

The Little Book of Muslim Manners



8-12 years



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I AM A MUSLIM

"ISLAM is obedience to the Creator and serving His creation"

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

It is said that a Muslim is the keyhole through which others view Allah.

To be able to reach perfection as human beings (Muslims) it is necessary to acquire three things:

1. Eiman (Faith) and Taqwa.
2. Knowledge
3. The best of Akhlaq

The Prophet (pbuh) was sitting with his companions when there was a discussion as to who the Prophet (pbuh) loved most.

The Prophet (pbuh) replied: "On the day of Qiyama, the one closest to me will be the one with the best of akhlaq and the one who is the most humble."

What is the best of Akhlaq (Husnal Khulq)?

Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) was once asked:

"O son of the Prophet! What is husnal khulq?"

Imam replied: "When all three of the following characteristics are found in a person:

1. To lower your wings. i.e. to become accessible.
2. To make your speech the best with others.
3. In the society meet others smiling.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has also said:

"A Muslim is one from whose hands and tongue other Muslims are safe."





THE BEST AKHLĀQ (Husnal Khulq)

"I have been sent only to raise the akhlāq of mankind to its highest station."

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

The word akhlāq is the plural of the word khulq which means personality. It is that which is the source of all those actions which one does spontaneously without thinking about them. It comes into existence through exercise and repetitive practise and is not easily destroyed.

Even though some characteristics are inherited or acquired by the up-bringing, one has a choice to overcome that which is wrong through practise and effort. Therefore the akhlāq of an individual is through his/her choice.

The Prophet (pbuh) has said:

"You cannot please all the people with money but you can meet them with a cheerful face and good behaviour so that you may be liked by them. Wealth is limited but good akhlāq and cheerfulness is inexhaustible."

A man from Shaam (Damascus) once came to Madina arriving in the presence of Imam Hasan (pbuh).

The man started abusing Imam Ali (pbuh).

Imam Hasan (pbuh) took him to one side and said: "You must be very tired from your journey. Come with me and I shall give you food, drink and rest. We will talk later."



The man turned to Imam Hasan (pbuh) and said: "I came to Madina as your worst enemy and now I am the best of your admirers through your akhlāq."

Imam Ali (pbuh) has said: A mu'min has a smile and cheerfulness on his/her face and sorrow in his/her heart."

Imam Ali (pbuh) was always cheerful in dealing with others so much so that some people considered it to be a weak point for a Khalifa saying that a leader must be grim- a person others should be afraid of.

Allah says about the Prophet (pbuh) in the Qur'an:

"It was by the mercy of Allah that you are gentle with them, for if you would have been stern and fierce of heart they would have run away from you."

Suratu Aali-Imran 3:159





ANGER

In describing those who will go to Janna, Allah says in the Qur'an: "...and those who swallow their anger and forgive people; and Allah loves those who do good (to others)."

Suratu Ali Imran 3:134

When someone hurts our feelings without it being our fault it makes us angry and sometimes we say and do things which we regret later.

Imam Ali (pbuh) has said that when you get angry, you must first sit down if you are standing and lie down if you are sitting.

Take ten deep breaths and go and do wudhoo, for the Prophet (pbuh) has said:

"Indeed anger is from Shaytan and Shaytan is made from fire. Fire is extinguished with water. So whenever you are angry do wudhoo."

Think about what happened. If it is your fault then see the positive side and try to change yourself. If it is not your fault then have faith that the truth will always win and when the time comes you can explain.

Imam Ali (pbuh) has said:

"Anger begins in madness and ends in regret."

Imam Ali Zaynul Abideen (pbuh) had a slave who once dropped a bowl of hot soup on him whilst she was serving food. She saw that



Imam was in a lot of pain. She thought that Imam would get angry and started to recite the above aya of Qur'an.

When she recited - and those who swallow their anger - Imam told her he was not angry with her.

Finally, when she recited - and Allah loves those who do good (to others) - Imam set her free.

Imam not only swallowed his anger but forgave the girl and set her free. As the followers of Imam the least we can do is to swallow our anger when a friend, relative or another Muslim says or does something which hurts us.





BULLYING

Bullying is hurtful behaviour to others. There are three types of bullying:

1. Physical - Hitting, kicking, taking things and or/destroying things.
2. Verbal - Name calling, taunting and insulting
3. Emotional – Gossiping, alienating.....

Some children may be bullied because of their skin colour, the way they talk, their size, their name, or what they look like and they feel they can't stand up for themselves. Children who are being bullied may feel lonely, unhappy, unsafe, and frightened. They may develop stomach aches, nightmares, nervousness, and anxiety.

If you are being bullied:

1. Tell an adult what has happened straight away
2. Stay calm
3. Tell them to stop
4. Get away from the situation as quickly as you can
5. Take control, ignore them, don't let them see you react

If you see someone else being bullied;

1. Be friends with them
2. Try and ensure they are not alone, especially at times when they are most likely to be bullied
3. Encourage them to tell a grownup they trust

What next?



1. Tell a teacher or another adult in school. For example your class teacher, tutor, a teaching assistant or a midday supervisor
2. Tell any other adult you trust
3. If you're scared of telling an adult then ask a friend to stay with you for support
4. Keep speaking up until someone listens to you and does something to stop the bullying the adult will take your concerns seriously and help you to solve the problem
5. Ask what support might be available in your school such as peer mentoring.

When you are talking to an adult about bullying.....

1. Clearly explain what has happened to you
2. How often it has happened, who's involved and where
3. Explain who you would like them to talk to initially
4. How you are feeling about the situation and what would help to make things better

Remember....

Don't ever blame yourself for what has or is happening.

No one has the right to hurt you.

