1.00:	Tae Kwon Do Classes \$5/session or \$15 monthly
12.30-1.30:	Beginners Arabic Classes Contact: 0414 575 966
1.15-2.00:	Body Toning Classes (\$15 monthly or \$10 for members)
1.30-4.30:	Youth Program Contact: 0415 301 184
1:30-3:00:	Intermediate Tajweed Classes Contact: 0401 571 382
2.30-3.30:	Beginners Tajweed Classes Contact: 0414 228 224
3.00-3.30:	Storytelling/ Significant Personalities in Islam
3.30-4.30:	Lesson by Sheikh Shady and Respected Guest Speakers
5.00-6.00:	Socialise with Other Sisters

THE SISTERS WEEKLY PROGRAM ON WEDNESDAYS IS AS FOLLOWS:

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By Sheikh Shady Al-Suleiman



FOR KNOWLEDGE SEEKERS

Tuesday

"Creed"

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AIMING TO FIN

Excuse me! Will you marry me?

In such a stressful time; a time of confusion, emotions, uncertainty and a wide eyed look on to this world, a brother or sister will feel the pressure of being single. It is a time of anxiety and much indecisiveness, a time when the tears are shed and the hearts are squeezed, a time of excitement varying from the heights of mountains with their fresh snowy peaks and the lows of the bottomless dark pits. Times when the single person wishes they could just wake up and find themselves already married and not have to worry about the in between! But alas, we must all go through this stage of our lives and it will carry for us many lessons which we will one day pass on to our children.

How to court the girl you want, and how one should approach a person who they are interested in marrying is one of the first questions of the odyssey of marriage. Don't you just wish there was an 'Idiot's Guide to Islamic Proposals' at your local bookstore sometimes?

But before we attempt to answer this important question, we have to understand something from the onset. Let it be known that there is no ruling in Islam against females proposing to males. Traditionally, it is the male that asks for the female's hand but there are many examples in the Sunnah where companions actually offered their daughters to other companions. Actually, in the Seerah, it was Khadijah the Prophet Muhammad's first ever wife who proposed to him when he was 25 and not the other way around. As a matter of fact if the reader can recollect in the Quran from Surat Al Qasas, it was also Prophet Moses who was proposed to by his father in law and not the other way around. So it can work both ways. However don't forget that there aren't people like Muhammad and Moses (peace be upon them both) these days so the sisters have to be very careful if they want their fathers to do that.

Having said that, I will turn my attention in advice to the brothers because they are expected to 'make things happen' these days. This doesn't mean that sisters can't read this article. No, I also recommend that sisters read this advice to receive some insight into what constitutes a sound approach to this matter by their suitor insha Allah.

Ok my dear brother, are you ready? You better be!

My young brother, if you are considering marriage at this stage of your life and you long for that partner in life that will fill your life with joy and grant you your new Muslim family, you must realise something important from now. As a young single Muslim male, it's only natural for you to be shy. That's fine and it's a sign of Iman. However, you must remember not to over do this embarrassment business, which will be explained.

If you want to get married, then you have to be a man and you have to learn to be a man as soon as possible. Being *too* shy is something that will hold you back from so many good things in life, including a proper proposal. No woman wants to marry a 'boy' because a 'boy' can't take care of himself let alone others, especially his wife. Children don't get married or make proposals, *men* do. So you have to get over that over-shy stage and realise that marriage requires a sense of manhood.

This has so many implications in the short and long run for which one can speak for ever. What manhood attributes are we talking about here? Even men like the Messenger were shy, so what are we referring to?

One of the attributes of a man that I allude to is that the man thinks about marriage and the girl in mind... and thinks hard. When he sits to think about this matter, he takes his time, he asks for advice from credible sources, he compares his thought

process and decision making with the text of the Quran and Sunnah, he prays his istikhaarah and he then makes his decision on solid, practical grounds.

He understands the purpose behind marriage, he knows why he wants to get married, he understand what it involves, he understands his responsibilities, he has prepared himself mentally for what it involves and he knows what to expect. Also, once a brother has decided on a particular sister he should also know why he has chosen that sister, for what particular qualities, whether he perceives that she will be a good mother and an obedient wife to Allah and to him. Why her of all the girls, what makes her the one? These are serious questions that must be addressed for your sake and hers, so you must be sure about these things before you commit to any marriage.

