

## A course on Personality development: An outline in the light of Quran, *Hadīth* and *Sīrah*

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### Abstract

Modern researches find that lecturing method is 68 percent less effective than activity based learning but in our universities usually the lecturing method is being used to teach *Sīrah* related courses which are not producing the required results. This article studying Quran, *Hadīth* and *Sīrah* of the Prophet regarding speaking, hand shaking, discussion, walking, mocking, snubbing, welcoming, greeting, arguing, time management, eve teasing, analyzing etc., develops a *Sīrah* based course for university students with a proper activity based methodology of marking and examining the growth in the students' personality at the end of the semester or class.

**Key Words:** *Sīrah*, Personality development, university, course

### Introduction:

Not only Muslims throughout the history of Islam but Learned dignitaries all over the globe admit that the best ever model among human beings are the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).<sup>2</sup> Contemporary scholarships state that the best results in any field of life need the best model for its planning,

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<sup>2</sup> Ingrid Ramberg, *Islamophobia and Its Consequences on Young People* (London: Elsevier, 2015) 82.

implementation and application.<sup>3</sup> This article explores Islamic attitude towards personality development in the light of Quran, Ḥadīth and Sīrah of the Prophet and discuss the need for *Sīrah* based course for university students focusing the activity centered method.

### **Smiling, Greeting and Welcoming**

Scholars deem that smile generates pleasure in the family, raises virtuous in business, and endorses for friendship. Islam teaches smiling, greeting and welcoming very nicely. Quran says: "And that it is He who makes (whom He wills) laugh, and makes (whom He wills) weep."<sup>4</sup> 'Ay'isha says: "I never saw more smiling face than the smiling face of Prophet Muhammad." Prophet Mohammad says "your smile for others is a charity"<sup>5</sup>; "Do not look upon any pious deed as insignificant, may it be greeting your brother with a cheerful heart."<sup>6</sup> However it should be kept in mind that according to Islam laughing and smiling are different things. Our holy prophet said don't laugh loudly because it makes your heart hard and careless and dead .our soul damages by laughing but by smiling our soul feel feels peace and calm.

### **Tolerating and Accepting**

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<sup>3</sup> George W Anderson, *Sap Planning: Best Practices in Implementation* (Delhi: Anand Sons, 2003), 521

<sup>4</sup> Al-Najm 53:43

<sup>5</sup> M.M. Dungersi, *A Brief Biography of Hazrat Fatima A.S.* (Carolina: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2017), 32

<sup>6</sup> Afzal-ul-Rehman, *Muhammad: Encyclopedia of Seerah* (London: Seerah Publishing, 1998), 8:468-473

Tolerance means "something to bear which is painful or unpleasant." Islamic teachings lead toward tolerance. Quran says: "there is no compulsion in the religion; the right course has become clear from the wrong."<sup>7</sup> It makes clear that everyone has the right to choose the creed he wants.<sup>8</sup> We find lot of examples of tolerance in the *Sīrah* of the Prophet.<sup>9</sup> To him "A real believer is one with whom others sense cozy."<sup>10</sup>

### **Discussing, Speaking and Reasoning**

Style of speaking means approach of speaking or discussing and style of conveying something which is in ones' mind. Selection of suitable manner for speaking, conversation and arguing in a balanced tone, adopting to maintain a smiling face, wishing peace to others in the start of the speak, shake hands humbly, balancing the voice and tone while talking, asking about the family members, avoid using tongue for ill manners, using simple and precise way of speaking, avoiding of useless arguments or reasoning and closing of conversations with greetings and good words are some basic speaking, discussion and reasoning aspects for a developed personality taught by Quran , Ḥadīth and *Sīrah* of the Prophet. The Quran has taught humanity the advice of the prophet Luqmān which he gave to his son in the following words: "Lower your voice,' directing him to speak in a gentle manner, for speaking loudly is detested and ugly."<sup>11</sup> These

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<sup>7</sup> Al-Baqarah 2:256.

