



Brotherhood in Action

SHAYKH HAYTHAM TAMIM



The manual for building
a harmonious society
as per the Sunnah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. All praise to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad, the final prophet of Allah, and upon his family, his companions, and his followers.

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The manual for building a harmonious society as per the Sunnah

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With thanks to Hana Khan



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Contents

Introduction	1
What is brotherhood?.....	1
How to avoid bad opinions about others	2
To perfect our conduct	2
Innocent until proven guilty.....	2
Backbiting.....	3
Don't judge based on only one side.....	5
Investigate the report	5
Stop the rumour when it reaches you	5
Defend the honour of your brother or sister until they are proven guilty	6
What could brotherhood look like?	7
How do we achieve good brotherhood?	7
What are the barriers to achieve brotherhood?	7
Consequences of not following the guidelines.....	8
How to deal with disagreements	8
<i>Nasiha</i> (sincere advice)	11
When and how to give advice.....	12
How to ensure peace in the community.....	14
Rights of a Muslim on another Muslim.....	14
Selflessness	17
Love for the sake of Allah.....	17
The introduction of brotherhood	18
Resolve conflicts.....	18
The 6 rights of every Muslim	19
Clear your heart of all ill feelings	20
Meet people with a pure heart.....	21
Do not despise sinners.....	22
Stick with the community	23
Spread love by expressing love.....	23
Transferring emotion to action.....	23
How the salam fosters love.....	24
Conclusion.....	24
About Shaykh Haytham Tamim	24



Introduction

Summarising compassion and brotherhood in Islam is a mammoth task, but this will give a brief overview of the topic.

The Quran says:

Believers are but a single Brotherhood: So make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear Allah, that you may receive Mercy. [49:10]

This is one of the major verses on this topic as well as the hadith from the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), as narrated by An Nu'man ibn Basheer:

عَنْ النُّعْمَانَ بْنِ بَشِيرٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهْرِ وَالْحُمَّى

“The example of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of one body. When any one of its limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”

This particular hadith is my favourite hadith on this topic. When the Prophet (peace be on him) talks about the attributes of love and mercy and compassion, these are not the exclusive property of Muslims, but we share them with the entire human race. The unique point in this hadith is the Prophet's (peace be on him) description of the relationship binding the believers together as a single body.

There are more than three million words in Arabic, but from these three million the Prophet (peace be on him) chose one particular word 'body' (*al jasad*), when he could have chosen any other. We need to reflect on this metaphor, as he specifically chose it. When I do a workshop on this, I usually distribute different limbs to the attendees. All together the limbs make up the body. However on his own, no attendee can claim he, by himself, is the body. In other words, all of us *together* constitute the body. Each limb is different in its nature - the heart, the blood circulation, lungs, brain. Just as the members of the human race, or any community or any family each one has differences. Yet despite their differences, they have to function together to make the body work. This is what the hadith is teaching us. You have to celebrate your differences, and work together as the body does. If we attack each other, we will die. In various illnesses, such as arthritis, certain cells of the body decide to attack the body, causing a major problem. The Prophet (peace be on him) is confirming that we need to be tolerating and accommodating towards one another, feeling compassion for each other.

The topic of love, which no extremist will ever mention, is covered by a vast number of narrations, including sound narrations from Muslim, Bukhari, Imam Ahmed, Tirmidhi and so on. This love is the overbidding emotion that should permeate a successful, harmonious and productive society.

What is brotherhood?

How do you achieve it and what are the benefits and the barriers to it? We will look at:

1. Brotherhood and its consequences, obstacles, etc.
2. When and how to give *nasiha* (sincere advice) in the best way and what to avoid.
3. The rights of a Muslim over another Muslim; obedience to leaders; the relationship and correct etiquettes between teachers and students; and how to deal with oppression.

How to avoid bad opinions about others

It's very common to hold bad opinions about people. It's a common human trait to be suspicious about other people and their motives. We will look at what the Quran and Sunnah teach us.

Apart from worshipping Allah and correcting our beliefs about Him (i.e. matters related to His oneness and *aqeedah* issues), all prophets and messengers were sent by Allah Almighty to achieve two fundamental aims, which were to teach us how to perfect both our character and our conduct.

To perfect our conduct

When you distil the message of Allah to humanity, it is simply to perfect human character and human conduct. The Prophet (peace be upon him) expressed this in the hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):

عَنْ مَالِكٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ حُسْنَ الْأَخْلَاقِ
عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ صَالِحَ الْأَخْلَاقِ
“Verily, I have only been sent to perfect righteous character and conduct.”
[Musnad Ahmad]

Their mission was to enable us to reach our personal potential as humans, through the development and improvement of ourselves and our interactions, and how we behave towards each other as agents within a society. These two aims are interconnected. The better our character, the better our conduct; and the better our conduct, the better our character. And these twin aspects have to be rooted in faith.

Faith determines our final destination in the Hereafter. One might have good character and good conduct in this life, but without the correct belief, one cannot enter Paradise. Allah Almighty directed us through the Quran and through His Messenger, the Prophet (peace be upon him), how to perfect our conduct and our character.

This booklet will extract some of the lessons from the Quran and Sunnah which show how to develop brotherhood based on good character and conduct.

Innocent until proven guilty¹

In this verse, in Surat al-Hujaraat, Allah Almighty tells us that we must not assume the worst about each other:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ
يَأْكُلُ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

'O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.' [49:12]

This means that the first thought that comes to one's mind should not be a bad opinion about someone. One should not assume that they were plotting and planning to do something harmful, even if they did something that was harmful. Instead, we should assume that their intentions were good by default. The Quran is teaching us a mechanism to rewire our minds, reprogramme our thoughts. In

¹ utruji.org/trial-by-rumour-vs-innocent-until-proven-guilty/

order to be good Muslims, good believers, Allah Almighty is saying, ‘avoid much suspicion, avoid much bad opinion’. One might be justified due to some issues and doubts, but in the first instance we have to avoid thinking badly of their intentions. The default is to think well unless proven otherwise.

It may be that negative assumptions we hold about people are due to our upbringing, but we have to change this formula as per the Sunnah and Quranic guidelines. This does not mean being naïve, but it is the principle that people are innocent until proven guilty. This was in Islam long before it came into the British judicial system. Thus we see that the Prophet (peace be upon him), as narrated by Abu Hurrayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), said:

‘Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales. Do not look for other’s faults. Do not spy one another, and do not practice ‘najsh’ (means to offer a high price for something in order to allure another customer who is interested in the thing). Do not be jealous of one another and do not nurse enmity against one another. Do not sever ties with one another. Become servants of Allah and be brothers to one another as He commanded.’ [Bukhari and Muslim]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) came to reform an ignorant society, a pre-Islamic *jahiliyah* environment which is often not dissimilar to our own time, despite our modernity. If you look at our social media, which may appear advanced, part of our new civilisation and digital age, but in fact it is still *jahiliyah.com*. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is telling these people how to change their default position.

Omar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say:

I’m not a fool but I will not let anyone fool me!

Nutshell: In your heart and in your mind do not doubt people in the first place; do not assume they are cunning and harbouring bad intentions.

Backbiting²

When you have a bad opinion about somebody and you start talking about them in their absence, this is the definition of backbiting, *gheebah*. It is from the root word *ghaib*, meaning not present. Hence it means that it is done behind someone’s back, rather than in their presence, or not face to face. Slander is when you hear something and you have no idea if it is true or not, and you start forwarding it or repeating it. Backbiting is mentioning something true about someone behind their back that they would not like you to say about them.

Backbiting is a very common practice, and has been a common disease in every century and in every family, community, and place. As infectious as the coronavirus, it is unstoppable. In any environment, whether it is work, or academic, or social, the moment someone begins to talk, you can catch it – listening to and enjoying gossip about others. Even if you do not contribute, but participate by lending your ears, you become culpable of this sin. However, the Quran exhorts us to block the backbiting virus. Don’t be part of it; don’t enjoy it. If you can’t stop it, change the topic or leave: this is how we fight this virus.

² utrujj.org/ghazali-on-backbiting-why-people-do-it-when-you-can-do-it-how-to-stop-doing-it/

What if you say something good about someone behind their back? This is not backbiting; this is praising them. It's not classified as haram, but should be within permissible limits – not over the top, such as saying someone is 'like the Omar of our time', as people say about some Arab leaders. This is false and this is hypocrisy, not praise. We have limits in everything.

