

The
RELATIONSHIP
between a husband and wife
should be like two
true and sincere
friends.

[Malfuzat, vol. 5, pp. 417]

Marital Harmony Guide



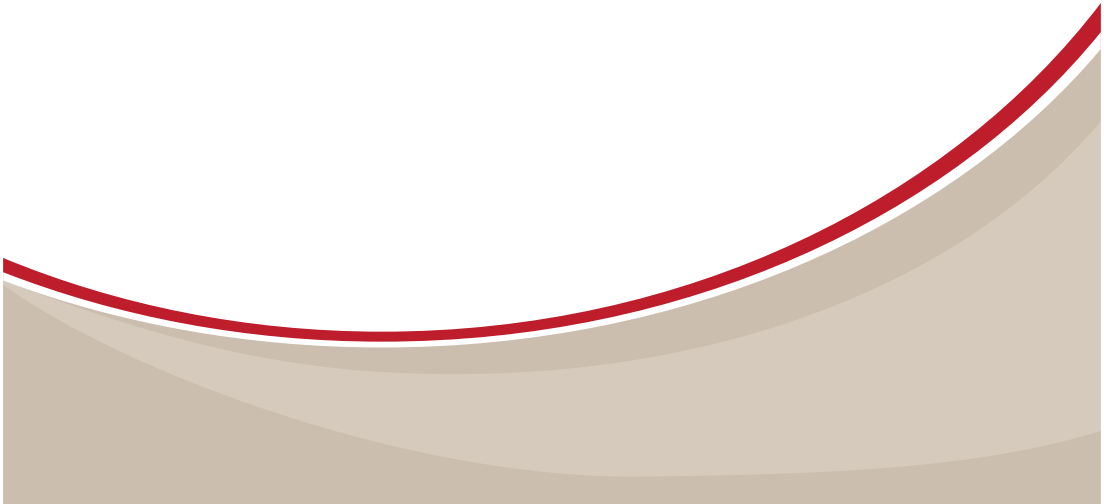
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National Tarbiyat Department

Marital Harmony Guide
By
National Tarbiyat Department, USA
April 2017

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Preface

In 2016, the Tarbiyat Subcommittee of Majlis-e-Shura recommended that the National Tarbiyat Department should develop a concise referenced educational guide on the topic of Islamic marriage and marital harmony.

Consequently, the National Tarbiyat Department developed this booklet. To improve the readability of this guide, our team has tried to present it in a question-answer format. Section one pertains to questions that may arise before marriage and section three deals with questions that typically arise after marriage. Section two is a brief summary of issues that may come up at the time of wedding. While the building block of marital harmony is honesty and Taqwa, we believe that a better understanding of these issues can help a marriage to succeed. All answers are provided only in the words of Holy Quran, Prophet Muhammad (sa), Promised Messiah (a.s) or Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat.

If you believe an important excerpt from the above texts is missing from this guide and will help the reader, kindly send the exact reference to us before July 1st 2017. We will gladly include it in the upcoming print edition.

I am deeply grateful to Imam Hammad Ahmad who did a great deal of work to compile this guide and to Imam Abdullah Dibba and Sardar Anees Ahmad for their final review. Naveed Malik from Silver Spring was the graphic designer. Please remember them in your special prayers.

Wasalaam,



Faheem Younus Qureshi
Serving National Tarbiyat Department, USA
April 23rd, 2017

Section I - Before Marriage

What is the purpose of marriage?

[30:22] And one of His Signs is this, that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect.

“The purpose of Nikah is for the continuity of one’s progeny, to protect one’s chastity, to attain love and peace, and to give the responsibility of a safe married life. The Qur’an names those married men and women as muhsin and muhsina, which means to be enclosed in a fort. This shows that the purpose of marriage is to safeguard oneself from satanic intuitions and attacks; also, it is to protect one’s chastity and righteousness.” (Fiqh Ahmadiyya Part 2, pp. 18-19)

“One of the purposes of marriage is that righteous servants of God may be born who may remember Him. The second purpose is that husband and wife may safeguard themselves against improper looks and misconduct through each other. The third purpose is that mutual love develops between them, safeguarding them against the distress of loneliness. All this is set out in the Holy Qur’an.” (Chashma-i-Ma’rifat, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 23, pp. 292-293)

In his speech of 25th June 1920, after announcing some marriages, Hadhrat Musleh Maudra said: “It is necessary for the boy, the girl and their parents to know the purpose of marriage because without knowing the purpose of something it becomes impossible to act upon it ...