<sup>8</sup> See: Quran.com retrieved from <https://quran.com/109> (Translation)

<sup>9</sup> See: Theresa Corbin and Dayo Kaighla Um, *The New Muslims Field Guide* (Carolina: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2018), 116

<sup>10</sup> Corbin and Um, *The New Muslims Field Guide*, 120.

<sup>11</sup> Luqmān 31:19.

lines expressed that there should be appropriate equilibrium in speaker's speech and in the tone of voices that addressee should enjoy listening to them instead of getting jaded with whatever they are gabbing or discussing. A disciple of Imam 'Atā spoke that once a student say to me somewhat which I knew already but I listened him as I do not discern about the thing.<sup>12</sup> *Laith Ibn Sa'd* said: If an individual tell me somewhat which I overheard already the marriage of his parentages I immobile heed him with same ease and attention. Prophet Muhammad constantly retain smile on his face. A man came to the Last Prophet Muhammad and greeted him with the known words for greetings. The Prophet responded his salām and said: Ten recompenses. Other man came and said the greeting with additional words. The last prophet retorted his salutation and said: Twenty (rewards). The third person came and also said the greeting with more additional words of greeting. The Prophet responded him with same better words and announced: Thirty."<sup>13</sup> It shows that as better words a person will use for greeting better rewards will get.

### **Analyzing and Researching**

The word *Tafakkur* in the religious sense means to reflect over the creation of Allah, to ponder and to think deeply on the signs of Allah and it has been used in various verses of the Quran. O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice. Humble, calm and thankful

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<sup>12</sup> Abu Ghuddah Shaykh Abdul-Fattaah, "*The Secret of Excellent Conversation*," Accessed February 16, 2020 [https:// muslimvillage. com/ 2016/ 09/24/ 47659/ manners-conversation/](https://muslimvillage.com/2016/09/24/47659/manners-conversation/)

<sup>13</sup> Al-Khatīb al-Tabraizī, *The Niche of Lamps (Miskāt-al-Masābīh)*. (Beirūt: Dār Al-Kutub Al-‘Ilmiyaah, 2012), 1:408-414.

personality can be developed if a person ponders upon his surroundings. When a person knows the reason of his creation, he becomes thankful to his Lord and follows the path which is righteous.

### **Time and Risk Management**

Time is defined as the whole day in which everything happens. Time is money<sup>14</sup>. It is a Treasure and yet we waste it foolishly. Allah says in Quran: "The Day they see it, as if they had tarried but a single evening, or the following morn!"<sup>15</sup> The reality of this verse reminds us that our short time on earth. Our life will be remembered as a blink of an eye. They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account." A Muslim used even every single minute in a better way and did not use time in those activities that Allah and his messenger did not like. The Prophet said about time: "There are two blessings which many people lose: (They are) health and free time for doing well"<sup>16</sup>. In another saying he speaks: "Allah said, 'the son of Adam wrongs me for he curses *Ad-Dahr*; though I am *Ad-Dahr*. In my Hands are all things, and I cause the revolution of day and night."<sup>17</sup> Prophet says in another *ḥadīth* "An individual will not passage on until he has been questioned regarding 4 things: their life and in what they spent, their acquaintance and what they

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<sup>14</sup> Swingle Brain, *Elements Unlimite*, (London: Keystrokes Publishers, 2006). A:69

<sup>15</sup> See: Quran.com, retrieved from <https://quran.com/79> (translations)

<sup>16</sup> Al-Bukhārī, Saīh al-Bukhārī, B-74, Ch. 1, H-2091.

<sup>17</sup> Sālih Ibn Abdul Aziz, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd: The Destination of Seekers of Truth*, (Riyādh: Dār al-Nadwah, 2003), 145.

organized, their capital, how they assimilated those and on what they consumed it, and their physique and how he showed it."<sup>18</sup>

Sleep at least 7-8 hours, Give yourself a break, exercise to relieve stress, silence Social Media, enjoy the people you love, Complete most important task first, Learn to say no, do something during waiting time, exercise and eat healthy, have some fun and using Time Management to Improve study skills are indirectly taught by Quran, *ḥadīth* and *Sīrah* of the Prophet for the development of Personality.