WHAT DOES THE QUR'AN SAY ABOUT BULLYING

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ
يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ
خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ ۗ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ ۗ
بُئْسَ الْأَسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ



O you who believe! let not (one) people laugh at (another) people maybe they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, maybe they may be better than they; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames; evil is a bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust. 49:11

The aya says:

- i) “No” to laughing at each other.
- ii) “No” to finding faults in others
- iii) “No” to calling people names
- iv) “No” bullying.

Rasulullah (pbuh) has said: “The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand, people are safe.”

A Muslim, by definition, cannot bully using his tongue (verbal bullying) or his hand (physical bullying).





CLEANLINESS & PERSONAL HYGIENE

“Cleanliness is the sign of a mu’min and the mu’mineen will enter Janna’.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

“Cleanliness is half of eiman (faith) - **Imam Ali (pbuh)**

Until the 16th century of the Christian era, Europe was void of the concept of cleanliness. The Christian priests refused to give the approval of building them. Toilets did not exist and people threw their dirt in the streets.

Will Durant writes: “One of the good results of the Crusades was the imitation of the hot bath houses of the Muslims in Europe. The church however, was not happy with them.”

1400 years ago, in the deserts of Arabia, where water was at a shortage, the Prophet (pbuh) preached that cleanliness was half of faith.

Cleanliness of body, clothes and surroundings is essential for a Muslim as the following ahadith of the Ma’sumeen (pbuh) portray.

“Keeping’s one’s surroundings clean, keeps poverty and miseries away”.

“Keep your clothes clean and tahir. Amongst your clothes the best colour is white.”



“Do not allow dirt and rubbish to remain in your house during the night, as they are the abode of Shaytan (in the form of germs...)”
“Angel Jibrail laid so much stress on the brushing of teeth that I thought that the Almighty Allah was going to make it wajib”.
“...if a person keeps a Masjid neat and clean, Allah grants him/her thawab equal to that of setting free a slave”.

Keeping your body clean is an important part of keeping you healthy and helping you to feel good about yourself.

Caring about the way you look is important to your self esteem (what you think about yourself)._ This topic gives you some ideas on looking your best._ By the way, you don't need to wear the latest designer clothing to look good._ There are other things you can do which are much more important for your "image".

Smelling clean

When you reach puberty special sweat glands under the arms and around the genitals start to work and produce sweat that smells. You should remove the hair under your arms and on your private parts regularly but certainly no less than once every 40 days.

Clothes

Underclothes are right next to your skin and collect dead skin cells, sweat and possibly other unmentionable stains. Overnight bacteria start to work on these stains so your clothes do not smell as nice on the second day of wearing.
Stay away from cigarette smoke as the smell will get into your clothes and hair.



If you have to wear a school uniform then take it off as soon as you get home and hang it up to air before you wear it the next day.

Ask your family not to smoke in the house or the car. Besides being unhealthy for them and you, the smoke clings to your clothes and makes them smelly. Of course, you wouldn't smoke either, would you?

Change underclothes every day.

Shoes

You spend a lot of time on your feet and your shoes are very close to the place where a very large collection of sweat glands live - your feet!

Sweat gets into your shoes and then bacteria arrive which love the moist leather or fabric so much that they tell all their friends to come round and party!

If you have one pair of shoes for school then try to get them off as soon as you get home so that they can air and dry out overnight. (As you get older somewhere outside the house is a good place!)

If you have more than one pair then use them on alternate days to give them a better chance of drying out.

Keep your shoes clean by brushing, polishing or washing. They will look better, last longer and be less likely to smell.



Feet

Wash your feet well at least once a day.

Dry them carefully, especially between the toes where more bacteria collect than anywhere else on your skin.

If you go swimming a lot or use public showers, you need to be particularly careful to wash your feet and dry them well. Lots of other people walk in bare feet in these places and you can easily pick up fungal infections or other problems for your feet, such as warts!

Using nice smelling products

You may want, or feel you need, to start using a deodorant or anti-perspirant under your armpits. But remember that nothing smells better than clean skin. Perfumes are not a good substitute for a shower or wash.

You may want to use special innersoles in your shoes, which can be taken out and washed, making the shoes smell less. You may want to use foot powder on your feet and inside your shoes. This can help too.

Hair

The hair follicles [which the hair grows from] produce oil which keeps the hair smooth. You also have sweat glands in your scalp, and dead skin cells come off the scalp. The oil, sweat and dead cells all add together and can make the hair greasy and look dirty unless you wash it regularly.



To keep your hair clean:

Wash regularly with shampoo (cheap ones are often as good as very expensive ones). Massage your scalp well. This will remove dead skin cells, excess oil and dirt.

Rinse well with clear water. Conditioner is helpful if you have longer hair as it makes the hair smoother and easier to comb, but hair doesn't need to have conditioner. Use a wide toothed comb for wet hair as it is easier to pull through.

Teeth

You should brush your teeth twice a day - after breakfast and before you go to bed. The Prophet (pbuh) advises to brush teeth before every salaa just before you do wudhoo.

During the day, fill your mouth with water and swish it around to get rid of anything sticking to your teeth.

Finally, keep your fingernails and toenails short and clean too making a habit to cut them every Friday.





DOING ONE'S BEST

"Be all that you can be."

Whether drawing a picture, pouring milk over cereal, tying shoes, or brushing teeth, we have to do the best we can.

Doing one's best does not mean being perfect or outdoing someone else. It means recognizing that one has performed at a personally high level and can say with their hand on their heart "I did my best."