Beyond backbiting is spreading lies about someone, known as *nameema* – creating false and fabricated news about somebody. This is slander and it is haram. They are both branches of talking negatively about others – though one is true and other is false. It does not matter if you heard it or said it, made it up or spread it – it is sinful to be in the chain, though the sin is greater if you are the origin of it. If you hear something, it does not give you a licence to repeat it. You cannot pass on any information until you have verified its accuracy or authenticity. In fact, the one who relays everything he hears will inevitably end up passing on untruths as not everything that he heard and passed on it true. Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

وَحَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ يَحْيَى، أَخْبَرَنَا هُشَيْمٌ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ التَّمِيمِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي عُثْمَانَ النَّهْدِيِّ، قَالَ قَالَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ
تَعَالَى عَنْهُ بِحَسَبِ الْمَرْءِ مِنَ الْكُذِبِ أَنْ يُحَدِّثَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعَ

“It is enough falsehood for someone to speak of everything he hears.” [Muslim]

The prophetic way to deal with any piece of news is to stop it. Unless it's authentic and there's a need to spread it, you don't repeat it, post it, or share it. This applies not just to speech, but very especially to social media.

Though responsibility lies with the one who started it in the first place, everyone in the chain is sinful, even if what they are spreading appears to be good but is not authentic, such as a hadith or story about a companion. Every story which is heart-warming is not authentic. If our criteria to judge information is how it makes us feel, then this can easily lead to exaggeration and deviation. The basis of Islam is truth, which means there is no room for adding to the religion. We have checks and balances in place to preserve the authenticity of our knowledge, and while it may seem that we are encouraging others in faith, if the hadith we share is fabricated, we are going against what makes Islam stand apart from all other religions – its adherence to the absolute truth. Therefore, unless you have certainty about any piece of religious information, do not share it.

It was narrated that 'Abdullah bin 'Amr said:

'I saw the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) circumbulating the Kaaba and saying: 'How good you are and how good your fragrance; how great you are and how great your sanctity. By the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, the sanctity of the believer is greater before Allah than your sanctity, his blood and his wealth, and to think anything but good of him.' [Ibn Majah]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) mentioned here, while performing *tawaaf* around the Kaaba and marvelling at how glorious and fragrant the Kaaba is, with its grace and tranquility, that the sanctity of each human is even greater than that – man is more sacred than the Kaaba itself. Therefore, the respect with which we view the Kaaba is the same respect with which we should view every person. Yet we don't treat humans as we treat the Kaaba. From a marketing point of view, when you want to elevate a product, you link it with something precious and create an association with that thing to make it important in people's eyes. Here the Prophet (peace be upon him) uses the Kaaba to illustrate to us that the human whom we vilify with ease is just as, in fact more sacred than the Kaaba.

With this comparison, we see why tarnishing someone's reputation and to spread rumours or negativity about them is so haram.

Don't judge based on only one side

عَلِيمًا سَمِيعًا اللَّهُ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ وَكَانَ الْقَوْلُ مِنَ بَاسِئِرٍ أَلْحَرَّ اللَّهُ لَا يُجِبُّ

Allah does not like the public mention of evil except by one who has been wronged. And ever is Allah Hearing and Knowing. [4:148]

Another rule which determines the formation of brotherhood is not judging based on one side of the story. There are many stories in the Quran which illustrate this point – not only how easily it is done, but also the repercussions of doing it. For instance, the most famous of these is the story of Dawood (peace be on him) which is quite lengthy, but its salient point is that a brother came to Dawood and said, 'My brother has 99 sheep and I have only 1 goat, and he asked me to give him this 1 goat'. Then Dawood, without hearing the other side of the story, concluded, 'Your brother is an oppressor.' However the revelation corrected him and commanded him to hear the other side of the story, which revealed that the truth was not as he had assumed based on one side.

Always remember not to form a judgement without hearing both sides. We have seen this recently, particularly in the media, that Muslim leaders and celebrities in the UK and USA and elsewhere have been shot down based on an accusation, without being given the opportunity to state their side. The media is quick to publicise any attacks and will do so without sufficient verification that there is substance to a story.

Investigate the report

The Islamic position on rumours is not to accept them without investigating them. Instead, we often find that at the hint of a rumour, people are quick to chime in and say they always suspected that person was dubious and dodgy. This is very sad, and it can ruin people's lives and livelihoods. This is why the Quran teaches us not to spread bad news, gossip or rumours. Investigating and authenticating is very important, especially when the person who is spreading the news is a troublemaker. We need to know the reality of the situation before we allow someone's reputation to be attacked. We would hate for that to happen to us. What goes around comes around, and if you spread rumours about others, do not be surprised if you become the victim of rumours yourself. I have seen this happen.

ءَامِنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحَبُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ يَا أَيُّهَا

O you who believe! If a troublemaker brings you any news, investigate, lest you harm people out of ignorance, and you become regretful for what you have done.

[49:6]

Stop the rumour when it reaches you³

Allah Almighty says:

يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ وَاللَّهُ َوَالْآخِرَةُ الدُّنْيَا ءَامِنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الَّذِينَ فِي الْفَلْحِشَةُ يُحِبُونَ أَن تَشِيَعِ الَّذِينَ إِنَّ

³ utruji.org/the-islamic-position-on-rumours/

Those who love to see immorality spread among the believers—for them is a painful punishment, in this life and in the Hereafter. God knows, and you do not know. [24:19]

The general guidelines here are to curb the spread of immorality, or *fahisha*. Wait until you have the facts, proven through evidence etc. before you denounce someone.

لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ نُّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

There is no good in much of their private counsels, except for him who advocates charity, or kindness, or reconciliation between people. Whoever does that, seeking God's approval, We will give him a great compensation [4:114]

Allah Almighty is teaching us that there is no good in internal plots and conversations unless they are exhorting good, encouraging people to give charity, or trying to reconcile between those who have fallen out. Whoever does this will be rewarded immensely.

This verse is changing people's mentality, rewiring their minds, as Allah Almighty tells us how to deal with rumours. It was revealed following the episode when false rumours of Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) spread through the community. Had people responded to the rumour by challenging it, killing it and defending her, the situation would have been the opposite.

Defend the honour of your brother or sister until they are proven guilty

بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ الْآمِنُونَ لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ

Why, when you heard about it, the believing men and women did not think well of one another, and say, 'This is an obvious lie'? [24:12]

Allah Almighty says when you hear something derogatory about someone, do not believe it. We should have a good opinion about believers, male or female – that is the default position. Defend them rather than stick your dagger in as well. This is haram. Yet people specialise in this in our community and do this on a daily basis, as entertainment. They enjoy it, and we have to be careful not to be around such people because it affects our heart and our relationship with Allah Almighty in the first place, and our relationship with people around us.

In his Farewell Sermon on the day of Sacrifice at Mina, the Prophet (peace be upon him), as narrated by Abu Bakrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

وَعَنْ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ فِي خُطْبَتِهِ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ بِمِنَى فِي حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ: إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ، وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ حَرَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا، أَلَا هَلْ بَلَغْتُ مَتَفَقُّ عَلَيْهِ

'Verily your blood, your property and your honour are as sacred and inviolable as the sanctity of this day of yours, in this month of yours and in this town of yours. Verily! I have conveyed this message to you.' (Bukhari and Muslim)

It is therefore haram to attack, kill, or steal from your brother or sister, or to attack their honour. There is no coincidence that the Prophet (peace be on him) mentioned this in his final farewell speech,

knowing that people would jump back into *jahiliyah* ways and urging them as his parting wisdom not to do that.

In the hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) set out the guidelines. Abu Darda' reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

Whoever defends the reputation of his brother, Allah will defend his face from the hellfire on the Day of Resurrection. [Tirmidhi and Ahmad]

Allah protects those from hellfire who defend their brothers and sisters. Imagine, when someone is being accused person and shot down by everyone, if one person followed this hadith and said, 'I want to defend my face from hell.' Then this would stop. The whole community would stop attacking him. This should be the default position. Abu Barzah al-Aslami narrated the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'O community of people, who believed by their tongue, and belief did not enter their hearts, do not backbite Muslims, and do not search for their faults, for if anyone searches for their faults, Allah will search for his fault, and if Allah searches for the fault of anyone, He disgraces him in his house.' [Abu Dawoud and Ahmad]

This hadith is very deep, and teaches us that those who like exposing others for their faults and defects will have their faults and *awrah* (nakedness) exposed by Allah on the Day of Judgement. It is stern warning.