Likewise with marriage, if someone doesn’t know its purpose they won’t be able to benefit from it. When the understanding of something is acquired then it becomes easy to benefit from it. For example, people who don’t know the purpose of food could say that one eats when one is hungry; therefore, there is benefit behind it. But those who have reflected over it know its benefits and have discovered remedies from it ... So the purpose of marriage is not jut for carnal desires. Those who think it is [primarily] for carnal desires are wrong. The doctors of European countries who take that to be the only purpose of marriage admit that a lack of

knowledge of the true purpose of marriage has led to their weak offspring. It is not merely for love and affection, because that love is a temporal emotion, as are anger, desires, etc. in which man doesn't care ... Therefore, those who base their marriage on love lose everything when the love dies out. When a man marries a woman because of her beauty, but she has very bad habits and cannot take care of the household, his life becomes a hell for him. Therefore, the purpose of marriage is Taqwa (the fear of Allah), safety of self and progeny, and for there to be success and ease in one's religious and worldly affairs. Islam understands this and teaches it as well."

How should one pray before the marriage?

[25:75] And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.

Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) said, "There are two types of Istikhara, one is general Istikhara and the other is specific Istikhara. The general Istikhara is done first and the specific Istikhara is done after."

"The general Istikhara is that a person pray without thinking of anyone specific that, 'O Allah, grant me a spouse with whose soul I have affinity.'

Secondly, the specific Istikhara should be observed when an opportunity arises. One should pray taking the name of the person with whom there is a proposal. In this way, the general Istikhara safeguards the specific Istikhara. Some people observe the first Istikhara and do not observe the second Istikhara, and some people observe the second Istikhara and do not observe the first Istikhara. Both should be observed and then the result ends up being correct."

"Some people are first fond of a certain woman, and then they observe Istikhara. In such an Istikhara, the inclination of the person generally affects the outcome and they start thinking that the result of the Istikhara was good. However, if they were not inclined to the proposal, then according to their inclination they think the Istikhara went against the proposal. However, the Istikhara did not go in favor of or against the proposal. Rather, it was their inclination that went in favor of or against the proposal, from which they come to the wrong conclusion." (Khutbate Nikah, pg. 435)

Why is there a need for such a marital harmony guide?

Unfortunately complaints regarding this subject are on the rise. At times, extremely coarse allegations are made about women or they are severely mistreated by the in-laws and if it were not for the grace of Allah that in light of His commandment 'keep on admonishing' (87:10) and in subservience and representation of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) attention is drawn to counsel and to advise, there would be great despondence and hopelessness.

Huzur said that today he would counsel and advice in the hope that his counselling will be blessed, he prayed that may Allah bless the words that he counsels with. Huzur said it is distressing to hear incidents concerning marital friction in the sense that our aims and objections are so lofty, and here we are entangled in egotistical webs borne out of trivial matters. Both men and women should self-reflect; in addition both sides of in-laws should self-reflect, for it could be the fault of either side - although it is usually the male side that commits the excesses. (Friday Sermon, November 10th 2006)

What's the magnitude of the problem?

Huzur (aba) said that on his instruction Ameer Sahib (UK) has carried out a survey that tells us that the rate of incidents of culpability amongst men are three times that of women [and] in 30% to 40% of the matters it is the in-laws who create the friction.

Putting it in perspective, Huzur (aba) said it is not as if there is no virtue or sincerity in the Community; certainly the majority of the Community is firm on what is good. There are even those who trust their daughters-in-law more than their own offspring. However, regarding this issue, if similar surveys were carried out in USA or Canada as the one in the UK, a similar picture would emerge there. The Tarbiyyat department and all the auxiliaries need to be very proactive in this matter. (Friday Sermon, November 10th 2006)

What's wrong with the idea of not marrying at all?