Some things to remember:

- I must treat others the way I want them to treat me.
- I am a good sport; I follow the rules, take turns and play fair.
- It is okay to laugh at funny things, but not to laugh at others.
- I do not gossip; if I cannot say anything helpful, I do not say anything at all.
- When I am sad, I help myself feel better by thinking of things that are good in my life.
- In order to have friends, I must act in a kind way.
- I believe that I am someone who can do important things.
- What I say and how I say it tells others the kind of person I am.
- I always thank Allah for my family, my teachers, and my community
- I treat everyone with respect.
- When I listen, I show others that I care about them.
- I do not give up; I keep trying until I can do my work.
- My Muslim values guide me to do what is right.
- I am honest; I do not cheat or steal.
- When I am angry, I use self-control and do not hurt others.



- When I do what I say I will do, I am being responsible.
- I try to learn something new each day.
- When things do not go my way, I stop and think of what I can do to make them better.
- I do not make fun of other children because I don't know what their life is like.
- When I use my time wisely, there is usually enough time to do what I want to do.
- I am me -- I do not try to be like someone else.
- I feel successful when I do my best.





DANGERS OF VIDEO GAMES

Playing video games has become a popular activity for people of all ages. Many children spend large amounts of time playing them. Some games connect to the Internet, which can allow children to play online with unknown adults and peers.

While some games have educational content, many of the most popular games promote:

- the killing of people or animals
- the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol
- criminal behaviour like stealing etc.....
- violence
- bad language

Studies of children exposed to violence have shown that they can become immune to the horror of violence, and become aggressive. Also one can become obsessed with videogames, spending large amounts of time playing these games which lead to:

- poor social skills
- time away from family time, school-work, and other hobbies
- poor results in school
- exercising less, and becoming unfit
- aggressive thoughts and behaviours



PRACTICAL ADVICE WHEN PLAYING VIDEO OR INTERNET GAMES

1. Study the rating of an online game carefully, often they will let you know if it suitable for someone your age.
2. Set-up your user profile to include appropriate language and game content for someone your age.
3. Make sure your parents know your online name and login and how to access your online account so they can help you if something goes wrong.
4. Set time limits for yourself – you could use a mobile phone to set an alarm to keep to your limit.

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

1. Always explore the privacy settings of your SNS to protect your privacy and to protect yourself from strangers.
2. Get your friends and family to have a look at your SNS to check that you aren't giving out too much personal information or posting inappropriate photos/films because they might see something you've missed.
3. Keep your passwords to yourself.
4. Respect yourself and others online.
5. If you are unlucky enough to have a bad experience online report it to the service provider and tell an adult
6. Cyber bullying is never acceptable. If you or someone you know is targeted by bullies online tell them:
 - to report the bully to the website/service operator
 - keep evidence of the bullying behaviour
 - to resist the temptation to reply to nasty messages
 - to tell an adult.





DRESS CODE - HIJAB

"And say to the mu'minat (believing women) that they should look down and guard their private parts and do not show their beauty except what appears thereof; and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms and not display their beauty; except to their husbands or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons or their women.....

Suratun Nur 24:31

It is Wajib to cover one's head and body from a man who is na-mahram.

Who is a na-mahram?

All men except those listed below are na-mahram:

Father and his father, grand-father, great grand-father (how high so ever)

Brothers and their sons and sisters' sons

Fathers' brothers and mothers' brothers

Husband, his sons and his father.

The word hijab means that which appears behind a curtain.

It is referred to as a woman's covering. It means to wear decent and modest clothes which cover the whole body including arms and legs and covering the hair with a scarf. It also means to behave decently with boys.

It is a declaration of identity - Non communicative message is - "I declare that I am being loyal to myself and my Creator, I am not a



victim and you will not pull my strings for I do that myself, I am unique - I will not be compared with the icons the fashion industry.

It provides the necessary dignity and self-respect to be able to lead a balanced social life. Islam separates work and social enjoyment.

The clothing of hijab must also be accompanied by lowering the gaze. Hijab is not a licence to attend mixed gatherings, or be in the company of na-mahrams for pleasure.

Why one should dress decently?

By dressing in a particular way you give an impression of yourself to other people: fellow Muslims, non-Muslims and boys. Ask yourself what impression you would like other people to have of you?

By being in hijab:

You are identifying yourself as a Muslim and showing you are proud of your identity.

You are showing people that you are an intelligent and independent young lady who is not pressured into 'looking like everyone else' and that you want to be respected for who you are rather than what you look like.

You are telling boys that you are a respectable girl and not one that tries to attract male attention. Most importantly, Allah will be pleased with you.



If you are with ladies, very young children and mahram men (mahrams are men that you can never get married to and these are your grandfather, father, father's brother, mother's brother, your brother and nephew), then you can wear perfume, make-up, jewellery and pretty clothes. You do not have to cover your hair in front of these but clothes should remain decent.

If there are non-mahrams present (that includes your male cousins), even in your own home, or you are going out then you must cover your whole body except for your face and hands in loose-fitting clothes that should not be see through. You should not wear make-up either.

When one does not wear hijab there can only be one of two reasons:

One wishes to draw attention to one's looks. Remember if you put out an advertisement, someone is going to respond to it.

One wishes to blend or be acceptable to a certain group of people. Remembering that we will be raised and identified with the group that we aspire to be like or with.





GOSSIP GHEEBA & TOHMAT (BACKBITING & SLANDER)

Backbiting is talking in someone's absence in a manner not pleasing to the mentioned person.

If what is said is true it is gheeba, however if it is false then it is even worse and that is tohmat or slandering.

Allah in the Qur'an says: *".....and lest not some of you backbite others. Do any of you like to eat the dead flesh of his brother?"*

Suratul Hujurat, aya 12

The absent person cannot defend himself, just like a dead person. So when you backbite, it is as if you carve away parts of the body. A dead body will never recover the injury. The same harm is caused when we backbite (harm) someone's character in their absence. Even if later, we go back to the crowd and say that the comments were unfair, we can never resurrect the personality that we crushed. E.g. If one breaks a glass and then mends it, even coating it with real gold, its value as a glass is a broken glass. How can one regain people's confidence in the sister/brother whose character one has assassinated?