If someone does something wrong in private, don't go and dig it up. This is paparazzi mentality, who do have no qualms zooming into the bedroom of celebrities and splashing them across the pages of magazines and making their private lives public; this is completely haram. They may be doing something wrong, but it does not mean we have the right to invade their privacy and to publicise their mistakes.

What could brotherhood look like?

From the Quran and sunnah we see that there should be no envy, no hatred, no suspicion, no harm, no cheating, no betrayal. We must not disconnect from one another, or look down at one another; this has to be based on trust. Brotherhood is founded on trust, not doubt. And it is based on loving for others what you love for yourself. It is built on cooperation, kindness, tolerance, mercy, and respect. It engenders an atmosphere of honour, protection, and support. This should be the default position of brotherhood and sisterhood.

How do we achieve good brotherhood?

Simply by following the guidelines. Allah Almighty sent down these guidelines not as decoration, but to be followed.

What are the barriers to achieve brotherhood?

There are plenty of barriers to brotherhood, and these include the following:

1. Shaytan – he certainly does not want to promote harmony and good relationships
2. Our *nafs* (ego, lower self)
3. Arrogance
4. Anger – sometimes prevents us from having a good relationship
5. Misunderstandings – sometimes create a lot of problems
6. Rumours – you can buy into these rumours, but rumours are hearsay, not fact

7. Ignorance – sometimes we create barriers out of ignorance

Consequences of not following the guidelines

When we do not follow the Quranic guidelines, instead of brotherhood we achieve disunity between families, communities, and countries, and our Ummah is disunited.

How to deal with disagreements⁴

It's very natural to have disagreements. It's not healthy to have only one opinion or one way of thinking. The Quran has mentioned disagreements many times in different verses, and we also have many narrations in the sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) about this.

Disagreements are healthy if we know how to deal with them, or very distracting and disturbing if we do not. That is why we need to have guidelines. The first thing we need to do is listen with the intention of understanding, rather than judging or replying. The art of listening properly would resolve half the disagreements that arise. Some statistics say that 80% of the conflicts could be resolved by attentive listening. This means not interrupting, and making a conscious effort to understand the speaker.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was masterful at listening. When you read his description in Al Shama'il, we see that he would give the speaker his full attention. He would listen until they finished, and were fully satisfied that they had been heard. We do not usually extend this level of attentiveness to others. Moreover, we tend to hear rather than listen.

Listening is about taking in what is being said, analysing it, understanding it, and not replying. Sometimes, instead of listening we are busy preparing our answers in our mind. This is wrong; we need to train ourselves not to judge. It's not an easy task, I know that, but with some practice we can achieve it, *insha'Allah*. I see communication problems all the time within the community, and particularly in couples with marital issues. Many of these conflicts are due to the husband or wife jumping to conclusions before the other spouse finished.

Allah Almighty in the Quran said:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

So fear Allah and adjust all matters of difference among you. [8:1]

In fact, it is not bad to disagree on matters. Rather, it makes life interesting, as having a variety of different views strengthens us, and gives us different ways of thinking, approaches and angles. It is a matter of managing differing viewpoints in a good way.

Some people can only see one point of view. This is what I hate about overseas fatwas coming into this country. They have limited vision and cannot be cut and paste in a different environment, so they should not be forced on us. Each fatwah has to suit the environment it is applied to, unless the fatwah is concerning timeless and immutable rulings. Current political and social conditions must be taken into account when applying fatwahs. One size does not fit all times and purposes.

It is also important to understand the cause of a disagreement – it may be a cultural issue, or it may be to do with understanding. An agreement can be achieved when both sides respect each other's view, as long as they are within permissible boundaries.

How does one draw the line between a Sufi vs. Salafi argument? As long as both opinions are within the boundaries, they are entitled to them. We have to learn to live and let live. Even the companions

⁴ utruji.org/without-reconciliation-we-can-never-be-a-strong-ummah/

did not act as clones of each other in the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him). One of them said, 'We used to travel and some of us would fast during Ramadan and others would not.' None of them accused the others that they had less imaan because they were not fasting. They made their decisions within the permissible limits.

During the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), there were disagreements and the Prophet (peace be on him) showed them how to reconcile these. On one occasion, one of the companions Amr ibn Aas was leading a group. During their travels, ibn Aas had a wet dream, but it was a very cold night so he decided not to do ghusl but tayammum, and then led the prayer. The companions followed him, but when they returned, they went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and told him what had happened – that he had led the congregation *junub* (in a state of major impurity). The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not make a judgement before asking Amr ibn Aas to come forward to tell his side of the story. He replied that Allah Almighty says, 'Do not kill yourself, Allah is most merciful to you,' explaining that it was a very cold night, and he was afraid that that if he were to take a shower, he might become ill and die. As the leader of the group, he did not want this to happen. The Prophet (peace be upon him) smiled, and it was a consent from him.

If there are disagreements in matters of *fiqh* then it should not be a big deal – we can follow different opinions. As long they are from an authentic source, from a reputable school of thought, then that's fine. Unfortunately, this is not how people see differences. Often it is a case of my way or the highway – the attitude that only one school is right, and the others are outside of Islam, which is completely wrong. Even the founders of these schools never claimed that their school or their opinion was the only way of practicing Islam; it is sad that many of their followers do not accept any opinion to be valid if it is not from their school of thought.

Sadly, I have seen this on some Shariah boards, where certain members say that unless the Hanafi school is followed they are not interested. They fail to see the bigger picture: that they are not there to serve the Hanafi school, but to serve Islam. It shows how rigidity leads to strong disagreements, which lead to disunity and conflict.

Abu Darda (may Allah be pleased with him) reported:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِأَفْضَلِ مِنْ دَرَجَةِ الصِّيَامِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالصَّدَقَةِ قَالُوا بَلَى قَالَ صَلَاحُ ذَاتِ
الْبَيْنِ فَإِنَّ فَسَادَ ذَاتِ الْبَيْنِ هِيَ الْخَالِقَةُ

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "Shall I not tell you of what is better in degree than extra fasting, prayer, and charity?" They said, "Of course!"

The Prophet said, "Reconciliation between people. Verily, corrupted relations between people is the razor." [Tirmidhi]

In this hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) showed us that bringing the hearts of communities, families, or conflicting groups together is even better than *siyam* and *qiyam*. This is because *siyam* and *qiyam* are for you alone but reconciliation is for the greater good. There is a difference between public and private benefit, and public takes precedence.

In another hadith, we are told that Allah Almighty will open the gates of paradise every Monday and Thursday and will forgive everyone who did not commit shirk, except two people: those who are in conflict. Allah will say to the angels, 'Postpone forgiveness until they reconcile'. That is how important reconciliation is.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ تَفْتَحُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْاِثْنَيْنِ وَيَوْمَ الْخَمِيسِ فَيُغْفَرُ لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِلَّا رَجُلًا كَانَتْ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ أَخِيهِ شَحْنَاءُ فَيَقَالُ أَنْظِرُوا هَذَيْنِ حَتَّى يَصْطَلِحَا أَنْظِرُوا هَذَيْنِ حَتَّى يَصْطَلِحَا

“The gates of Paradise are opened on Monday and Thursday. Allah forgives every servant who does not associate anything with Him, except a man with enmity between himself and his brother. It will be said: Delay these two until they reconcile, delay these two until they reconcile, delay these two until they reconcile.” [Muslim]

I have thought about this a lot – why do we have so much emphasis on reconciliation? Why will Allah Almighty not forgive people until they reconcile? It is because they are disturbing the fabric of the community and the relationships within the Islamic community. Allah Almighty wants the human community to be based on love, mercy and forgiveness. If we tamper with any of these, it impacts the whole community. Therefore, do not hate one another, do not spy on one another, do not harm one another, because it upsets the tranquillity of the community.

When we neglect this, a myriad of troubles ensues, as we know from our own Ummah. Therefore, in order to give believers the utmost encouragement to reconcile, Allah says those who do not reconcile will not be forgiven. In order to reconcile we need to break ‘Miss Nafs’ – Miss Ego.

There is an important rule we need to understand. If you have a disagreement based on *fiqh* issues or scholarly issues, you cannot say, ‘No akhi, what you’re doing is wrong’, because he’s following an authentic school. This is why scholars established a maxim which is that you cannot object to a matter which scholars disagree about.