The last thing a young sister wants is for the hasty and over excited suitor to do a 360 out of the blue in the middle of an engagement and change his mind unannounced... and how many times has that happened? A man, my dear brother, does not do that. Another thing a sister does not want is someone who can't make up his mind and uses every excuse under the sun to cover this up. A man does not work from dreamed whims and spontaneous desires because 1) others can convince him out of whims in 5 minutes and 2) desires change all the time around the clock. Marriage is too important a process to be taken lightly like that.

My dear young man, you must understand that you are not the first and last person to propose or get married. It is a natural and universal way of life for a man to get married to a woman. That is how life has been operating for the last few thousands of years. In other words, there should be no reason in the world to feel 'bad' or 'guilty' because you actually want to marry someone!

For this reason, it is not a *crime* to actually confront

ND "THE ONE"

How to court the girl you want

By: Muhammad Khodr

Image reference: www.s0.511etq1r1.www
www.htmlpraha.cz

your father in law in an appropriate manner and discuss the issue with him and let him know of your intentions. A humbling and nerve wrecking experience it may be, but believe you me, he will not hurt you! There is no need to feel anything negative – you're not committing a crime! Remember, you have to be man enough.

Ok, so we will assume insha Allah that all of that is in working order; so how to do propose? How do you court the girl you want, and how should you approach that special girl you are interested in marrying?

Well, there is no real step by step way of approaching such a matter. Subhan Allah as we all know, there is as much diversity in this life as there is in the number of human beings, so to narrow down all this beautiful diversity and randomness of life into a single line of behaviour would be unwise and impractical.

However, opinions are many but the truth is one. There may be many ways of approaching the manner but some rules stay and apply in all circumstances, all time. These rules include: no free time and unlawful communication between male and female (Khalwa), mandatory rules of going through a Mahram, rules of not proposing on behalf of another, rules of no touching under any circumstance between male and female before marriage, and so forth.

As for the manner of approaching the female, this can occur in various ways. The brother may lay eyes on a sister for the first time: in the street, at TAFE or university, in a shopping centre, at work, in a community event (dinners, lectures) or any other venue where males and females generally meet. After this, a natural spark of interest may arise.

The brother can endeavour to find out the name of this sister through appropriate ways, and the opportunities for this are endless, but the brother has to be patient – the girl will not evaporate into thin air overnight. He can do that through the institution she

attends or works in, through the friends that she was with at the time, or through other means that present themselves at the time.

Once he knows what her name is, he can work with this information and speak to family friends and relatives who he can count on to obtain more information – which includes a contact number of her Mahram. These family friends or relatives must be responsible Muslims who won't carry this information and make it headline news in the community. Through this he can obtain the home phone number, names of her parents and family members and a bit of background information about the family to get a general feel for everything.

Information like this is very easy to obtain...which actually may be a scary thing. However, if every Muslim is responsible and is aware of the dangers of Ghiba and saying what is not necessary to people who have nothing to do with the matter, then insha Allah it should be fine. It is for this reason that such information should not be given to or received from anyone who is not trusted for their ability to keep a secret and basically keep a lid on things for the time being. In the past, this matter has caused so much trouble and you don't need that in your delicate time whilst getting to know a sister.

Once you have the information that satisfies the believer in you, then you are ready to make that important call to the family. Usually, mum makes that call to the mother of lady, and requests to come over for a 'cup of coffee.' Lebanese mothers usually know what 'a cup of coffee' means but in other nationalities and cultures it may be different. For this reason, since this is nothing strictly Islamic, there is no set way to let parents know – it is open for cultures and traditions to play their part. However, under no conditions do cultures or traditions over power the religion and break any of the rules of Islam.

It is after that initial nerve-wrecking visit by the man and his parents to the sister's house that the bride is officially engaged (Note that this 'engagement' is

not the same as western culture; here the man and woman are just beginning to know each other). After that particular gathering, it is unlawful for any other brother to propose or even talk of proposing to this same sister. In Islam, this period is called the engagement period – the time that both parties begin to enquire about the other and it is Haram to make a proposal upon another brothers' proposal. This includes contacting the sister or her parents about the matter. It is when things end and each party goes their own way that another brother can make his offer and express his interest, so remember this my dear brother, and don't be tempted to break this rule.