The Prophet (pbuh) has said: "Backbiting eats away the deen (religion) of a Muslim worse than leprosy eats one's flesh"

"Sitting in a Masjid awaiting prayer is ibada as long as you don't use the time for gossip".

The wife of the Prophet (pbuh) Hazrat Ayesha says: "A woman came to us and as she was leaving, I made a gesture suggesting



that she is short. The Prophet (pbuh) said: 'you committed gheeba'.

The Prophet (pbuh) has also said: "If you hear gossip about your brother/sister and you defend him/her, Allah will eliminate many of your evils in this and the next world. And if you remain quiet and do not do anything, your sin is 70 times more than the one who did the gheeba."

Imam Ali (pbuh) said: "Allah will disgrace the passive listener in this and the next world".

Sometimes we do not realise that we are backbiting. Let's look at some of the different types of backbiting -

1. Mixed with Riya (pretence): Someone's love of authority and power is mentioned and you say Alhamdulillah that we don't love power or someone's short tempered and we say May God save us from impatience. We are asserting that we are free of these shortcomings, while suggesting that the sister/brother suffers from such defects.
2. At times we say 'such and such' is such a good person, but may Allah grant him/her a little more piety. If we are really concerned, then we should assist to try to change his/her situation. He/she will benefit, and so will we. The backbiting simply bankrupts us of our good deeds!
3. At times our body language encourages the backbiter. Raised eyebrows, attention, smiles, etc. We are helping an offence against Allah and a person take place. Show contempt.



Defend the person if you know him/her. Here is where silence is a crime, a huge one in the sight of Allah. May He forgive us?

Take few moments and see if you can make a promise that you will avoid backbiting for at least a day. If you succeed, advance to a few days. If you succeed then advance to a week, then a month, then a year, and perhaps forever, Insha'Allah. Now send a salawat to acknowledge your pledge, if you want to enter this pact with Him.

And finally, a hadith from the Prophet (pbuh): "If you did gheeba and then did tawba (repented), you may be the last person to enter Janna. But if you did gheeba, and you did nit repent, you may be the first one who enters Jahannam".



EVEN IT'S NAME HISSES

It topples governments,
It ruins careers,
It destroys reputations,
It causes nightmares,
It spawns suspicion,
It generates grief.

It is the snake that poisons everyone,
It is **gossip**.

Before you repeat a story, ask yourself:

Is it true?

Is it fair?

Is it necessary?

If not, forget it.





INTERFAITH

WHAT OTHERS BELIEVE

Not everyone in your school believes what you believe. So how do you witness or defend your faith if you don't understand their religious beliefs? Here is some help to understanding the differences between Islam and other world religions.

Belief	Islam	Hinduism	Christianity	Judaism
Origin of name	<i>"..Indeed the only religion with Allah is Islam"</i> Qur'an - 3:18 Islam means 'submission' to the will of Allah	The word Hindu comes from the river Indus. it is the 'ism'-the culture of the Indus valley.	'Messiah' or the anointed one in Greek is 'Khristos'. From there comes the word 'Christ' & thus Christianity - the religion of those who worship Jesus Christ as son of God.	One of the sons of Jacob (Prophet Yaqub (pbuh). - whose descendants were known as Bani Israil) was Judah (Yahuda) from which the name Judaism is derived. Jews believe they are the chosen people.
Basic concept of Belief in God	<i>"And your God is One God: There is no God but He, .."</i> Qur'an - 2:163 <i>"..And your Lord is not unjust to anyone.."</i> Qur'an - 18:49	Deity is visualised as a triad: The power to create belongs to Brahma. He is beyond worship. Preservation is in the power of Vishnu Shiva is the great destroyer They are limitless forms of God. Basically everything is God.	"...we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity... for there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost is all one... they are not three gods, but one God... the whole three persons are co-eternal and co-equal..."	"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." - Deuteronomy 6:4



Belief	Islam	Hinduism	Christianity	Judaism
Nabuwwa	<p>...<i>"Our Lord is He who gave everything it's form and then guided it.."</i></p> <p>Qur'an - 20:50</p> <p>From Prophet Adam (pbuh) to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)</p> <p>124,000 Prophets.</p>	<p>No concept of Prophethood.</p>	<p>Prophethood stops at Prophet Musa (pbuh) - Moses. After that Prophet Isa (pbuh) is worshipped as the son of God.</p>	<p>Prophethood stops at Prophet Musa (pbuh) - Moses.</p>
Death, life hereafter & the Last Day	<p><i>"..It is He (Allah) who has created death & life so that He may try which of you does the best of deeds..."</i></p> <p>Qur'an - 67:2</p> <p><i>"..And everyone of them will come to Him on the day of Qiyama alone"</i></p> <p>Qur'an 19:95</p>	<p>Human beings are perceived to be trapped in 'samsara' - a meaningless cycle of birth, death & rebirth. Karma is one's deeds. Through purity one can be born into a higher level. Bad deeds can cause a person's rebirth into even an animal. (Re-incarnation)</p>	<p>If a Christian acknowledges his/her sinful nature, believes in the divinity of Jesus and accepts his teachings, then he/she will have everlasting life in heaven. The process is called being saved or born again.</p>	<p>"I believe with perfect faith that there will be a resurrection of the dead at a time when it shall please the Creator."</p> <p>One of the 13 principles of faith.</p>