Tarawih is an issue which never fails to evoke hot-tempered reactions from worshippers. I remember once, we were praying *tarawih* in Ramadan, and we ended by praying the *witr*. There are two to three ways to pray the *witr* in the sunnah and accordingly we have different versions in the different schools.⁵

The Hanafi version is based on one of the ways the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray the *witr*, which is similar to *maghrib* with 3 consecutive *rakaats*. As the majority of the community I was leading were Hanafi, I prayed the *witr* in the Hanafi way. However, a man praying behind me immediately began shouting, ‘What is this prayer? How did you invent this kind of prayer?’ I said, ‘Calm down, *ya akhi*, calm down’. I asked him where he was from, but he was so angry that he could barely reply. He thought I had just invented a new *deen*. Eventually he said he was from the UAE. I asked him what his objection was, and he said he had never seen the *witr* performed like that – which is not surprising, as the people in the Gulf most commonly pray it the Shafi’i or Hanbali way. I asked him if he was a *muhadith* (scholar of hadith) or if had read all the hadith and the sunnah related to the *witr* prayer. He said nothing. I explained that Imam Tahawi narrated this style of praying in his book in the third century *hijri*, and that we have different narrations regarding the *witr* prayer. He started calming down. I said that it is fine for him to follow the Shafi’i school or the Hanbali school, but it does not

⁵ utrujj.org/how-do-you-perform-the-witr-prayer/

invalidate the Hanafi method of praying. Something does not become inauthentic or invalid just because one is not familiar with it.

Therefore, our objections can stem from us thinking we know when we don't.

Nasiha (sincere advice)

Do we need *nasiha*? When does somebody need *nasiha*?

The Prophet (peace be upon him), said in a very famous hadith that religion equates to giving very sincere advice.

Jareer ibn 'Abdillah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I gave my oath of allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) pledging to establish regular prayer, pay zakah and to give sincere nasiha for every Muslim. [Bukhari and Muslim]

Sincere *nasiha* is about giving the right advice. When someone needs your opinion, don't give him the wrong information, don't betray him, as he trusted you. It's better to say, 'I don't know,' than giving him the wrong advice. Say, 'This is not my area of expertise. I have no idea about how to do this,' but don't make things up because he asked you. That is a betrayal of his trust. In any case, he will discover later that you have given him the wrong advice – he might have invested in the stock market, and made a loss. Then he will come back to you and be upset with you.

Some people might even be stingy in giving advice, fearing that the other person will excel beyond them. However, your provision (*rizq*) is predestined. This does not mean you give him your granny's secret recipe, or your business secrets, but if he is asking you for a piece of advice that you can easily give without endangering your business, then it will be rewarding for you and beneficial for him. Tamim ad-Dari (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

الِدِينِ النَّصِيحَةُ فُلْنَا لِمَنْ قَالَ لِلَّهِ وَلِكِتَابِهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِأَيِّمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَعَامَّتِهِمْ

'Religion is sincerity.' We said: To whom? He said: 'To Allah, to His Book, to His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.' [Muslim]

We are all familiar with this hadith, which uses the word *deen*. It equates the whole religion with sincere advice (*nasiha*) because our *deen* is based on truthfulness, not cheating and betrayal, and the believer by default has to be a truthful person.

On the authority of Safwan ibn Sulaym who said:

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was asked, "Can the believer be a coward?" He said, "Yes." He was asked, "Can the believer be a miser?" He said, "Yes." He was asked, "Can the believer be a liar?" He said, "No." [Malik]

Thus, a believer can have miserly traits and cowardice, but as per the narration he can never be a liar. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was known *as-sadiqq al-amin*: the trusted, the trustworthy, the truthful. He invested in this by asking his people, the Qurayash, as per his famous first public address following the revelation, whether they would believe him when he told them the truth and they confirmed that they would. Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سَلَامٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ مُرَّةَ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَرَجَ إِلَى الْبَطْحَاءِ فَصَعِدَ إِلَى الْجِبَلِ فَنَادَى " يَا صَبَا حَاهُ " . فَاجْتَمَعَتْ إِلَيْهِ قُرَيْشٌ فَقَالَ " أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ حَدَّثْتُكُمْ أَنَّ الْعَدُوَّ مُصَبِّحُكُمْ أَوْ مُمْسِيكُمْ، أَكُنْتُمْ تُصَدِّقُونِي " . قَالُوا نَعَمْ. قَالَ " فَإِنِّي نَذِيرٌ لَكُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ " . فَقَالَ

أَبُو لَهَبٍ أَلْهَدَا جَمَعْتَنَا تَبًّا لَكَ. فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ {تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ} إِلَى آخِرِهَا

The Prophet (peace be on him) went out towards Al-Batha' and ascended the mountain and shouted, "O Sabahah!" So the Quraish people gathered around him. He said, "Do you see? If I tell you that an enemy is going to attack you in the morning or in the evening, will you believe me?" They replied, "Yes." He said, "Then I am a plain warner to you of a coming severe punishment." Abu Lahab said, "Is it for this reason that you have gathered us? May you perish! " Then Allah revealed: 'Perish the hands of Abu Lahab!' (Bukhari)

This is the importance of being a truthful person. People know that you do not tell lies, and so when the Prophet (peace be upon him) conveyed the revelation, people knew that he had not made it up, even though they rejected it.

Therefore, if you are qualified to give the advice, then bismillah, give it. Otherwise, don't make yourself an authority and start giving fatwas; this is haram. Yet when it comes to *deen*, *masha'Allah* everyone thinks he or she is a Mufti! And if they know some Arabic, *masha'Allah* they think they are in the forefront, and they can drop some Arabic words and people will think how knowledgeable they are. Unless they are trained under authentic teachers, don't buy into this.

Ibn al-Atheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Sincerity towards the common folk of the Muslims means: guiding them to that which is in their best interests. [an-Nihaayah]

Sincerity means you have to love for others what you love for yourself. Do it for Allah's sake, not to tell people off and say, 'I told you, but you didn't listen!' This is not advice. Yet this is often the case. Advice has to come from a genuine place, from your heart, again. Otherwise it may well be the wrong advice.

When brothers and sisters give the wrong advice, it leads to more conflict and more difficulties in their lives. Advice has to give you a way out, has to give you ease, have to give you more comfort, not the opposite. Otherwise, it's not the right advice.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) is emphasising that one needs to be careful when giving advice. If the intention is not pure, it can ruin someone's business so they won't be a threat for that person, or ruin someone's relationship because they do not have their best interests at heart.

When and how to give advice⁶

Part of giving advice includes choosing the right time, the right words, and the right tone. You might have a very sincere intention and be telling the truth from your heart, but your timing might be completely off. In that scenario your valuable advice will fall on deaf ears, they will not listen to you. For instance, while a spouse is driving, if they take the wrong route, let them navigate. They will figure it out, unless they want your input. We need to know when to stop, as sometimes we keep going on and on.

Always try to choose the best words. If you choose the wrong words or the wrong tone, even with the best advice, it will ruin it.

Usually advice should be given in private. There are some exceptions, but generally speaking this is the default position. I've come across some scholars who quote very weak or sometimes fabricated hadith in their speeches. *Alhamdulillah* with the blessing of Allah Almighty, I've worked in the field of hadith for many years, so I'm familiar with many narrations. Not saying I'm a *muhadith*, but

⁶ utrujj.org/self-righteousness-vs-kindness-when-giving-counsel/

alhamdulillah I have good knowledge about it. If I hear this, I wait for the opportunity to point it out them in private.

Once I heard a scholar quote the story that *at-tahiyat, assalawatu mubarakatu at taiyibah lillah assalaamualaika ai yuhan nabiyu wa rahmah tullahi wa barakatuh* was the exchange between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Allah Almighty during his ascent to heaven (*miraj*) and Allah replied '*assalamualaika ai yuhan nabiyu wa barakatuh*'. And then the angels said, '*assalaamualaina wa ala ibadillahi salihin*'. I said to the scholar that it was a lovely story, but unfortunately it has no basis, no *sanad* (chain of transmission), no authenticity whatsoever. He was surprised, and commented that his shaykh used to say this. I would love for this story to be true, but it is not the case that everything you love or that sounds good is a hadith.

When delivering *nasiha*, do not deliver it as if you know better than the other person and as if you are looking down at them, and they are sinners. You need to be very humble and ask Allah Almighty to give you sincerity and humility while you are delivering it, and say, 'Ya Allah make my words go to their heart and enable me to say the right thing'.

If someone is wrong, how should we correct it? First, you have to assess the situation – if they are stubborn or vicious, it will create more trouble than there already is, so it's better to minimise the harm than fuel it. This is maxim in fiqh that preventing harm should be given priority over promoting benefit (*dar' al-mafasid awla min jalbu al masali*):

'Minimising evil is better than maximising benefit'.

