

## CLASS 8

## INTERACTING WITH SOCIETY AS A COUPLE

CHILDREN

Raising a child isn't easy. In fact, it's among the most challenging and all-consuming responsibilities we have in life. But good parenting is vital—to the society & to Allah.

Both mother and father have a necessary and important role in the lives of their children. Parents' work in the home will be more effective if their first priorities are Allah, each other, and their children.

A home that is safe, where children can grow mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually, requires faith and the best efforts of the parents.

While there is a lot to be said on the rights and duties of children but we'll not go into it and only look at matters in which, you as a couple can affect your child.

The husband-wife relationship is the base of the pyramid the rest of the family is built upon. ***If there is a crack in the base, everything else is affected.***

Husband and wife in a marriage are meant to be equal, partners. The husband is the head of the household and is responsible for the temporal welfare of his family. His role is to support his wife. The wife is also to support her husband and to nurture her family both spiritually and emotionally. Husband and wife are meant to work side by side in providing a safe haven from the world for their family. Their roles are different, but equally important and essential to building the family and the community.

## Fighting in front of the children

Parents who fight in front of their children are harming the psyche of their children unknowingly. These are a few things to be kept in mind IF an argument arises between the husband and wife.

- Put yourself in your children's shoes. Would you like to be a spectator to your fights?
- Say Aoudhubillah and just give it a few seconds before you respond. Try not to argue when you're seeing red. Take time to cool off before discussing your problems.
- Remember that when it comes to fighting between spouses, it doesn't help to fight fire with fire. Raising your voice, name-calling and door-slamming will only serve to fuel the fight.
- When you recite Aoudhubillah and give yourself time to cool off and think, you will often find that while you may think you're fighting about long working hours or money, it may actually just be a manifestation of the fact that you're tired, under stress or feeling neglected. Try to analyze what the real issue is.
- Try not to focus on laying blame and trying to make your spouse grovel and see the error of his or her ways. The idea is to come to a solution not punish your spouse.
- If you have issues to resolve with your spouse try to wait till your children are asleep or go into another room to have your argument.
- If you've had a massive argument in front of your children, make it a point to let them know that they are not to blame and that sometimes parents do fight, but it does not mean that they love each other or their children any less.
- If possible, try to explain what you were upset about in simple terms that they can understand. But try not to alarm them or speak in a manner that they feel obliged to take sides or turn hostile to your spouse.
- Explain to your children that losing your temper was a mistake and that you may have said many things you didn't mean just because you were angry.
- Make every attempt to make up with your spouse so that you can present an united, normal front to your children as soon as possible.

## Building individual relationships

Parents can have different opinions on the same topic but showing this indifference to the child will harm him/her. A child is a good manipulator and he/she can easily manipulate a parent if he/she knows that a difference exists between their thinking. Here are some tips to strike a good balance.

It is very natural for parents to have different views on child rearing. Sometimes the mother may be too strict while the father is lenient. Other times the father may believe in spanking a child who misbehaves while the mother strongly opposes this. So how would two parents, with completely opposing points of view, come to an agreement?

## Respect

Ideally a couple should have an agreement and a similar vision. But it is also natural to have different views. However, it is important to respect your partner's right to his or her own stance on child rearing. Although the father will have more rights but as a couple should try not to impose your opinions on your partner. If you believe hitting a child is wrong, then don't hit your child, but don't stop your partner from doing so.

## Permission

Very often when children don't get permission from one parent, they rush to the other. In such a case it is important not to overrule a decision once made. If your partner has denied permission and your child comes wailing to you, ask your child to sit back and reflect on why he/she thinks he/she has not got the permission, and what he/she can do in the future to ensure she gets it.

If you believe that the child should be given the permission, then you should make sure that you actually ask the partner to allow the children instead of you doing it yourself. This breeds respect for both parents and we give the impression to the children that we work as a team and not as individuals.

Note: Being a team does not mean that the child sees both as equal, it is Islamic for the child to know that the Father is the head of the family and has the bigger say but also the child should know that the mother is the one the father listens to most and they work as a team.

## Playing parents against each other

If you take the side of your child against the other parent, your child will start playing you and your partner against each other. This will give the child the feeling that one partner is stronger than the other in the relationship, and will take, what the child perceives to be the 'weaker' partner, for granted. Your child will not hesitate in running to you and saying "Mommy slapped me!" and then will sit back and take in the scene as you rush to the child's defence by berating mommy.

## Individual relationships

Your child has an individual relationship with each parent, and the other parent should not interfere in such a relationship. In addition, parents have to respect children's individual relationships with not just the other parent, but also with friends and other relatives. If granny spoils your child, there's really nothing you can do about it.