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said: "Marriage

is my precept and my practice. Those who do not follow my practice are not of me" (Ibn Majah).

"When a man has married, he has completed one half of his religion" (Mishkat).

What is the true interpretation of a "Qawwam"?

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (ra) said, "Those men are Qawwam who financially provide for their wives. Those useless men who live off of the income of their wives are not at all Qawwam." (Commentary 4:35)

"You hear so much about women's liberation and women's rights, etc. Islam speaks of a comprehensive fundamental principle, which covers all situations: And they (the women) have rights similar and equal to those (of men) over them in equity; (i.e., for women, there are exactly equal rights as for men, as men have rights upon women. There is thus total equality and there is no difference whatsoever between the fundamental human rights of women and men.) But men have a degree of advantage over them. And Allah is Mighty and Wise.

In another part of a verse of the Holy Quran, it is stated: Men are appointed guardians over women because of that in respect of which Allah has made some of them excel others despite the fact that they spend of their wealth.

From the Arabic word Qawwamun (guardians made responsible to keep their wards on the right path), some medieval-minded ulema deduce and claim the superiority of men over women, whereas the verse only refers to an advantage that the breadwinner has over his dependents. As such, the guardian is better qualified to exert moral pressure on the wards to continue to remain on the right path. As far as basic human rights are concerned, it does not in any way refer to women being unequal or to men's superiority over women. The last part of the verse refers to the above-mentioned advantage and makes it manifestly clear that despite this advantage, the fundamental rights of women are exactly equal to those of men. The Arabic letters wa is to be translated as 'despite the fact that' or 'while' and in this context seems to be the only correct translation." (Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues, pp. 93-94)

"In this regard, the verse cited earlier, which refers to guardians (Qawwa-

mun), lays a very heavy responsibility on the shoulders of a husband. If his conduct is not conducive to the creation of an ideal atmosphere for a healthy family life, he would have failed in his responsibility to act as a guardian (Qawwam). It should be remembered that the best example of Qawwam was the Holy Founder (sa) of Islam himself. He was neither harsh, nor dictatorial, nor in any way offensive or over-assertive in relation to his family. To keep them on the right path was a grave responsibility, but the way that he discharged this responsibility serves as an excellent living example for all times to come for all those who want to investigate and comprehend the real meaning of the epithet Qawwam.

In a famous tradition, Abu Hurairah (ra) relates that the Holy Prophet (sa) said: "The most perfect of believers in the matter of faith is he whose behavior is best; and the best of you are those who behave best towards their wives." (Tirmidhi)

If the parents really want their children to grow up into members of a righteous society, they should remember that mutual relationships between husbands and wives are going to play an important role in the making or breaking of the character of their children." (Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues, p. 108)

Huzoor (aba) said, "Every married man is the guardian of his family, and looking after their needs is his responsibility. Man has been made the Qawwam, and to provide for the expenses of the home and for the education of the children is his responsibility. However, unfortunately in the Jama'at there are some men who, rather than providing the expenses of the home, instead ask their wives to pay their expenses. However, they have no right on the income of their wives. If a wife pays some expenses, then that is her favor to her husband." (Khutbate Masroor 2004, pg. 184, March 5 2004)

What is the real meaning of "arranged marriage"?

"No marriage can be arranged and entered into without the consent of both man and woman. However, the woman needs a guardian or representative for the arrangement. The purpose is to safeguard her rights and to maintain her modesty. Islam allows both the man and the woman to see and talk to each other before the marriage, with a chaperon present at these meetings." (Khalifatul Masih IV, Questions and answers, 6/21/92)

What are the rights of a boy and girl if they don't like a proposed match?