Therefore, if you know that telling someone of their mistakes will make them go ballistic, then it is better not to say anything. That way the evil is contained at 1 rather than 10. It depends on your scenario, and you need to be very careful in your assessment. One of the things scholars say which is a general rule is that 'whoever has more knowledge, has less objections.' It is often newbies who go round correcting everyone. Now when I look back at myself 25 years ago, I laugh. I used to object to many things. The more you learn, the more you say, 'I wish I had known this, then I would never have created any problems.' The more you know, the more you are able to deal with conflicts around you. The less you know, the more you object. There is a whole universe outside your home, but all you can see is what is visible from your window. Therefore, when you judge something remember there is more in it than you can make out. Take this into account before you jump to any conclusions or rush to correct someone. And make a risk assessment before you say what you think – you might create a great deal more harm than good. This is one reason why silence can be golden.

If you see injustice taking place, what should you do? The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained this by taking a familiar Arabic proverb and adding a twist to it. Anas bin Malik narrated that Allah's Messenger (peace on him) said:

Help your brother whether he is an oppressor or an oppressed.

A man said: O Allah's Messenger (peace be on him) I will help him if he is oppressed, but if he is an oppressor, how shall I help him?

The Prophet (peace be on him) said: By preventing him from oppressing (others), for that is how to help him. [Bukhari]

It was clear to the Arabs that the one who is oppressed needs help, but they were puzzled how the oppressor needed help. The hadith shows that we support justice both by helping the oppressed and preventing the oppressor from oppressing others. This changed the *jahiliyah* mindset of siding with your brother regardless of whether he is right or wrong. Islam taught us that we have to stop injustice

wherever we find it. But of course we have to do this with wisdom, depending on the ingredients and the scenario, then we choose the best strategy.

How to ensure peace in the community

Peace comes when we choose the right leader – whether it is for the project, the community, the mosque or the country, choosing the right person brings peace. Conversely, handing leadership to those who are not capable creates more problems. As the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, when leadership is given to the wrong people then the Final Hour is imminent. Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

“When trust is lost, then wait for the Hour.” Abu Hurayrah said, “How is the trust lost, O Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet (peace be on him) said, “When authority is given to those who do not deserve it, then wait for the Hour.”

[Bukhari]

It is one of the signs of the Day of Judgement that the wrong people will be in the wrong positions, as we are witnessing today – at an international level as well as locally, with my respect, in our mosques. We still have good leaders in our community, but unfortunately we have plenty who are wearing the wrong hats.

Rights of a Muslim on another Muslim⁷

Allah Almighty says in the Quran:

لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ اللَّهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِنَّمَا

‘Believers are indeed brothers so reconcile between your brothers’ [49:10]

This is the bondship of *imaan*. We have two main connections between us and others: the connection of blood and the connection of faith. Blood connections are family ties, though we might be connected to someone by blood but not be very close to them. Allah Almighty is encouraging us to have strong relationships with our brothers and sisters. We also have a brotherhood and sisterhood based on *imaan*, not only *raheem* (the womb). The verse above is referring to believers, not just relatives.

The bondship of *imaan* is the glue in that binds our Ummah together as one body. It is our connection to our brothers and sisters that are not born from our mother. As humans, Allah created our nature to be very social: we like to mingle and mix with people, we do not like isolation. The one who is isolated has an issue, and may need help from a psychiatrist or a psychologist, because they cannot live with others. This is the exception. By default, we love to live with people around us. Therefore we need to work out how to improve our relationships. Allah Almighty teaches us the guidelines.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) established the pillars of the human society when he arrived in Madinah. Any successful society has to abide by these pillars. One of these pillars was to spread the salam. Abdullah bin Salam (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

قَالَ لَمَّا قَدِمَ النَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - الْمَدِينَةَ أَنْجَفَلَ النَّاسَ قِبَلَهُ وَقِيلَ قَدْ قَدِمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَدْ قَدِمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَدْ قَدِمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ . ثَلَاثًا فَجَنَّتْ فِي النَّاسِ لِأَنْظَرٍ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَتْ وَجْهَهُ عَرَفْتُمْ أَنَّ وَجْهَهُ لَيْسَ بِوَجْهِ كَذَّابٍ فَكَانَ أَوَّلَ شَيْءٍ سَمِعْتُهُ تَكَلَّمَ بِهِ أَنْ قَالَ " يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ وَأَطْعِمُوا الطَّعَامَ وَصَلُّوا الْأَرْحَامَ وَصَلُّوا بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّاسُ نِيَامٌ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِسَلَامٍ

⁷ utruji.org/ghazalis-20-rules-for-dealing-with-people-rules-19-20-avoid-the-people-of-ghafalah-and-the-rights-of-muslims/

“When the Prophet (peace be on him) came to Madinah, the people rushed to meet him, and it was said: ‘The Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) has come! The Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) has come! The Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) has come!’ Three times. I came with the people to see him, and when I saw his face clearly, I knew that his face was not the face of a liar. The first thing I heard him say was when he said: ‘O people! Spread (the greeting of) Salam, feed others, uphold the ties of kinship, and pray during the night when people are sleeping, and you will enter Paradise with Salam.” [ibn Majah]

Society functions well when people are connected to each other, when they notice each other, and this cannot happen until they greet one another. The Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasised from the very beginning how important it is to ‘spread salam’. The greeting is the start of creating a harmonious, loving and caring community. When you meet your brother or sister with a smile on your face you break the barriers. A smile is an instant ice-breaker.

The pillars of any society, not just Muslim society, are to spread salam, feed the food (which means look after those who are in need), maintain your family relations – don’t sever them or let them become disconnected – and pray in the night whilst people are sleeping, and the result is that you will be admitted to Jannah peacefully.

Through these Allah Almighty is teaching us how to reconnect with each other. I can tell you from my experience of studying and teaching *fiqh* for many years: there are plenty of rulings in *fiqh* which maintain harmony in the community. For instance, gazumping is haram from an Islamic point of view. After the sale has been agreed and everything is in place, no one can interject with a higher offer. This is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) said one should not inflate the price after a sale has been agreed. Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

“Do not be envious of one another; do not artificially inflate prices against one another; do not hate one another; do not shun one another; and do not undercut one another in business transactions; and be as fellow-brothers and servants of Allah.

A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He neither oppresses him nor humiliates him nor looks down upon him. Piety is here - and he pointed to his chest three times. It is evil enough for a Muslim to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. All things of a Muslim are inviolable for another Muslim: his blood, his property and his honour.”
[Muslim]

Allah Almighty says:

ءَامِنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ الَّذِينَ بَيَّأُهَا

You who believe, fulfil your obligations [5: 1]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said:

“Muslims must fulfil the terms of their agreement,” “Transactors retain the right to rescind the sale as long as they have not parted company,” and “Contracts are the binding law of the transacting parties.”

Based on this, the price agreed is binding for both parties. The seller is not entitled to ask the buyer for a different price after completing the contract, so long as the buyer does not absolve the seller from the sale. After an agreement has taken place, unless it is still being negotiated, we can see the

wisdom in it being haram to increase the price, as doing this would create animosity. If someone is about to get possession of a house and another buyer swipes it from under his nose by offering more for it, he will be understandably upset. This is one of many reasons behind the prohibition of undercutting or gazumping, as this can lead to the severing of relationships.

Ibn Umar reported that the Prophet (peace be on him) said:

لا يبيع بعضكم على بيع بعض، ولا يخطب على خطبة أخيه إلا أن يأذن له

"A person should not enter into a transaction when his (Muslim) brother has already negotiated, nor should he make a proposal of marriage when that of his brother is pending, except with the permission of the latter." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Backbiting is another example. No one is happy if people are backbiting them, even if they are getting their *hasanat*, because it undermines your reputation and makes you look bad. There are plenty of rulings which promote and safeguard harmony, love and care in the community. Allah Almighty wants us to have a good community – not an ideal utopian community, but a good community, which has trust and respect for one another.

In the famous narration of Anas bin Malik, the Prophet (peace be on him) said:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ

By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, none of you has believed until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself of goodness. [An Nasa'i]

Here, one's level of *imaan* is connected with how much one wishes well for others. Unfortunately, it is more common to measure the level of someone's *imaan* from the length of their or beard, or by their *thowb/abaya*, or the colour of their scarves, etc. Real *taqwa* and real *imaan* is to love for others what you love for yourself. Your action might reveal it or might not, but it's between you and Allah Almighty. Do you really love for others what you love for yourself?