Belief	Islam	Hinduism	Christianity	Judaism
Books	<p><i>"We have revealed to you the book (Qur'an) which clarifies every matter."</i> Qur'an 16:89</p> <p><i>Revealed by Allah to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) through the angel Jibrail.</i></p>	<p>The most important of Hindu texts is the Bhagvad Ghita which is a poem describing a conversation between a warrior Arjuna and his charioteer Krishna.</p>	<p>The word 'Bible' means 'the Books'. The Bible is a collection of books written over 1000 years by over 40 authors- some unknown in a variety of styles and language. Over 75% is the Old Testament.</p>	<p>Hebrew version of the Old Testament. Consist of Torah (Law), Nev'im (Prophets), & Kethuvim (Writings) - Tanakh. Jews believe they were written under degrees of inspiration and therefore have order of importance.</p>
Dietary Laws	<p><i>"O you who believe! Eat of the good things We have provided you with and thank God if it is He that you worship"</i></p> <p><i>Qur'an 2:172</i></p> <p>The food must be obtained by lawful means. It must be <i>halal</i> and not <i>haram</i>.</p>	<p>Hindus believe that all living organisms including insects have souls. For this reason many devout Hindus eat only vegetarian food. Among all animals the cow is regarded as sacred - others are either incarnations or messengers of various Gods.</p>	<p>A quote from the Bible: <i>"Of their flesh (the swine) shall you not eat, and their carcass you shall not touch, they are unclean to you."</i> <i>Leviticus 11:8</i></p>	<p>Food must be <i>kosher</i>. Only certain kinds of meat are allowed- Lamb, beef, chicken are among these. Shellfish and pork are not. Slaughtering must be by trained/ordained Jew. Other laws too.</p>



Belief	Islam	Hinduism	Christianity	Judaism
<p>Hijab</p>	<p><i>"..Let them wear their head coverings over their bosoms and not display their beauty..."</i> Qur'an 24:31 <i>"..They should wear their outer garments over their bodies so that they should not be known and thus not be given trouble..."</i>Qur'an 33:59 Hijab is wajib (obligatory)</p>	<p>Hindu culture entails modesty in dress.</p>	<p>"....if a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off or shaved off, she should cover her head." I Corinthians 11:6-7</p>	<p>"It is not like the daughters of Israel to walk out with their heads uncovered. Cursed be the man who lets the hair of his wife be seen....a woman who exposes her hair for self-adornment brings poverty." Rabbi Dr. Menachem M Brayer - Professor of Yeshiva University in his book 'The Jewish woman in Rabbinic Literature'</p>





HOW TO BE A JUST (FAIR) PERSON

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice....." **Suratun Nisa**
4:135

To be fair you have to:

- Treat people the way you want to be treated.
- Take Turns.
- Tell the truth.
- Play by the rules.
- Think about how your actions will affect others.
- Listen to people with an open mind.
- Don't blame others for your mistakes.
- Don't take advantage of other people.
- Don't play favourites.

We do not treat people justly because we like them or are partial to them. If that were the case, there would be no need to command justice, since people are naturally just to those they like. We need to be especially careful in being just when dealing with those we have no favorable feelings towards.





KNOWLEDGE

"Allah makes the road to Janna easy for one who takes a step on the road to acquiring knowledge."

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

It is not enough to acquire information on a subject of study, but it is important to be able to absorb, understand and practise upon the information in order to call it 'knowledge'.

The following ahadith from the Prophet (pbuh) may throw some light on the right way of acquiring knowledge.

"The treasures of knowledge are opened by asking questions. May Allah bless you. Ask questions because four persons are rewarded - The one who asks, the one who answers, the one who hears and the one to whom it is related."

"Preserve your knowledge in writing."

"Scholarly discussions enliven dead hearts provided they lead to Allah and His commands."

"Teach others what you know so that the foundation of your knowledge may become strong and seek knowledge from others so that the level of your information may increase."



EXTRACTS FROM ĀDĀB AL-MUTA'ALLIMEEN
(Behaviour of students)
by Khwaja Nasiruddin Tusi (A.R.)

"Seeking knowledge is wajib on every Muslim, male and female."
Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

1. Intention

"It is necessary for the seeker of knowledge to have the intention of first pleasing Allah, to remove ignorance from him/herself to remove ignorance from others and to revive and continue the religion of Islam by enjoining good and forbidding evil first from him/herself and whosoever is associated with him/her and others if it is possible.

Therefore it is necessary for a student to be patient during difficulties and to exert him/herself as much as what is within his/her capacity. He/she should not exceed the limits during this worthless life by belittling him/herself with greed and he/she should distance him/herself from prejudice."

2. Selection of knowledge, teachers, classmates...

1. To start with tawheed and to know Allah with proofs.
2. To select a teacher who is the most knowledgeable, pious & eldest.
3. Enquire about the field of study and do not make a hasty decision.
4. "Check the earth by it's fruits and check a person by his/her associates"



5. Write legibly, not writing too small for if he/she lives he/she will regret it (not being able to read the text) and if he/she dies; he/she will be cursed.
6. Do not sit too close to the teacher unless it is an emergency.

3. Exertion, continuity, and high goals.

"Whoever seeks something with exertion (action) will find it."

"Three persons must have exertion:

- (i) The student
- (ii) The teacher
- (iii) The father of the student.

It is necessary for the student to continue to study with repetition at the beginning of the day of his/her lessons and at the end.

"Those who stay awake during the nights make their hearts happy in the day."

It is necessary to have high goals for he who has high goals flies as a bird with his/her wings.

KNOWLEDGE IS ETERNAL LIFE

Brushing the teeth increases the memory and the ability to speak.

"Unrestricted eating causes the intellect to leave."

4. Starting a lesson, determining it's length & outlining it.

Begin the lesson on Wednesday for the Prophet (pbuh) has said:

"There is nothing that begins on Wednesday, except that it would be completed."

It is necessary for the beginner to start only with the amount that can be mastered and repeating it twice slowly....



"The lesson is once, but repetition is one thousand..."

Begin with something easy, near the level of understanding.

Do not acquire that which cannot be comprehended.