After this visit, things begin to build up. Parents ask about the other party through their family, friends, and members of the community who they can trust with such information like our Sheikhs and other community leaders. More visits will be pursued, families will get to know each other and where they decide to go and the decisions they make is then up to them. Meanwhile, the brother is getting time to have some small talk with his potential bride-to-be about the birds and the bees and everything else they can muster from their minds that would be ticking away in la-la land.

What you end up with insha Allah is another Muslim family blessed by Allah with a lot of hope attached to it and so many people blessing it and willing to support it in any way. You see friends, family and the community being happy for a couple of love birds and wishing them all the best in their marriage and asking Allah for the best of this world and the best of the hereafter.

If you are not married yet, all the best insha Allah, and may your route to happiness be easy. As for those newly weds, hang in there and may Allah assist you with increased patience, and for those who are already married and have been so for a while, may Allah shower your marriage with strength and prosperity so that you may lead in example for the rest of us that follow.

SURVIVING THE FIRST YEARS OF

More Muslim marriages are breaking up in their first years of marriage than ever before. The first five to seven years are the most challenging of any marriage. They are a time a couple spends getting to know each other better and adjusting to each other's habits and personalities. Below are some of the main problems couples face in the early years, including some possible solutions.

1. Lack of proper information before marriage

A number of problems are caused simply by the fact that the couple and their families have not discussed crucial issues beforehand. Some of these include:

Whether or not the wife will work outside the home?

Will the couple wait to have children?

Which city and country the couple will live in after marriage?

Will they live with his parents or have their own apartment?

These and other relevant issues need to be discussed and decided in the first stages of the marriage process.

2. Who's in charge?

One of the biggest problems is the tug-of-war between couples over who is in control in the relationship. This has led to a stalemate in disagreements, as well as bitter feelings.

Many couples today are refusing to compromise within moderation when differences arise. While from an Islamic perspective, the husband is given the leadership role in the marriage relationship, this does not mean he runs the couple's family life like a dictatorship. It must be remembered that Islamically, a leader is one who serves, manages, provides and nourishes. A leader must also have humbleness and humility.

authority figure.

On a similar note, it's important for both the husband and wife to remember that they need to make themselves physically attractive to each other. Too many couples take marriage as a means to let themselves go. The couple or one of the partners may gain too much weight, or may not care about hygiene and their looks in general. The reverse should be true: spouses should take the time out for these things and give themselves even more attention after marriage. Our beloved Prophet (S) has recommended this for both the husband and wife.

4. In-laws

The first few years of marriage are not just a period of adjustment for the married couple only. It is also one of getting used to with the in-laws. Husbands, wives and their families need to practice the Islamic rules of social relations with each other. These include: avoiding sarcasm, backbiting, calling each other by offensive nicknames, and mak-

ing a special effort to respect each other as family members.

Furthermore, comparisons need to be avoided, since every individual and every couple is different. Hence, wives should not be compared to mothers and sisters. Husbands should not be compared to fathers and brothers. In-laws should not be compared to parents, etc.

In addition, there should be regular, healthy contact between spouses and in-laws. This means visiting each other on a regular basis, or calling if distance makes it difficult to get together.

5. Making a schedule

Making a schedule may seem like an end to spontaneity, but it's far from it. This allows you to establish your own lifestyle and time together as a couple. It's especially important if both the husband and wife are going to school and/or work. In this scenario, a schedule helps in setting time aside for each other during

8. Not keeping secrets

The inability to keep secrets from the outside world concerning issues between a couple is a huge factor for marriage breakdowns, especially when related to sexual matters, as well as exposing their spouse's faults. This is not only unacceptable. It's unIslamic. Couples should seek to hide each other's faults. They should seek advice on marriage problems from a "marriage mentor", someone who is older, wiser, trustworthy and has the best interests of both parties at heart.

9. Finances

How much should be spent on furniture, the house, food, etc. These are staple issues of any household and can lead to a tug-of-war between husband and wife. To keep spending in check, husbands and wives need to draft a budget and stick to it. The household will run more efficiently and that's one less source of conflict in the marriage.