"It is narrated by Ibn 'Abbas (ra) that a virgin girl came to the Holy prophet (sa) and said that her father had married her with someone but she did not like him. The Holy Prophet (sa) gave her the option to maintain that marriage or reject it." (Abi Dawud, Bab Fil-Bikr Yuzawwijuha Abaha)

"It is regrettable that some demand from the first day that they do not wish to live with their spouse and it transpires that the marriage only took place due to parental pressure and that their intent was to marry elsewhere. Huzur said parents should not destroy lives in this manner." (<https://www.alislam.org/archives/2006/summary/FSS20061110-EN.html>)

What are Islamic teachings on cousin marriages?

"Indeed, one should take into consideration the proposals from within one's family, but even then it is not compulsory. The Promised Messiah (as) was also once asked in regards to the proposals from one's own family, and the Promised Messiah (as) said that it is better to settle the marriage within one's family if a suitable match is available, but it is not compulsory to do so." (<https://www.alislam.org/friday-sermon/2017-03-03.html>)

When should we go for premarital counseling?

Premarital counseling should be conducted weeks and months ahead of the wedding date so both sides have time to identify and resolve any differences. More information and a premarital counseling request form are available at www.rishtanata.us

What are the conditions surrounding the paying of a dowry (Huq Mehr)? What steps should be taken if a wife agrees to forego the dowry?

Huzoor (aba) said that Islam has laid down various injunctions to secure the future of a woman. One of these is that a dowry should be fixed for her at the time of Nikah which the husband is obligated to pay. Some people have a misunderstanding that dowry is only to be paid in case of divorce or separation. Some people covet the earnings of their wives. Likewise, there is a custom in some poor families and countries that the bride's

parents receive the dowry from the bridegroom at the time of the wedding and the bride receives nothing and remains empty handed. Huzoor (aba) said that such ways are totally unlawful and are strictly forbidden by Islam. Citing an episode of a companion of the Promised Messiah (as), Huzoor (aba) said that it is essential to hand over the dowry to the wife before she chooses to forego it.

(<https://www.alislam.org/tj/sermons/FSJ20160401-EN.pdf>)

Marrying with bad intentions (Green card, immigration, etc.)

Citing part of verse 20 from Surah Al Nisa (4:20) as a guide, Huzur (aba) said there is a tendency among some men from India & Pakistan who marry girls living in the Western world that as soon as their immigration status is confirmed, they tend to turn nasty. Then there are those who marry girls from Pakistan, etc. but later maintain that they do not quite like them. It has become trendy to maintain that they feel there is no compatibility. These people should reflect and ponder over this; their actions are far removed from taqwa.

(Friday Sermon, November 10th 2006)

Section II - At the Time of the Wedding

What is our position on Mehndi?

So much money is spent on marriage celebrations that in places where these rituals are followed, people have assumed that these are among the obligations of marriage. For example, there is the Mehndi (henna) ceremony. It is given the same significance as the wedding day. Invitation cards are printed, stages are prepared and series of parties continue for many days prior to the wedding. Each day a new stage is set up [and] lavish meals are discussed and reviewed. This ritual has also grabbed hold of those who do not have the means to afford it and as a result they go into debt.

Non-Ahmadis have been following these rituals but now some Ahmadi households are also practicing some of these idle matters. Huzur (aba) said he had recently drawn attention that we should desist from extravagance and lavish dinners at the Mehndi ceremony. On the day [of the earlier sermon] a family from London were holding a Mehndi reception. Upon listening to Huzur's sermon, they cancelled the reception and instead invited a few friends of the bride to dinner. They sent the food which was prepared for the reception to a function that was being held at Baitul Futuh. Such are the Ahmadis who act immediately upon being reminded and also write in letters of apology. However, Huzur (aba) said he has received some complaints from Pakistan and also from Rabwah. Some people are getting involved in these rituals a little too much. Rabwah is a small town, so everything is noted quite quickly there. Therefore, Huzur (aba) said he was saying it openly that these idle rituals and ceremonies should not be followed and should be brought to an end. Friday Sermon, Jan 15 2010

Should all the guests at the wedding be served a meal?