If a person does not exert him/herself in understanding once or twice, then it becomes a habit and he/she will not understand anything.

Consultation is only for one purpose and that is to find the truth. The object however, will not be achieved by anger, disruption and hardship.

"A moment of debate is better than one month of repetition."

You should not debate with a person who is arrogant and not straight in his/her nature because by nature he/she influences the akhlaq and limits or affect's one's potential and thus the environment will be influenced."

Always think before speaking.

5. Relying on Allah

It is essential to rely on Allah and not seek means of livelihood from the knowledge.

It is necessary for the student to be occupied with nothing other than the seeking of knowledge and should not neglect Fiqh, Tafseer, Hadith and knowledge of the Qur'an.

6. Times for acquiring knowledge

"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."

The most excellent time is during adolescence.

Time before Fajr and before Maghrib and Isha.

If one becomes frustrated to change the subject.



"The night is long. Do not shorten it by sleeping. The day is light, do not shade it by your sins."

7. Piety in learning

"Knowledge is a pride which has no humility. It cannot be reached, except by humiliation which has no pride."

Less eating, Less sleeping and less talking.

"Sit facing qibla at the time of reading."

"Pray salaa of submission, for it will assist in the acquisition of knowledge."

Take a notebook for every occasion.

"One who does not have a notebook in his/her sleeve, does not establish the wisdom in his/her heart."

Prophet (pbuh) said to Hilal ibn Yasir, "Is the ink well with you?", when he taught him something.

Causes of memorisation and forgetfulness

- The strongest means of increasing memorisation is exertion and perseverance. Reducing eating and to recite Salatul Tahajjud (Shab) also increases memory.
- Reciting Qur'an especially Ayatul Kursi.
- Reciting salawat.
- Brushing teeth, drinking honey and eating 21 red raisins every day before breakfast will increase the memory.
- Eating coriander and sour apples, looking at a person who has been hanged, reading tombstones...all are the causes of forgetfulness.





SADAQĀ

"If you are poor do business with Allah by giving sadaqā."

Imam Ali (pbuh)

Sadaqâ is the charity given for the sake of Allah. It is a source of attaining the blessings of Allah. The best sadaqā is that which is given in secret for the Prophet (pbuh) has said it is that which puts out the flame of Allah's anger.

The Prophet (pbuh) has also said: "On the day of Qiyama everyone will rest under the shadow of his/her sadaqā until the matters are settled between the people."

He has also said: "Sadaqā reaches the hand of the Creator before it reaches the one you give it to."

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (pbuh) has said: "Beware of refusing to give sadaqā and then spending twice as much in disobeying Allah."

Sayyida Fatima Zahra (pbuh) could not bear to see her two young sons Hasan and Husayn (pbuh) ill. She made a vow with Allah to fast for three days. With her the whole family fasted.

On the first day when they were about to break their fast, there was a knock on the door. It was a poor man who was hungry. All the family gave up their bread to the man and broke their fast with water.

Similarly on the next two days, an orphan and a prisoner came who were hungry. The family gave away their food.



Allah revealed a sura of the Qur'an in honour of their sadaqã

Suratud Dahr (Sura 76).

The criteria for sadaqã is taught by the family of Fatima Zahra (pbuh) and her family in this sura, "We feed you only for Allah's sake; we want no reward or thanks for it. We fear from our Lord a difficult day of distress (Qiyama)..."

Suratud Dahr 76:9, 10





SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS OF A MU'MIN

The Prophet (pbuh) has said: “Every mu'min has 30 obligations towards another mu'min which cannot be absolved until he/she fulfils them or is forgiven for them”

1. Forgiving their mistakes
2. Mercy towards them when they are in a strange land or situation
3. Guard their secrets
4. Give them a hand when about to fall
5. Accept their apologies
6. Discourage gheeba about them
7. Persist in giving them good advice
8. Treasure their friendship
9. Fulfil their trust
10. Visit them when ill
11. Being with them at their time of death
12. Accepting their invitations
13. Returning their favours in kind
14. Thanking them for their favours
15. Being grateful for their assistance
16. Protecting their honour and property
17. Helping them meet their needs
18. Making an effort to solve their problems
19. Guiding them to what they have lost
20. Answering their greeting
21. Taking them at their word



22. Accepting their gifts
23. Confirming them if they swear to something
24. Inclining towards them
25. Helping them when they are being unjust (by turning them away from it)
26. Helping them when they are victims of injustice
27. Refraining from feeling bored with them
28. Not forsaking them in times of trouble
29. Whatever good you like to like for them
30. Whatever evil you dislike to dislike for them

One day the Prophet (pbuh) was sitting alone in the masjid. A man came near him and the Prophet (pbuh) moved aside to make place for him.

The man said: "Ya Rasulallah! The masjid is empty and there is so much space available, why have you moved aside?"

The Prophet (pbuh) replied: "A Muslim has a right on another Muslim - when he wants to sit near him the latter should move aside as a mark of respect".

In 'Risālātul Huquq' (A charter of rights) attributed to Imam Ali Zaynul Abideen (pbuh); Imam lists 51 rights.

Some of them are:

The greatest of rights WAJIB is the right of Allah which is the root of all rights. His right is that one worships Him without associating anyone with Him...



The right of your self (nafs) is to utilise yourself in obeying Allah... and you must ask Allah for help in this.

The right of Salaa is that you know it is standing before Allah and that you are praying with your heart and pray it according to its rules.....

The right of Sadaqa is that you know it is a saving with your Lord and a deposit for which there is no need of witnesses... You should know that it repels afflictions and illnesses in the world and repels the fire in the next.

The right of the one who imparts knowledge is to respect him/her, listen to him/her and attend with devotion. You should not raise your voice towards him/her.. You should not speak whilst she/he is speaking nor speak ill of him/her... If anyone speaks ill of him/her you should defend him/her... You should not show any enmity or show hostility in friendship. If this is done then Allah's angels will give witness that the knowledge learnt from him/her was for Allah and not for the sake of the people...