This concept is not restricted to one's brother, but more generally one's brothers and sisters in humanity – as Muslims, we have to want goodness for others regardless of whether they are Muslim or not.

In another narration, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said says, '**You will not attain the highest level of imaan**, until you love goodness for others as you love it for yourself'. This is the real measure of imaan and the way to measure and assess it.

You can measure your level of imaan by how much you wish well for others. The more you want them to do well, the higher your level of imaan.

Phoney love for others is often displayed at election time: all of a sudden, we see candidates showing a heightened concern for others and seeking out people they haven't given a moment's thought at any other time. They become active in their mosque or community or constituency. Where were they all these years? Why the sudden interest?

Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

'A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his

brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever screened a Muslim, Allah will screen him on the Day of Resurrection.' [Bukhari]

A Muslim is a brother for another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to his enemy. He should fulfil his needs, help and support him, etc. You can see this permeate our Sunnah, encouraging good relationships, a harmonious community, and support for one another. If someone comes to your aid when you are in need, you will hurry to support him when he needs it the most. But if nobody is there for you when you are in a difficult place, you will not care about them deep down, and this is how we end up becoming distant from others. Therefore Allah Almighty and the Prophet (peace be upon him) is teaching us the steps we need to take to create a loving, caring and harmonious community.

Selflessness⁸

Mu'adh ibn Jabal reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَجَبَتْ مَحَبَّتِي لِلْمُتَحَابِّينَ فِيَّ وَالْمُتَجَالِسِينَ فِيَّ وَالْمُنْتَازِعِينَ فِيَّ وَالْمُتَبَادِلِينَ فِيَّ

"Allah Almighty said: My love is assured for those who love each other for My sake, who sit together for My sake, who visit each other for My sake, and who spend on each other for My sake." [Musnad Ahmed]

You cannot overestimate the blessing of having Allah's love, and here Allah Almighty is telling us how to achieve it – we have to love one another for His sake. The way you love one another is by visiting one another, helping one another, giving financial support to one another, and encouraging others. All these actions will lead to Allah's love. They may take us outside our comfort zone.

Our comfort zone is me, myself and I. Usually we focus on our own needs and wants, but Allah Almighty is telling us to come out of our comfort zone and reach out to others. Share and spread goodness, do not keep it to yourself. By default we love ourselves, but to love others needs training, apart from your parents and children whom you love by natural instinct.

Love for the sake of Allah

What does it mean to love for Allah's sake or hate for Allah's sake? We need to understand the basics and the rules and the guidelines: we hate the action; we do not hate the person. When he changes his course of action, you will have no personal issues against him. Your displeasure is linked to the action alone.

Loving for Allah's sake means that you love those who are obedient to Him not because of the benefit you gain from their friendship – because they are rich, or powerful or have status. Your love is not tainted by self-interest. This is demonstrated beautifully by the hadith of the angel who was sent by Allah in human form to a man who was visiting his brother in another village. The angel quizzed the man on why he was visiting his friend and once he established that his intention was purely for Allah's sake, he assured him that he had Allah's love.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be on him) said:

"A man set out to visit a brother (in Faith) in another town and Allah sent an angel on his way. When the man met the angel, the latter asked him, "Where do you intend to go?" He said, "I intend to visit my brother in this town". The angel said, "Have you done any favour to him?" He said, "No, I have no desire except to

⁸ utrujj.org/7-tools-to-fix-your-relationship-with-allah/

visit him because I love him for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and Glorious."
Thereupon the angel said, "I am a messenger to you from Allah (to inform you)
that Allah loves you as you love him (for His sake)". [Muslim]

The introduction of brotherhood

The second thing the Prophet (peace be upon him) established in Madinah after building the mosque was establishing brotherhood – *muakhat*⁹. The Prophet (peace be upon him) formed bond-ships between around sixty companions according to different narrations, partnering the immigrants from Makkah (Muhajireen) with the residents of Madinah (Ansar). He investigated them and personally matched them, for instance Salman al-Farsi and Abu Darda; Ammar and Khuzafa; Mus'ab and Abu Ayyub, in terms of character, likes, and feelings. Abdul Rahman bin Awf (may Allah be pleased with him) was made the brother of Saad ibn ar- Rabi' and the list goes on. They were partnerships that brought mutual benefit, as the Makkans had knowledge of Islam which they could teach the residents of Madinah. Meanwhile, the Ansar could help the Makkans settle, as they had left everything behind for the sake of Allah, so they could break the ice and ease them into the new climate, customs, and working conditions, and support them financially and socially. The relationships were so close that initially the brothers would even inherit from each other as real family members, until this was abrogated after around one and a half to two years. This brotherhood helped the migrants overcome their sorrows and homesickness at being uprooted and displaced. They shared their accommodation, belongings and what they earned. It was an incredible fostering of hospitality, generosity and gratitude. Such a brotherhood was truly unique in the history of migrations. It created a magnificent power, that would ultimately pull all of Arabia to Islam.

Is it possible to re-create this brotherhood again? We have different opinions – some scholars said that after the death of the Prophet (peace be on him) it cannot happen, while others say it may be re-ignited and re-established. I like this opinion, but it requires some work. We can boost our communities by pooling our talent, sharing knowledge, finance, and support.

Resolve conflicts

Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

'Whoever has wronged his brother, should ask for his pardon (before his death), as (in the Hereafter) there will be neither a Dinar nor a Dirham. (He should secure pardon in this life) before some of his good deeds are taken and paid to his brother, or, if he has done no good deeds, some of the bad deeds of his brother are taken to be loaded on him (in the Hereafter).' (Bukhari)

In this hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) is saying that if you have wronged somebody, you should sort it out before you die, because in the *akhirah* you cannot sort it out. The only way you can sort it out is by depleting the bank account in which you accumulated your *hasanat* (good deeds). You will have to give away your *hasanat*, and if you have no *hasanat* then your destination will not be heaven. Therefore finish any unfinished business and settle all your scores before it's too late. We still have dirham and dinar in this *dunya*, so we can sort out our affairs through some compromises in the *dunya*. It requires that we break our *nafs* and have humility. In the *akhirah*, those whom we owe will be able to take from our account, for which we worked tirelessly. They will be able to just take from it, so let's sort it out in the *dunya* before it's too late.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

⁹ utruji.org/brotherhood-friendship-and-wilayah/

'It is not lawful for a Muslim to desert (not to speak to) his Muslim brother for more than three days while meeting, one turns his face to one side and the other turns his face to the other side. Lo! The better of the two is the one who starts greeting the other.' [Bukhari]

Taking the decision to never speak to someone again is not an Islamic stance. The best among two is the one who starts the reconciliation, who sends his *salam* or who greets the other. Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught us to break the barriers in our mind that Shaytan puts up.

Why three days? I've been fascinated by this ruling for a long time. There are some scenarios which can take longer than three days, but generally in three days we regain our equilibrium and calm down, and are able to make up. Though we are all different and some people can cool down in three minutes, and others need three hours, the maximum time one should stay angry with someone else is three days. If one cannot manage to let go of their anger after this, they need to work on themselves. Having lingering anger festering in one's system is neither Islamic nor healthy for us. Rather it is deeply detrimental to one's being, psychologically and physically. Therefore, we have to work on controlling our anger and learn how to respond more calmly to provocation and triggers, and switch out of angry mode and as it affects those around us as well as our relationships, our happiness and our akhirah.