The parents as a team should work on not allowing scenarios like a granny saying to you, "Okay, stop shouting at her now! Enough!" and to your child, "Come here sweetie, granny will give you a cookie," and this is done more often than not - then it needs to be dealt with in the best way possible, without hurting the feeling of the elders we should try to make her realise that this is not okay. Remember there are far more positive influences of having the elders around children than negatives so just be sure that if it is really really needed before you take any action.

## Privacy of the Couple

As much as you love your child, you should keep in mind that your spouse has an equally important place in your life and should not be side lined at the arrival of a new baby. Both the parents have to work hard on striking a balance between parenting and maintaining a warm relationship with their better half.

For the sexual training of children, the parents must first teach their children not to enter their bedroom without asking permission. Allāh (SwT) has pointed to this important point in Surat Nūr, Verse 58:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنُكُمُ الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِنَ الظَّهِيرَةِ وَمِنْ بَعْدِ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثَ عَوْرَاتٍ لَكُمْ

*“O you who have faith! Let your permission be sought by your slaves and those of you who have not reached puberty three times: before the dawn prayer, and when you put off your garments at noon, and after the night prayer. These are three times of privacy for you.”*

## PARENTS AND IN-LAWS

It is a wide spread misconception in many cultures that a woman has no duties towards her parents once she is married and they become an obligation on the sons which is completely incorrect. A daughter has the same duties towards her parents as the son. She has to serve them, take care of them and spend on them (if she has a source of income) according to her ability and her husband's permission.

“The responsibilities of a married woman towards her parents are like those of any other woman. The rights of the parents remain both before and after marriage, but obedience to the husband takes precedence over obedience to the parents if there is a conflict.

If the command of the parents conflicts with the command of the husband, then what takes precedence is the command of the husband. But the Muslim husband and the Muslim wife must strive to avoid conflict with the parents, and strive to achieve harmony between them and their parents.

One of the matters to which the married woman should pay attention concerning her parents is that she should strive to visit them from time to time, and give them appropriate gifts even if they have no real material value. She should try to avoid letting her children's misbehaviour annoy them when visiting them, and avoid telling them about marital disagreements.

Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid - “If her parents need money and she is able to spend on them, then it is obligatory for her to spend on them as much as she is able to. If she does not have money of her own, but she intercedes with her husband, if he has money, to help her parents, then she will be rewarded for that in sha Allah. This is part of honouring her parents.”

Similarly, it is believed that once the son gets married, the obligation to serve his parents automatically goes to the new daughter in law which is Islamically not correct. The wife of the son is in no way obligated to serve her in-laws except if she does so out of kindness. The wife does not have to obey anyone among her in-laws, whether that is her husband's father, mother, brothers or sisters, in any matter, major or minor, unless they tell her to do something which is obligatory according to Islam, or forbid her to do something that is haraam. In such matters she has to obey, whether that comes from a relative or a stranger, an in-law or anyone else. [Click Here](#) for details. It is the duty of the son to look after his parents even after he gets married. He is the one answerable to Allah but if the wife takes up the responsibility to relieve him then she'll In Sha Allah be rewarded for it.

This, in no ways means that the women should stop serving their parent in laws. This is from her good manners to serve the elders and her serving the parents of her husband, pleases him and helps increase love and harmony.

This is mentioned mainly for the brothers to realize that the wife is doing something extra and that he should be thankful for her doing this. Unfortunately, in many cultures the women serve her parent-in-laws endlessly and the husbands just take it for granted as that is an obligation on her.

Also, it is necessary for the man (son in law) to treat his wife's parents with respect specially if he expects her to do the same with his parents,

## DEALING WITH MOTHER & WIFE WHO DO NOT GET ALONG

There are two general but golden rules in this...

1. *“Do not fix something that is not broken”*
2. *“Do not seek perfection”*

We need to realise that this is a relation which is delicate and should be handled that way and men should intervene as and when there is an utmost need.

If the wife comes and complains about his mother (where he feels his mother is not right), he should tell her that he understands, ask her to have sabr for which Allah will reward her and that he appreciates her for this. This way the man has acknowledged the concern from his wife and also gave her motivation to be good to his mother. Many problems arise when the man directly disregards her making her feel all alone and depressed which worsens the relation between all three.

Similarly if your mother complains about your wife, do not just rush to your wife and question her about the matter. Be just, if the wife is not wrong and it's a trivial matter just hear your mother out that might calm her down but do not discuss trivial issues that your mother has brought to you with your wife as that would lead to more problems and resentment. But if there is a need then surely you can discipline your wife by ordering her to set her matter right.