The right of a mother is that you know that she carried you where no-one carries anyone. She did not care if she went hungry and thirsty as long as you ate and drank... she gave up sleep...

The right of the father is that you should know that he is the root. Without him, one would not be. When you sees in yourself something that pleases you; know that your father is the root of that blessing....



The right of one who is older is that he/she be respected because of age and honoured because he/she entered Islam before you...

The right of the one who is younger is that he/she be shown compassion through teaching him/her, forgiveness, covering of faults and help...

The right of he/she through whom Allah makes you happy is that you first praise Allah and then thank the person....





HONOURING PARENTS

"Allah's pleasure is the pleasure of one's parents and His anger is their anger."

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

A man once came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said: "Ya Rasulallah! I am healthy and want to take part in jihad for Islam. However, my mother does not like me being separated from her and going for battle."

The Prophet (pbuh) replied: "Go and stay with your mother. I swear by Him who has appointed me as His messenger that the thawaab for your spending one night in the service of your mother and her being happy is greater than you performing jihad for a whole year."

A man called Zakariyya once came to Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) and said: "I was a Christian but have now become a Muslim."

Imam asked him what convinced him in becoming a Muslim. Zakariyya replied that it was the following aya of the Qur'an: "Thus did We reveal to You our guidance by Our command; You did not know what the Book (Qur'an) was nor did you know what faith was, but We made it (the Qur'an) a light through which We guide whichever of our servants We want, and Indeed you are a guide of the right path."

Suratush Shu'ra - 42:52



Imam told Zakariyya: "Indeed Allah has guided you to Islam and illuminated your heart with its light."

Zakariyya then asked Imam about whether he could live with his parents who were still Christians. Imam asked whether they ate pork and Zakariyya said they did not. Imam replied:

"Take care of your mother. Be good and kind to her and as and when she breathes her last attend to her funeral rites."

Zakariyya said that when he returned home he honoured his mother as he was ordered by Imam. The mother on noticing the change in her sons' behaviour said:

"What is the reason of you honouring me so much after you have become a Muslim?"

Zakariyya told her that one of the AhlulBayt of the Prophet (pbuh) had ordered him to honour her.

She said:

"..Your religion is better than mine. Guide me so that I may become a Muslim."

Zakariyya taught her the basis of Islam and she became a Muslim. She offered the Zhuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib & Isha Salaa of that day as taught to her by her son and died a Muslim at midnight on that day.





DUTIES TOWARDS PARENTS

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has said: "Sitting with your parents for one hour is better than going for jihad. Even if only a word is spoken with a view to pleasing the parents, Allah is pleased."

Respecting parents means:

1. Never raise your voice while talking to them.
2. Do not sit when they are standing.
3. Do not walk in front of them unless they tell you to do so.
4. Do not talk when they are talking.
5. Never correct them in front of others.
6. Do not make them angry or displeased with you.
7. Never argue or shout at them.

Always pray for them:

رَبِّ اَرْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْنِي صَغِيرًا

"...Lord! Have mercy on them just as they had mercy on me when I was little..."

Suratu Bani Israil 17:24





STRIVE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MU'MINEEN

"When one of my servants performs a good act, I award him Janna in exchange"

Prophet Dawood (pbuh) asked Allah:

"Ya Allah! What is that good act?"

The revelation came:

"It is making a mu'min happy even if it be by offering him a date"

There was a man called Sadiq Halwani who was once approached by his friend in Masjidul Haram to lend him two dinars. Sadiq told him he would give him the money after he had completed his tawāf.

As he was just about to complete his tawāf, Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) arrived for tawāf. Imam put his hand on Sadiq's shoulder and began tawāf.

Sadiq says that although he had completed his tawāf he accompanied Imam.

His friend was sitting in a corner and making signs at Sadiq. Imam asked Sadiq why the man was trying to call his attention.

Sadiq replied:

...He is waiting for me so that after I complete tawāf I can help arrange a loan for him. As you put your hand on my shoulder I did not wish to leave you."

Imam removed his hand immediately from his shoulder and told him:

"Go to meet his need..."

Sadiq fulfilled his word to his friend. Next day he went to visit the Imam. Imam said:



If one strives to meet the need of a mu'min it is more worthy a deed than freeing 1000 slaves and equipping 1000 people for jihad"

Imam Ali Zaynul Abideen (pbuh) has said:

Strive to acquire a high position in Janna. Remember the more useful a person is to a fellow mu'min the higher his/her position in Janna. At times even the saying of one sentence becomes the source of becoming closer to Allah. Never consider kindness to your fellow mu'min brother/sister to be insignificant for it will be these that will be useful on a day when nothing much will be of any use."





INQUIRE ABOUT AND VISIT THE NEEDY AND THE POOR

"A true Mu'min is one who maintains brotherly relations with the poor and needy and gives them a share of his wealth and behaves with them justly." –

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

Imam Hasan (pbuh) and Imam Husayn (pbuh) had just buried their father and were returning to the city when they heard someone crying and calling out: "Where are you? O you who visited me and had mercy on me!"

They went to inquire and found that it was a leper for whom Imam Ali (pbuh) had provided a shelter outside the town of Kufa. Imam used to visit the leper daily, dressing his wounds and feeding him for he had lost the use of his hands.

When Imam Hasan & Husayn (pbuh) informed him of the shahadat of their father, the leper asked to be taken to the grave where he breathed his last.

It is reported that Imam Ali Zaynul Abideen (pbuh) was once with his companions when they visited one of the poor and needy of Madina. Imam gave him some money and then kissed the poor mans' hand.