The 6 rights of every Muslim

Ali ibn Abi Talib reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

لِلْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ سِتَّةٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ يُسَلِّمُ عَلَيْهِ إِذَا لَقِيَهِ وَيُجِيبُهُ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيُسَمِّتُهُ إِذَا عَطَسَ وَيَعُودُهُ إِذَا مَرَضَ وَيَتَّبِعُ جَنَازَتَهُ إِذَا مَاتَ وَيُحِبُّ لَهُ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

"A Muslim has six rights over another Muslim in good conduct: to greet him with peace when he meets him, to respond to his invitation, to respond to his sneeze, to visit him when he is sick, to follow his funeral prayer when he dies, and to love for him what he loves for himself." (Tirmidhi)

1. Greeting one another is one of the rights of Muslims. Though there are some men and women who do not greet each other because they segregate the sexes, there is nothing wrong in saying *salam* to each other, as long as you have the right etiquettes. After all, we say 'good morning' to non-Muslim neighbours, so it makes no sense to refuse to say '*salam*' to your Muslim neighbour. There is nothing wrong in saying *assalaamu alaikum*.
2. When you are invited by another Muslim you should accept their invitation, especially to a wedding, *walima* or *aqiqah*, etc. Imagine if you have a *walima* and you invited someone, but they do not come, and only a few people end up coming – it will upset you. Therefore, Allah made it a duty to respond positively to invitations. It is considered *wajib* to go unless there is something haram at that wedding. If this is the case, then you have the option not to go and you should turn down the invitation with tact.
3. If they sneeze and say '*alhamdulillah*', you should say '*yarhamukallah*'. If they didn't say *alhamdulillah* it's not incumbent on you to say '*yarhamukallah*', but you can say it. By default you assume he said it and you did not hear it, this is a good opinion. The scholars commented on this that he might have said it silently, so you should say '*yarhamukallah*'. And then he will reply back '*Yahdikum-ullah wa yuslihu balakum* (may Allah guide you and render sound your state of affairs).'

4. When they are sick you should visit them, if visiting is permitted and will not harm them. In our community we have those who rush to ICU when they are not allowed to visit, and insist they should be allowed in. We need to be considerate.
5. When someone passes away, we should attend their funeral – go to their *janazah*, do *ghusl* if possible, pray for them and be at their burial. This is one of their rights upon you as a Muslim. These are their basic rights.
6. As mentioned earlier, we should love for them what we love for ourselves, which places them on par with us not beneath us. We need to be aware of their needs, not just our own.

In a similar narration, Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

“The rights of one Muslim over another are six.” It was said: What are they, O Messenger of Allah? He said: “If you meet him, greet him with salaam; if he invites you, accept the invitation; if he asks for advice, give him sincere advice; if he sneezes and praises Allah, say Yarhamuk Allaah (may Allaah have mercy on you); if he falls sick, visit him; and if he dies, attend his funeral.” (Muslim)

Clear your heart of all ill feelings¹⁰

Anas said Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said to me:

'My son, if you are in a position to pass your morning and evening keeping your heart free from against anyone, then act according to it' (this high ideal). He then said: 'My son, and that is my Sunnah and he who loves my Sunnah, in fact loves me and he who loves me, will be with me in Paradise.' (Tirmidhi)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has given Anas bin Malik a very sweet and deep advice. And we know that Anas is one of the young companions. He served the Prophet (peace be upon him) for 10 years and when the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to Madinah, Anas was 10 years old. He said, 'my son' because he was young, and this is how Islamic teachers refer to their students in general anyway.

Anas narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) told him that if you can clear your heart daily of ill will and negativity towards anyone, then it will give you his company in Jannah. This is of course easier said than done when we have conflicts with people, or they slight you, or ignore you or insult you. Your heart will not feel glad to see them, or worse may be filled with bitterness and even hatred. So it has to be polished. Otherwise Shaytan will jump in and add salt to your wounds, magnify the pain and the blame and create rifts and even chasms.

Shaytan is a master at rewinding and replaying hurt, so we need to know how to stop it. Every day, check your heart for any resentment or ill will towards anyone. If you can clear these, you will have a clear heart and be following the Sunnah, and be the companion of the Prophet (peace be on him) in Jannah.

The sequence is telling. The end is high reward – being with the Prophet (peace be upon him) in *Jannah*, but it does not come free of charge.

Anas ibn Malik reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

¹⁰ utrujj.org/fallen-out-with-someone-time-to-let-it-go/

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حُفَّتِ الْجَنَّةُ بِالْمَكَارِهِ وَحُفَّتِ النَّارُ بِالشَّهَوَاتِ

“Paradise is surrounded by adversity, and Hellfire is surrounded by temptations and desires.”

Hardship is the keyword for *jannah* as you cannot enter *jannah* without striving and dealing with numerous hardships – *makarih* (what you dislike) – and Jahannam has been surrounded by temptation (*shahawat*) – the *mahaab* (what you like).

Again, Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be on him) said:

The (Hell) Fire is surrounded (hujibat) by all kinds of desires and passions, while Paradise is surrounded by all kinds of disliked undesirable things. (Bukhari)

Imam Nawawi in his *Al Minhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim*, a commentary on *Sahih Muslim*, noted that while Imam Muslim used the word *huffat* to describe the fact that Jannah and Jahannam had been surrounded respectively by adversity and temptation, Bukhari used the word *hujibat*, which is related to *hijab*, meaning like a shield or fence, conveying the image of a fence around Jannah and Jahannam. Simultaneously it conceals Jannah and Jahannam and creates a barrier.¹¹

Both narrations are telling us that it's not an easy task to reach Jannah. Meanwhile, the road to Jahannam is a slippery slope, may Allah protect all of us from it. Simply give in to temptation and follow your desires, and the slippery descent begins. In order to get to Jannah, you have to struggle against yourself continually. Allah said:

وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ إِلَّا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَآلَئِكَ يَكْفُرُونَ
يَحْرُزُونَ

And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good. [29:69]

Keep polishing your heart every day. Are you feeling animosity towards anyone today? Most probably yes, towards multiple people. Therefore, polish your heart by saying, 'May Allah forgive me for this and may Allah forgive that person for that,' etc. In the first couple of weeks it will be difficult because you are not familiar with this, but later it will be your second nature and it will bring you comfort.

If you want light to penetrate your heart, polish your heart from these sins every day. It will make you light, and alleviate the heaviness inside. Polish your heart through *istighfar* and through *dhikr* of Allah Almighty, through *tasbeeh* etc. Do not underestimate this very small practice; it will change the way you deal with things around you. It will give you a better connection with Allah Almighty and better communication with people around you.

Meet people with a pure heart

Ibn Mas'ud (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace be on him) said:

لا يُبَلِّغُنِي أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِي عَنْ أَحَدٍ شَيْءًا، فَإِنِّي أَحِبُّ أَنْ أُخْرَجَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنَا سَلِيمٌ الصِّدْرِ

¹¹ utrujj.org/putting-the-brakes-on-desire-and-resisting-temptation/

None of my Companions should convey to me anything regarding another because I desire to meet everyone of you with a clean heart. [Timidhi]

When I read this hadith, I was surprised, as it shows just how human the Prophet (peace be upon him) was. As humans we all have feelings, so if someone comes to you and tells you the faults of someone, it will cloud your heart towards them. You will be guarded with them, but the Prophet (peace be on him) wanted to meet them with a light heart. This is a lesson for us.

This does not mean that you should not know about someone's faults or failings if they are genuine and relevant to your dealings with them, but that it should not be the first thing you find out about someone. It makes you pre-judge them and limits how you meet them and communicate with them. If you meet them with a pure heart, you can meet them free of prejudice, and benefit from them. Meeting them with a clean, pure heart is better for you.

Do not despise sinners¹²

In the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), one of companions was drunk and was brought to the Prophet (peace be on him), who commanded that he be lashed 80 times. Then one of the companions said:

'May Allah completely humiliate you!' In another narration he said, 'O Allah curse him! How many a time is he brought [for punishment for this crime]!'

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, 'Don't help the Shaytan against your brother'. Although he committed a big sin, to curse him is something else.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'Do not help shaytan against your brother.' [Bukhari]

The Shaytan wants all the descendants of Adam in hell. Closing the door of warm, affectionate support for this person, would prevent him from wanting to associate with Muslims, and help Shaytan lead him to hell. Hence the Messenger of Allah (peace be on him) said:

'Do not curse him! [I swear] By Allah, all I know of him is that he loves Allah and His Messenger!' (Bukhari)

Contrary to this, how many times have we helped the Shaytan against our brothers and sisters? If you check your record, it is likely to be countless times. We need to train ourselves not to be quick to curse others – it is not our job to curse people. Even when he was attacked by the Quraysh, despite being inflicted with injuries and bleeding, the Prophet (peace be upon him) refused to curse them, even when his companions said, 'O Rasullallah, make *dua* against them'. The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied that they were ignorant., and he raised his hands and prayed to Allah to guide them instead. Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported:

قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ادْعُ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنِّي لَمْ أُبْعَثْ لِعَانًا وَإِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ رَحْمَةً

It was said, "O Messenger of Allah, pray against the idolaters!" The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Verily, I was not sent to invoke curses, but rather I was only sent as mercy." (Muslim)

¹² utrujj.org/427-what-is-the-difference-between-major-and-minor-sins/
utrujj.org/how-did-the-prophet-muhammad-deal-with-those-who-made-mistakes/

Stick with the community

Muadh ibn Jabal narrated that the Prophet (peace be on him) said:

'Verily Satan is the wolf of a man just as the wolf is (the enemy) of a flock. He seizes the solitary sheep going astray from the flock or going aside from the flock. So avoid the branching paths; it is essential for you to remain along with the community.' (Tirmidhi and Ahmad)

In this hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) is saying that Shaytan is the wolf, and can easily hunt the lone sheep, so we are safer when we don't stray from the *jamma'ah*. The *jamma'ah* is the believers – it means be with the believers, not to follow the crowd blindly, nor isolate yourself. Be part of the community, not the odd one out, not the one who is always creating trouble and sowing dissent.