A special note to husbands: in the beginning of marriage, husbands tend to shower their wives with gifts. They do this as an expression of love and because they want to provide for their wives. However, as time passes and they keep giving, they go into debt or experience financial difficulty. Also, wives get used to a certain level of comfort which husbands can no longer afford. Providing for a wife (and later on, a family) is not just reserved to material things. It includes spending time with her, and treating her with equity and kindness. In fact, most wives would prefer this kind of provision over expensive gifts.

OF MARRIAGE

A husband exercises the right kind of leadership by listening to, and consulting his wife. Also, a husband is bound to follow the rules of the Quran and Sunnah. So differences in opinion should be referred back to these sources, instead of becoming a source of tension and problems.

3. Sexual problems

It is unrealistic to expect the issue of sex and sex-related problems to mysteriously disappear once a couple gets married. In reality, it takes time, commitment, disappointment and investment to establish a sexual relationship in marriage which is in tune with the needs of each partner. It's important for Muslim couples to walk into marriage with proper information about sex and sexual etiquette from an Islamic perspective. They need to know what is Halal (permissible) and what is Haram (forbidden). They should also keep in mind that spouses must never discuss their sexual relationship with others, unless it is to get help for a specific problem with the right person or



a fast-paced week of work and studies. The couple may also learn to become a team instead of two people living in the same home with separate lives.

6. Marriage as a restriction

Muslim men who have grown up in Sydney may find marriage restricting. After all, initially they could hang out with their friends and arrive at home by 11:00 p.m. without anyone saying a word. After marriage though, they have to be home by 7:00 p.m. if not earlier.

While marriage comes with responsibilities and a tighter schedule, the benefits are also there and over-ride everything else. It takes time and patience to realize that in the end, the benefits (i.e. a life partner, children, etc.) are greater than the restrictions, and that ultimately, the purpose of marriage is to help each other get closer to Allah.

7. Friends and Islamic activities

Friends are a joy, and a good friend is someone you want to be close to for the rest of your life. However, friends may be the unintentional source of many marriage conflicts. Too much time spent with friends, either hanging out or on the phone, means time lost with the husband/wife. It may also be important to note that some friends, especially if they are of the same age group, may give the wrong advice on marriage due to their own inexperience and/or misfortunes in the area.

Some possible solutions to this could be:

Working out a "friends time" at least once a week where the husband and the wife meet with friends privately,

Developing friendships with other married couples so the spouses can befriend each other.

Islamic activities also fall in a similar category. Excessive focus on outside Islamic activities takes away time from the married couple. Give Islamic activities their due, but within a balance of everyone's rights, including those of your spouse.



10. Give each other space

A number of couples think being married means always being together and serving each other hand and foot. Wives may initially take over all household chores, not letting the husband help or even do his own things (i.e. ironing his own clothes). They later regret this as household responsibilities increase and their husbands become dependent on them for the smallest things. Similarly, husbands may think getting married means being with their wives all the time. This later may lead them to becoming irritable and cranky.

The key is to focus on being caring, fond of and accepting each other and giving each other sufficient space. Doing this provides a necessary balance in a relationship which is so close physically and emotionally.

Reference:

An edited excerpt from

<http://www.soundvision.com/Info/marriage/survivalguide.asp>

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Attributes of Prince Charming

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X T C I F N T E B L G I R B Z
L N M O E H N N O K N V E L X
P A A R M O T W E C I I D O X
F U O E H P E I F G R N A V V
B U R U K R A J A H A G E E R
S C T E S A J S U F H C L N O
R E S P E C T G S S S K J V M
E C N E I T A P N I T M X K A
T S E D O M J O L U O I I Q N
I S Q F K L S M I L E N C V C
R H F O W U Q N I Q D U Z E E