Imams' companions asked why he had done that to which Imam replied: "He is my Muhsin (one to whom I am obliged) for by accepting my help he is bringing me closer to Allah."



The Prophet (pbuh) has said: "Who so ever gives respect to a needy Muslim will appear on the day of Qiyama as one who has achieved the pleasure of Allah".





AFFECTION TOWARDS ORPHANS

"Who so ever puts an affectionate hand on the head of an orphan will be rewarded by Allah with radiance (light) for every hair which will pass from below his hand." –

Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh)

One day Prophet 'Isa (pbuh) was passing through a grave yard with his companions and when nearing one particular grave he started walking faster.

When his companions enquired he said that the person in the grave was being punished and he did not want to be near the grave.

A year later on passing the same graveyard, the companions of Prophet 'Isa (pbuh) noticed that he was walking slowly cherishing each step when he walked passed the same grave.

They asked him about the change. Prophet 'Isa (pbuh) replied: "The man had a son who has provided food and shelter to an orphan. Allah has forgiven the sins of the father on that account."

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has said:

"If a person looks after an orphan and meets his/her expenses; he/she will be my companion in Janna and will sit by my side."

In his last will (after being struck by Ibne Muljim) Imam Ali (pbuh) said: "Fear Allah when the question of orphans arises. You should never let them starve. So long as you are there to guard and protect them you should not let them be ruined or lost. The Prophet (pbuh) always reminded us of this responsibility so much so that we often thought that the Prophet (pbuh) might give them a share from our inheritance."





VISITING THE SICK

"One who helps a sick person in meeting his/her needs is forgiven of his/her sins whether or not he/she has been successful or not."

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) met some of his companions who were on their way to visit a sick person. Imam asked them: "Are you carrying with you an apple, or quince or ...some perfume..?"

They replied in the negative.

Imam said: "Know that such things give peace of mind to a sick person."

Whenever one visits a sick person one must take a gift, be it small. The Prophet (pbuh) has said: "Whoever is willing to feed a sick person shall be provided the fruits of Janna by Allah,"

It is also necessary that the visit should not be an inconvenience to the patient. Imam Ali (pbuh) has said: "Among those who are rewarded for visiting the sick; he/she is rewarded more who stays with the sick person for a short time unless he/she knows that the sick person wishes him/her to stay longer."

The Prophet (pbuh) has said: ".....Pray for the sick person and say: O Allah! Cure him/her with Your medicine and keep him/her safe from distress."





HONOURING NEIGHBOURS*

"By Allah! Honour your neighbours, for surely the Prophet (pbuh) continued to say this until we thought that he might even give them the right to inherit from us."

Imam Ali (pbuh) - Will

Imam Ali (pbuh) has also said: "Avoid burying your dead near someone evil, for surely a good neighbour benefits you in the next world just as he benefits you in this world."

An a'lim knew someone in his neighbourhood who was not very pious and did not heed the advice of the a'lim. The man died suddenly and the a'lim was grieved thinking of the adhaab the man must be suffering in his grave.

A few days later the a'lim saw the man in his dreams. He was happy and in luxurious surroundings.

The a'lim enquired about his good fortune. The man said: "What you see is a benefit I am enjoying not because of my deeds but that of a lady who was buried yesterday. Her grave has been visited by the Shuhada of Karbala and all of us around her have benefited from the mercy and blessings showered upon her."

The a'lim on waking up enquired about the lady who had been buried the day before. He found out that she was a young mother. He asked her husband what she had done to achieve such an honour which also benefited her neighbours in the graveyard.



Her husband replied: "She was a good wife and mother. Every day after she had finished her work she would recite Ziyarat Ashura and cry." (She recited the Ziyara with understanding and total commitment and submission).





MANNERS OF TALKING

Imam Ali (pbuh) has said:

"A person is hidden under his tongue"

This means that one is valued through one's conversation.

The following were guidelines given by Imam Husayn (pbuh) to Ibn Abbas about good and useful conversation.

"Do not begin a conversation without first greeting the person you are talking to."

"Keep away from a conversation which is without an aim or object, for it lowers your position."

"..Wait to speak at the right opportunity; Many speak the truth but not at the right moment and therefore have to face disrespect."

"Do not argue with a patient person for he will win over you with the power of his patience."

"Do not argue with foolish and ignorant people as they will hurt you with their nonsense."

"You may only do that gheeba (backbiting) of a person which you would like him to speak of you."



Imam Ali (pbuh) has said: "Your speech is under your firm control as long as you do not speak, but if you speak you come under its control; so guard your tongue as you guard your gold and silver, for many a word is a blessing but leads to displeasure"

It is said that "The spoon always seems twice as large when you have to take a dose of your own medicine."

Words which appear to be just tiny molehills of idleness and frivolity here in the world will loom as mountains of error when we are faced with them on the day of Qiyama.

It has been estimated that most people speak enough in one week to fill a large 500 page book. In the average lifetime this would amount to 3000 volumes or 1,500,000 pages. It is a frightening thought that by these words we shall be either 'blessed' or 'condemned'.

Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (pbuh) has said that the most valuable thing Allah has given us is the tongue. None of His Messengers (Prophets) were given wealth or position through which to convey His message but were given the eloquence of the tongue.

It is said that one must speak little with people (only that which is necessary) and speak much with Allah; perhaps then one's heart will recognise Him.

Allah made everything with two doors, but he made four for the tongue - the two lips and the two sets of teeth.



There is an ancient Greek fable about a monster known as Proteus who had the power of assuming many shapes and appearances. He could become a tree or a pebble, a lion or a dove, a serpent or a lamb. He seemed to have very little difficulty in passing from one form into another. The fabled creature reminds one of the human tongue. It can bless or curse, express praise or whisper slander, it can spread a word of encouragement or spread vindictive hatred.



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