Men should firstly understand that jealousy – which Allah has created in man – is one of these main factors, especially between your mother and your wife, because your mother, who has been with you for many years, looking after you and taking care of you, is going to feel that you no longer belong only to her; indeed she will feel that her share of you is no longer enough to fulfil her rights over you, and that the division of your attention between her and your wife is not fair. Your wife gets love, compassion and care, and all the mother gets is your showing patience, with difficulty, for her troubles, and your giving her what she needs with reluctance and resentment. This applies if the son gives her her rights, so how about if he is disobedient and denies her her rights? In that case there will be problems.

Jealousy makes a person blind and deaf, and it soon destroys any happiness and tranquillity that the family might have. It is at its strongest when we do not handle it properly and do not try to tame it.

Be patient with your wife but also try harder to please your mother, men of today have become really laid back and want the issues to be sorted without them having to do anything. They need to work for their family and the Ummah as a whole. Try to show your mother that she still has an important place in your life, spend some quality time with her and make it a point to show your mother that this attitude of yours is helped by your wife, she supports you and encourages you to be good to your mother and spend time with her.

[Click here](#) for a detailed discussion on this matter.

### **Women should not allow their mothers to interfere in the marriage**

The mother's rights over her children are great, and Islam has enjoined the children to fulfil these rights, and it regards disobedience to parents as a major sin.

The mother whose daughter has got married should realize that it is not permissible for her daughter to give precedence to obeying her mother over obeying her husband, and she (the mother) should understand that it is not permissible for her to interfere in her daughter's life after marriage, unless she is asked to intervene in order to bring about a reconciliation or to offer advice and guidance.

The first thing the daughter should do is not to share secrets and problems between the spouses with her mother as this might lead to her being inquisitive and constantly interfering. Try and tell the mother not to get involved or talk to the father to let the mother know that she should not be doing this.

[Click here](#) for a detailed discussion.

## SOCIETY

A respectful husband and wife will behave appropriately in public. They will never embarrass their spouse by using coarse language, being impolite, or sharing intimate details about their marriage. Inappropriate behaviour could very well lead to loss of respect for themselves. They will not belittle her or make fun of the other in their presence or absence, nor will they backbite.

Sharing bedroom secrets with a third person is HARAAM in Islam. Even if he/she is your best friend and you don't have any secrets between you.

Asma' Bint Yazid said: {I was present where the Prophet ﷺ was, and men and women were sitting. The Prophet ﷺ said to them:

*"May a man be talking about what he does to his wife, and may a woman be talking about what she does with her husband?"*

The people remained quiet and did not answer. So I said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah! The women do that, and the men do that too."

He ﷺ said: *"Do not do that, because doing that is like a Shaitan meets a Shaitanah in a street, then he had intercourse with her while people were watching."*

**Treat your mate with respect:** Don't give her/him the cold shoulder or talk to him/her like a child. Belittling their intelligence or behaviour in public, even if you're just joking, will do more harm than good to your relationship. Put your differences aside and show her love and support instead. Instead, talk about her great accomplishment at work. Showing each other some affection as well may help you see how little the disagreement really means.

**Don't fight in public:** Even if your spouse is doing everything in his power to aggravate the heck out of you, remain calm; it may be his immature way of handling his emotions. Not only will having a fight in public single you two out of a crowd, it will also cause those who are with you, like such as your kids, other family members or friends, to feel extremely uncomfortable. Wait until you get home to discuss any problems. Also, when later having your discussion, try to focus your discussion on key issues rather than the way he was acting.



**Establish rules:** If a main issue has yet to be resolved, set some rules that bar the discussion of the issue while out in public. This rule should also ban talking about the problem with friends and family as well. Your friends and family naturally view your spouse differently than you do, and what they consider to be helpful advice may further aggravate the situation or cause you to see a problem that you didn't realize beforehand, which may lead to a fight with your spouse later on.

**Praise them in public:** Have you ever noticed that when someone praises you, you want to repeat the behaviour that caused it? This is just human nature. It can be a form of manipulation if it isn't genuine. But it can be a powerful way to motivate others when it is authentic. Words are powerful tools. They can create, or they can destroy. They can build up, or they can tear down. If you start speaking well of someone, you start believing what you say.

Encouragement is also a powerful force for good. All of us need positive reinforcement. This is why when we are losing weight and people notice, it gives us the strength to stick with the program. This is true in every area of life.