

The Skills We Need

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Sure we have heard some people saying that 'life is difficult'. In one sense, this expression might be true, because there can be many things which one may at first find difficult to do; for example, passing exams, making a good decision, dealing with stress, being able to solve problems properly, and so on. These and many other phases in life require hard work and patience. But there are certain skills which if one acquires, can be very useful in making life seem less difficult and more enjoyable and fruitful. We, as the staff of ZamZam magazine will do our best to help the dear readers to take the first steps in acquiring life skills through surveying one skill in each issue.

Interpersonal Relationships

Being quick-tempered, quick to take offence, or too assertive are among the qualities which make communication with the others hard and/or unpleasant for the person and also for the others who are communicating with him or her. No doubt, none of us like to talk to people who get angry promptly, who are not tender in their speech and manners, who take offence for no justifiable reason and/or who hurt the others with their words or manners without even caring about their own conduct. These undesirable

characteristics can be the result of selfishness which is itself a very bad condition. In fact, selfish people are mostly friendless and so are left to themselves in a terrible lonely condition.

Meanwhile, they might apparently have some friends, but in fact they are friendless, because true friendship is based upon mutual affection, sympathy and trust, while selfish people obviously do not possess these nice abilities and capabilities. They cannot be truly affectionate towards the others due to their selfishness; they always say 'me first', 'the best for me' and the like and they can hardly take any trouble for helping the others. They are not truly sympathetic towards the others, because they do not feel for them, feeling just for themselves and their own needs and desires. And moreover, they cannot be trusted as a friend by any, because trust-worthy people are in fact wise and selfless people. Here, it is quite worthwhile to mention that the Allah's last Messenger - Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was known as "Muhammad al-Amin" , meaning "Muhammad, the Trust-worthy" among his people not only among his followers but among his enemies as well. Certainly, being trusted by both friends and enemies is an extraordinary quality possessed by true men of God and their true followers.

So, to become able to communicate with the others in positive ways, one must first try to remove bad-temper and self-

centeredness from him or herself. At first, doing so might not seem easy of course, but through constant care, practice and self-policing, it will gradually become easy for one to control his or her temper, to forgive the others more easily, and to become a good friend for those who deserve it. We should also try to be very nice to our parents, grandparents and siblings to find them loving us and wishing to talk with us. If a young girl or boy feels that nobody in the family likes her or his companionship, he or she should first of all try to look for the causes of that condition in her or himself. Maybe because of her or his harshness and impatience the others dislike talking to him or her. For sure, violence can be regarded as the cause of such failures; failing to communicate with the others successfully, failing to find friends, failing to have a good time at home and with family members and also failing to communicate with teachers in a desirable way. The pupil who does not know how to speak to his or her teachers and so tends to be disrespectful towards the teachers, cannot expect to receive pleasant behaviour from them and so may start hating the school, the teacher and the classmates, while the fact is that just through learning the needed skills, he or she could find the school environment, the teachers and the classmates nice.

Of course, even boys and girls who have a good temper may sometimes experience hard times at home, at school and in other

environments. For instance, it is possible that a family member, having received harsh behaviour from the others, starts shouting at one and quarreling for no reason and/or it is possible that in one's school, there are some bullies among the classmates who make one angry and upset. Under such conditions, the wise boy or girl tries to first control his or her temper and then try to find the best way out of the hard situation. At home, forgiveness and tolerance can be the best way, but outside the family environment (which should be kept warm and friendly), one might need to inform the principal about the bullies and ask for their help. Often the timely interference by an adult can be the best solution to the problems caused by bullies. In fact they need to learn that impolite behaviour and hurting the others will not go unpunished, otherwise they may grow up to be aggressive and so dangerous members of the society. Communication with one's parents also needs certain skills. First of all, a young boy or girl should mind his or her way of talking to them; one should not talk in a loud voice to parents, should never interrupt them, should by no means show disregard towards the advices they give out of love and compassion and should never show ungratefulness towards them either by word, or by actions. In the Holy Qur'an, respect due to the parents has been mentioned just next to the significance of worship of Allah.

So, the one who really desires to learn communication skills and to put them to use, needs to start from faith and morality, since faithlessness leads to immoral behaviour and so to every unpleasant conditions including loneliness, depression and other spiritual sufferings.

Obviously, a faithful boy or girl tries to be well behaved towards his or her parents and other family members and so will win their love and respect which in turn help him or her attain many other winnings in life. This is a communication s kill leading to success in the society too, because the one who is loved, respected and trusted at home and by his or her family members is most likely to develop self-confidence and self-respect much more successfully than those who for any reasons, including their own failure in communication, and deprived of such blessings in their family. Also as we all know, being able to communicate with one's siblings in positive ways is a life-long blessing; siblings, if properly raised, can be very helpful to one throughout life, even when parents have passed away and/or due to old-age can longer help one with a problem, such as a financial problem. Moreover, one might in certain conditions be forced to find someone to trust with a secret or with some property. In such conditions, often good brothers and sisters can offer help, because in many cases, one might not be able to trust even his or her close friend with, for

example a problem or a secret. It goes without saying that if, while living together at home, siblings have not been able to communicate with each other properly, they will not be able to trust each other later in adult life, so the basis of this significant foundation, namely trust should be laid at home and in the friendly atmosphere of the family life, and before the youngsters start experiencing the harder world outside. This is in fact a secret behind the success of many who have been fortunate enough to taste the sweetness of affection, sincerity and in short fruitful communication first and foremost in the family environment.

As for those whose family lives have been devoid of such blessings, it should be said that they need to try to educate themselves, in this regard before it is too late, before due to lack of the needed skills, they find themselves friendless and lonely, incapable of finding a good friend, incapable of experiencing the sweetness of the companionship of sincere people and left to solve the various problems of life all alone and by themselves.

Now, let's communicate properly with our closest Friend - our Kind God, who has Himself invited us to turn to Him for everything, to find Him Best Friend, the Best Guide, the Best Companion and the Best Helper. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah has addressed us thus: *"Call me and I will answer your call."*