In Islam, marriage is an obligation and a wedding reception may be

held if it can be afforded. Meals can be served at the reception, although it is not essential that all the guests be served a meal. If the wedding party is travelling from a long distance, then maybe just they can be served a meal. However, if the law of the land does not permit serving a meal then it should be avoided. At one time, serving a meal at weddings was legislated against in Pakistan. Huzur (aba) said he was not aware of the exact current restrictions but some restrictions still apply. The authentic commandment in Islam is that of holding a reception for Walima, that, too, in accordance with one's means. God has told us the objective of our creation and any good work that is done to please God becomes [a form of] worship. (Friday Sermon, Jan 15 2010)

Can we borrow money to prepare a befitting dowry for our daughter?

At times, women are reproached and given taunts for not bringing enough dowry. Such people need to look at the blessed model of the Holy Prophet (sa) in this regard and how he married off his daughters by adopting simplicity when gifting the dowry. Similarly, the family of the bride should not place undue burden upon themselves and only gift what they can easily afford. (Friday Sermon, March 3rd, 2017)

Shouldn't we be worried about the financial status of a potential bridegroom?

Huzur added that the girls' side of the family often ask before the marriage whether the boys has a house of his own and if not, then they do not pursue with the proposal. This is also wrong because eventually one is able acquire a house of their own but marriages should be settled by giving precedence to Taqwa [righteousness] and not by worldly standards. Similarly, certain families do not give their daughters in marriage to missionaries because they are life-devotees. (Friday sermon, March 3rd, 2017)

Section III - After Marriage

After marriage, is it recommended to live with parents/in-laws, or on our own?

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (ra) said, "In India, people often complain of arguments at home, especially between mother-in-laws and daughter-in-laws. If they act on the Holy Qur'an, this will not happen. Look, it gives guidance that homes should be separate, the mother's home separate and the married children's home separate." (Commentary 24:62)

Huzoor (aba) stated: "One malady, because of which homes are being destroyed and a constant state of fighting and restlessness in homes exists, is that boys are staying with their parents and siblings in the same house even after marriage, despite having means and without any legitimate reason. If the parents are elderly, there is no one to serve them, they cannot move about doing activities, and there is no helper, then it is necessary and obligatory for that child to keep them with him and serve them. However, if there are siblings who are living with them, then there is nothing wrong with having a separate home. Nowadays, much harm are created because of this. If by living together you fall into more sins, then this service is no goodness."

"(Verse 24:62 of the Holy Qur'an) gives guidance that homes should be separate. The mother's home should be separate and the married children's home separate, only then will you go to one another's homes and eat there. This perception of people, that if they live separately from their parents [this] would be a great sin, is wrong. Some parents instill fear in their children and blackmail them, as if they will be hell bound as soon as they start living separately. This is an extremely wrong attitude.

Many times I have asked girls; in-front of their mother-in-law and father-in-law they say that they are living by their own choice, in

fact even their husbands say this. However, when I ask them separately, the response from both of them is that they are living together because they have to. The result is that sometimes the daughter-in-law is transgressing against the mother-in-law, and sometimes the mother-in-law is transgressing against the daughter-in-law."

Huzoor stated, "Most families live with great love, but those who cannot should not make emotional decisions. Rather, if they have the capacity and facility, and there is no necessity, then it is better that they live separately. This is a very good point by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (ra) that if living together is so important, then why have the homes of the parents been mentioned separately?" (Khutbate Masroor vol. 4 pg. 570-571)

Can a girl work after she is married?

Hazrat Khalifa Rabi (rh) said, "Some ladies have such professions as are very important for the lady folk itself, for instance lady doctors. Their profession also, perhaps, interferes to some degree with primary purpose of creation, yet it helps the women folk in general and that is in itself a very useful occupation. So, I fully support ladies becoming lady doctors, particularly specializing in the diseases of ladies, so that they don't have to go to men."