COMPASSION

MODEST

FAITHFUL

PATIENCE

FAMILY

PURE

FLOWERS

RESPECT

FORGIVING

ROMANCE

GENEROUS

SHARING

GENTLE

SMILE

LOVE

TRUSTWORTHY

HONESTY

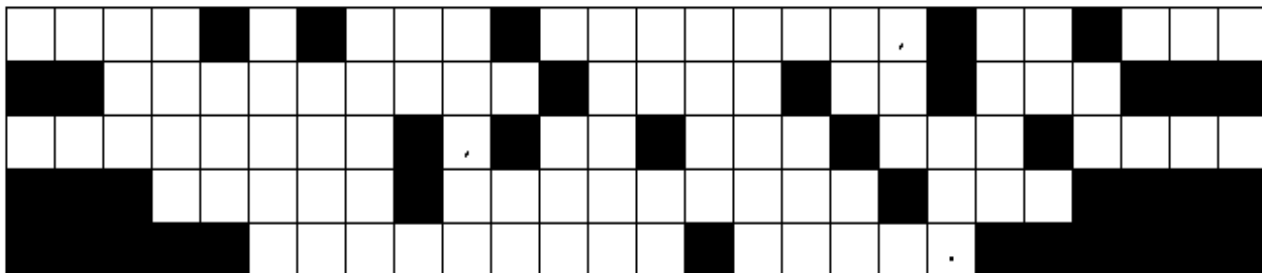
LEADER

JUSTICE

KIND

FALLEN PHRASE

Hint: Saying of the Prophet (s)



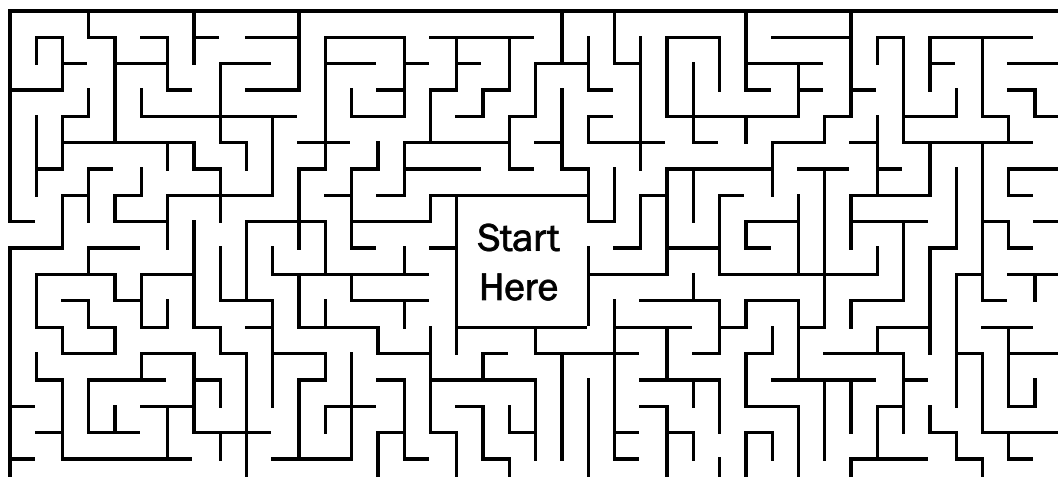
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R E L I L A E N L N E S O G D F N G H T H E F E A S

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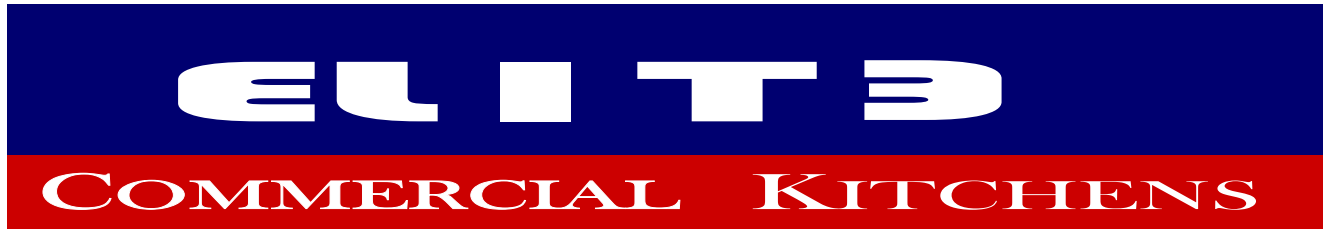
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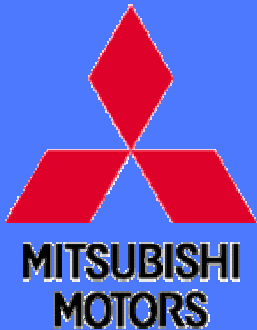


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