You have 24 hours. Write down how you spend them. The easiest way to do this is to create a simple chart for example:

Work = 6 hours, Exercise = 1 hour, Salah = 1 hour,  
Eating = 1 hour, Sleeping = 7-8 hours, Other Activities  
= 1-2 hours

### **Back Biting and Snubbing**

Back biting is not allowed in Islam so one should keep his self away from back biting as he will be answerable for everything which he will say at the back of any person. "O! You, who have believed, avoid much [Bad] 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."<sup>19</sup> A companion requested to the last Prophet:

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<sup>18</sup>Muhamamd Saeed Abdul Reḥmān, *Islam: Question and Answer-Jurisprudence and Islamic Ruling* (London: MSA Publication Ltd. 2007), 100.

<sup>19</sup> See: Quran.com retrieved from <https://quran.com/49/12>.

"Advise me," The prophet said: "Do not get angry." He repeated his question several times but Prophet replied the same: "Do not get angry."<sup>20</sup> At the end of the discussion and talking, prays and greeting of closing, *Al-Salāmo- 'alaikum Warahmatullāh-e-wabarakātuhu* is also an important closing part taught by the Prophet.

### **Walking, See-off and Appearance**

Walking prepare the body physically and mentally for daily work. Walking style grooms our personality. A good habit makes a man strong and healthy. Walking panaches comprising walking swiftness and pace have a huge impression on personality.<sup>21</sup> A Good way of walking show a full of confidence a person can be complete when a proper focus on walking. The Holy Prophet said It might be tolerable for one to collide with a filthy pig smeared with mud but not that the shoulders of a men should brush against a stranger women. These manners should apply in our life. Do not contemptuously turn your face away from people nor does tread haughtily upon earth Allah not love the arrogant and the vainglorious "And don't walk around exultantly on the earth certainly you will never rend the earth nor attain the mountains in height"

### **Analysis and Results**

As per above mentioned discussion, it is analyzed that a 3 hour course contents should be developed for a practical achievement of the learning goals. It is observed that our university students have no goal for the

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<sup>20</sup> Shaikh al-Islām al-Id Ibn Daqiq, *A Treasury of Hadith* Trans Mokrane Guezzou, (Leicestershire: Kube Publishing Ltd, 2014), 142.

<sup>21</sup> Puri Sudhir, *A Guide to Live Life Successfully: How to Deal Different Conditions and Persons in Life* (Bloomington: Book tango, 2013), 46.

development of their personality. That's why their personality is not developing even in university atmosphere. Personality development is very important for learning and future success. Everyone wants significant and affective personality. And we think we can get by brands or by higher education. Although education develop our personality but only when we are aware about our aims and we set goals for those aims. The areas of social norms and personality traits of Holy Prophet i.e. speaking, hand shaking, discussion, walking, mocking, snubbing, welcoming, greeting, arguing, time management, eve teasing, analyzing, researching, Islamic dressing and praying are set to be taught in the said 3 hour course. The newly developed format for course contents is used to develop the course contents. The course is developed including the topics i.e. Course description, Course Objectives, Learning Outcomes, Module-wise breakdown of course contents, Teaching Methodology, Assessment Methods, Outcomes and Learning Grid, Evaluation Criteria and Reference Books for reading.

### **Conclusion**

A university level BS course has been developed containing of the Islamic teachings and practices of the prophet for personality development. The developed course title is "**Ethical Trainings by Seerat-un-Nabi**". The topics like speaking, hand shaking, discussion, walking, mocking, snubbing, welcoming, greeting, arguing, time management, eve teasing, analyzing, researching, Islamic dressing and praying can be taught to BS classes in University adopting the prescribed method. By implementing this course we can develop good habits among students which help us in the development of their personalities. For this purpose approval should be sought from the concerned Boards of Studies.