

Marriage

Tips for a Better Husband and Wife Relationship

Although many Muslims may right now be in failing marriages and on a fast track to divorce and its terrible consequences, there are many ways to put their marriage back on the right track if the husband and wife are sincere in their desire to reconcile. The following principles can be used by Muslims whose marriages are already in trouble or by Muslims who would like to avoid trouble in their marriage.

Examples of Negative Relationship of Husband & Wife

Many Muslim husbands and wives treat each other like adversaries rather than partners. The husband feels that he is the boss, and whatever he says goes. The wife feels that she must squeeze everything she can out of her husband. Some wives never show their husband that they are satisfied with anything he does or buys for them in order to trick him into doing and buying more. They make him feel like a failure if he does not give them the lifestyle that their friends and families enjoy. Some husbands speak very harshly to their wives, humiliate them, and even physically abuse them. Their wives have no voice or opinion in the family.

Marriage In The Eyes of Allah

It is very sad that this relationship which Allah (SWT) has established for the good has been made a source of contention, deception, trickery, tyranny, humiliation, and abuse. This is not the way marriage is supposed to be.

Allah (SWT) described marriage very differently in the Holy Quran: ". . . He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts) . . ." (Holy Quran 30:21, Yusuf Ali Translation).

Do not be a Tyrant

Regardless of whether or not Islam has made the husband the head of the household, Muslims are not supposed to be dictators and tyrants. We are taught to treat our wives well. The Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) was reported to have said: 'The most perfect Muslim in the matter of faith is one who has excellent behavior; and the best among you are those who behave best towards their wives' (From Mishkat al-Masabih, No. 0278(R) Transmitted by Tirmidhi).

Be Partners in the Decision Making Process.

Follow the principle of 'Shura,' and make decisions as a family. There will be much more harmony in the family when decisions are not imposed and everyone feels that they had some part in making them.

Never be Emotionally

Never be emotionally, mentally, or physically abusive to your spouse. The Prophet (SAWS) never mistreated his wives. He is reported to have said: 'How could they beat their women in daytime as slaves and then sleep with them in the night?'

Be Careful of Your Words

Be very careful what you say when you are upset. Sometimes you will say things that you would never say when you were not angry. If you are angry, wait until you calm down before continuing the conversation.

Show Affection

Show affection for your mate. Be kind, gentle, and loving.

Be Your Spouse's Friend

Show interest in your mate's life. Too often, we live in the same house but know nothing about each other's lives. It would be great if the husband and wife could work together for the same cause or on the same project. They could perhaps establish a husband/wife prison ministry, take care of orphans in their home, or lead an Islamic weekend class.

Show Appreciation

Show appreciation for what your spouse does for the family. Never make your husband feel that he is not doing good enough for the family or that you are not satisfied with his work or his efforts, unless, of course, he is truly lazy and not even trying to provide for the family. The Prophet (SAWS) was reported to have said: 'On the Day of Judgment, God will not look upon the woman who has been ungrateful to her husband.' (where is this hadith found) Show your wife that you appreciate her. If she takes care of the house and the children, don't take it for granted. It is hard work, and no one likes to feel unappreciated.

Work Together in the House

The Prophet (SAWS) is known to have helped his wives in the house. And if the Prophet (SAWS) was not above doing housework, modern Muslim husbands shouldn't feel that they are.

Communication is Important

Communication, Communication, Communication! This is the big word in counseling. And it should be. Husbands and wives need to talk to each other. It is better to deal with problems early and honestly than to let them pile up until an explosion occurs.

Forget Past Problems

Don't bring up past problems once they have been solved.

Live Simply

Don't be jealous of those who seem to be living a more luxurious life than your family. The 'rizq' is from Allah (SWT). In order to develop the quality of contentment, look at those people who have less than you, not those who have more. Thank Allah (SWT) for the many blessings in your life.

Give Your Spouse Time Alone

If your mate doesn't want to be with you all the time, it doesn't mean he or she doesn't love you. People need to be alone for various reasons. Sometimes they want to read, to think about their problems, or just to relax. Don't make them feel that they are committing a sin.

Admit Your Mistakes

When you make a mistake, admit it. When your mate makes a mistake, excuse him or her easily. If possible, never go to sleep angry with each other.

Physical Relationship is Important

Be available to your mate sexually, and don't let your sexual relationship be characterized by selfishness. The Prophet (SAWS) was reported to have said: "It is not appropriate that you fall upon your wives like a beast but you must send a message of love beforehand."

Have Meals Together

Try to eat together as a family when possible. Show the cook and the dishwasher, whether it is the husband or the wife, appreciation for his or her efforts. The Prophet (SAWS) did not complain about food that was put before him.

Be Mindful of Your discussion Topics

Never discuss with others things about your marriage that your spouse wouldn't like you to discuss, unless there is an Islamic reason to do so. Some husbands and wives, believe it or not, complain to others about their mate's physical appearance. This is a recipe for disaster. Information about your intimate relations should be kept between you and your spouse.

Many of us treat our spouses in ways that we would never treat others. With others, we try to be polite, kind, and patient. With our spouses, we often do not show these courtesies. Of course, we are usually with our spouses at our worst times --- when we are tired and frustrated after a hard day. After a bad day at the office, husbands usually come home angry and on edge. The wife has probably also had a hard day with the children and the housework. Wives and husbands should discuss this potential time bomb so that if they are short-tempered with each other during these times, they will understand the reasons rather than automatically thinking that their spouse no longer loves them.

Good marriages require patience, kindness, humility, sacrifice, empathy, love, understanding, forgiveness, and hard work. Following these principles should help any marriage to improve. The essence of them all can be summed up in one sentence: Always treat your spouse the way you would like to be treated. If you follow this rule, your marriage will have a much greater chance for success. If you discard this rule, failure is just around the corner.

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