Spread love by expressing love

Cohesion comes when people express their love for one another. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

'When a man loves his brother, he should tell him that he loves him.' (Abu Dawoud)

In this hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) showed us that it is better to let others know you love them than to keep your feelings to yourself, as it increases the love between people when it is expressed. It is what I call the transformation of emotions into action. Emotions are one thing, but activating them is something else. As I have repeated many times, Allah Almighty said in the Quran in 50 different verses, *imaan* and action go hand in hand, as inseparable twins. How do we transfer emotions and *imaan* into action?

Transferring emotion to action

A man was with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and another man passed by him and said:

O Messenger of Allah! I love this man. The Prophet (peace be upon him) then asked: 'Have you informed him?' He replied: No. He said: 'Inform him'. He then went to him and said: I love you for Allah's sake. He replied: May He for whose sake you love me loves you! (Abu Dawood)

I heard of a sister who was in hardship, facing some difficulties, and another sister helped her. She is not her sister in blood, but her sister in *imaan*. She helped and supported her until she was fine, *alhamdulillah*. The sister who had been helped was so grateful she was secretly making dua for her always and asking Allah to reward her for all her help. One day another sister who was listening to her make dua asked her why she did not tell her friend what she had done for her, etc. And another friend who was listening said to her, why don't you pick up the phone and tell her? So she picked up the phone and she called that sister and told her, 'You know I'm making so much dua for you because you supported me, may Allah bless you and reward you so much,' and it was wonderful because it increased the bond between them. Sometimes we feel indebted to somebody, and we make dua for them, which is good, but we do not send them a message or tell them to their face. If we were to tell them, 'I'm really indebted to you, you supported me, may Allah send someone to support you and relieve you and give you peace and all contentment,' it would foster more love between us.

How the salam fosters love¹³

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

لَا تَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّى تَحَابُّوا أَوْ لَا أَدْرُكُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمْوهُ تَحَابَبْتُمْ أَفْسُوا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ

“You will not enter Paradise until you have faith and you will not have faith until you love each other. Shall I show you something that, if you did, you would love each other? Spread the salam between yourselves.” (Muslim)

With the right attitude, when you say ‘salam’ with a smile on your face, it is very powerful and it sprinkles magic dust throughout the community. It instantly lifts the mood of the other person, who smiles back immediately in response and greets you in return. Though it is a seemingly tiny gesture, its ripple effect is great, and it counts as an act of charity, for which you are rewarded.

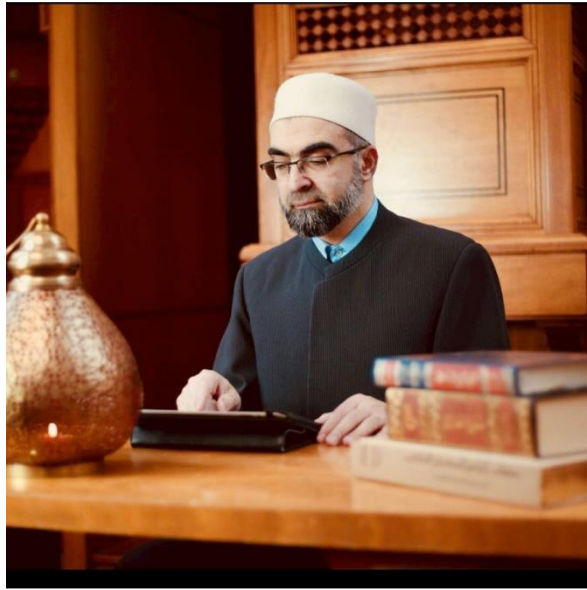
Unfortunately, not everyone feels charitable, and people are generally quite stingy about saying ‘salam’ to people they do not know, even though it costs nothing and is light on the tongue. There was a man in the masjid once who was frowning, so someone remarked to him that saying salam is a charity. He replied grumpily that he was not in the mood for giving any charity that day, and continued frowning. It is not a sign of masculinity to frown. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was always with a smile on his face. Smiling is the sunnah.

Conclusion

Islam is a guide to living a fruitful life not just as an individual but also collectively as a society. Each directive and recommendation in the Quran and the Sunnah lead to one’s self development spiritually and socially and impact one’s relations with those one interacts with, bringing about a positive environment. Some steps are as simple as a smile, others require a greater effort to overcome man’s propensity to look out for himself and fulfil his own desires. Yet it is precisely when we look beyond ourselves that we create the best environment for ourselves to thrive and flourish. It is when individuals initiate and follow the Sunnah that we curb toxic practices within society which lead to disunity and conflicts that fester and divide communities and the Ummah at large. The power to transform society lies in the hands of every individual who is part of it.

About Shaykh Haytham Tamim

¹³ utrujj.org/ghazalis-20-rules-for-dealing-with-people-rules-14-15-hurry-to-help-others-and-initiate-the-salam/



Shaykh Haytham Tamim, the founder and main teacher of the Utrujj Foundation defines himself as a knowledge seeker. Praise be to Allah, his Foundation was the pioneer in disseminating Islamic knowledge in the UK over 20 years ago.

His extensive expertise spans over 30 years across the main Islamic jurisprudence schools of thought and different Islamic denominations through highly advanced classical and religious texts.

With 29 links in his chain, Shaykh Haytham's unbroken chain of scholarship goes back the Prophet (peace be on him), and gave him the opportunity to study with some of the foremost scholars in their expertise. He holds some of the highest Ijazahs (certificates) in Quran, Hadith (the Prophetic traditions) and Fiqh (Islamic rulings).

His respected teachers include the late Professor Wahba Al-Zuhayli, the late Shaykh Muhammad Sukkar, the late Shaykh Khalil Al-Mays, Professor Ahmad Al-Haji Kurdi, the late Shaykh Abdul Razzaq Al-Halabi, the late Shaykh Adeeb Al-Kallas, the late Mulla Abdul 'Aleem Al-Zanki and Professor Mustafa Azami, Mufti Taqi Usmani, Shaykh Nizam Yaqoubi.

His own gift for teaching was evident when he gave his first sermon to a large audience at the age of 17, after which he studied in Damascus and returned to serve as a senior lecturer of Islamic Transactions and Comparative Jurisprudence at the Islamic University of Beirut (Shariah College).

Prior to coming to the UK, he established an office for the research and publication of important manuscripts and published three books on Comparative Jurisprudence (Fiqh). He also worked in Lebanese Shariah courts as a trainee judge.

In 2000, Shaykh Haytham moved to the UK, where he founded Utrujj to spread the message of Islam with an emphasis on clarity, authenticity and practicality.

Due to his wide breadth of experience, he is a scholar and advisor on Islamic Finance and Shariah for international organisations ranging from investment firms to legal and accountancy firms. In addition, he has 20 years of experience advising British lawyers, as well as charities such as Save the Children and UNICEF.

He is the Director of Shariah Solutions Limited, consultancy firm in Islamic Finance and also a member of several advisory roles on Shariah boards, and has assisted multiple institutions launch Islamic compliant products to serve the Muslim consumers of Europe and the Middle East.

Shaykh Haytham Tamim is leader of the Lebanese Sunni community in the UK under Dar Al-Fatwa in the UK and an authorised Faqih with knowledge of the Shariah.

He takes a keen interest in promoting love and tolerance within the Muslim community as well within wider society, and voicing the need for social justice.

Often consulted by his students for his wise, compassionate and balanced stance, he loves spreading knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah in a way that is authentic, relevant and down to earth.

Jazakumullahu khayran for spending time learning with us. We need your support to enable us to reach more people and spread authentic knowledge. Every contribution big or small is valuable to our future.

utrujj.org/giving/

'If anyone calls others to follow right guidance, his reward will be equivalent to those who follow him (in righteousness) without their reward being diminished in any respect.' [Muslim]



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