Hazrat Musleh Maud's (ra) own wife, Hazrat Sarah (rh), was not able to raise her youngest child because she was extremely busy in studying so that she could gain the education needed to educate the women of the Jama'at. (Meri Sarah, pg 8)

Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) said, "Thus, we have to see what knowledge we are in need of. We are in need of the knowledge of religion. If a girl passes in M.A. but she does not know training of children and homemaking, then she is not a scholar but is ignorant. The first obligation of a mother is training of children, and then homemaking. She who studies Hadith and the Holy Qur'an is a religious and

Muslim woman. If a woman progresses in studying general books so that she can become a teacher or learn medicine, then this is beneficial because we are in need of this but all other subjects are vain." (Anwarul Ulum, vol 13 pg 201)

Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) said, "Similarly, women say that we will have jobs; but if they have jobs, then their offspring will be ruined. How will they train their children ... The real responsibility on women is the education and training of children, and this responsibility is no less than the responsibility of Jihad. If the training of children is done well, then the foundation of a people is firm and they progress. If their training is not done well, then one day or another those people are inevitably ruined." (Anwarul Ulum, vol 15 pg 28)

Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) wrote, "Many girls are studying just for earning and employment, although the duty of a woman is not employment. This trend of employment of women is a remnant from the cursed remnants of Western culture. Islam has placed the responsibility of providing income on men. "Men are guardians over women because Allah has made some of them excel others, and because they (men) spend of their wealth. So virtuous women are those who are obedient, and guard the secrets of their husbands with Allah's protection." (4:35) ...Thus, rather than spending their time in some other way, righteous women should spend their time in the protection and guardianship of men, and in the absence of men when they are out earning a living, they should, with the help of Allah Almighty, safeguard those trusts that have been entrusted to them, as in they should turn their attention to matters of homemaking, train the children, keep the morals of the home and neighborhood right, etc." (Meri Sarah pg 23)

The Holy Prophet (sa) said, "The man is a guardian of his family, the woman is a guardian and is responsible for her husband's house and his offspring" (Bukhari, Muslim)

Huzur (aba) advised women with children, "The first responsibility is the raising of children. If she is starving, then she may work, but she should have enough resolve to go and come straight back from work and also raise her children. If she is working only to earn money to do fashion, then she should leave her job." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0a-PHZcqRM>)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh) said, "Islam has placed the responsibility on men to earn a living. It carries a profound wisdom in it. Although women are allowed to earn when necessary and to fulfill their needs, but only if they are unable to avoid it. But to earn as a profession is men's responsibility." (Hawa Ki Betian pg 148)

Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) said, "The intentions of Hazrat Khadija (ra) were very lofty. When the Holy Prophet (sa) married her, she quickly perceived that she had married a man who has self-respect. She realized that, 'He does not have wealth and I have great wealth; when I place food before him, then he will feel that his wife has given him food; if I have clothes made for him, then he will feel that his wife had it made for him; if I give him money, he will feel his wife has given him money. He will not be able to bear this because God Almighty has made him a man with self respect.' Thus, after marriage, Hazrat Khadija (ra) said to the Holy Prophet (sa) that, 'I have a wish, please accept it.' He asked what the matter was. She said, 'I wish to call witnesses and give you all of my wealth, spend it as you wish.' Hearing this might have also been difficult for the Holy Prophet (sa) but Hazrat Khadija (ra) said, 'I also give all of my slaves to you.' Since the Holy Prophet (sa) did not like slavery, this also became a reason why he accepted the request of Hazrat Khadija (ra). He (sa) said, 'Khadija, think it over well, lest you regret it afterwards. I do not like keeping slaves, and if you give me your slaves, I will immediately free them.' Hazrat Khadija (ra) said that she accepted. Thus, Hazrat Khadija (ra) gave all of her wealth and all of her slaves to the Holy Prophet (sa) and he immediately freed all of them." "Hazrat Khadija (ra) did not just marry a poor man. After marrying him, she also did not care for whether her wealth would be a source of comfort for

her. She turned her wealth over to her husband as well so that he may give it away. This quality is the reason why the Holy Prophet (sa) had extreme love for her in his heart." (Khutbate Nikah, pg. 667-668)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh) said, "The guiding principle I have told you [is] that you should think within you, what is the main purpose of your creation in a way which is different from men. Allah could make us exactly the same, but He has made us different because our functions are different."

Can a husband or wife pursue higher education after marriage?

Any career would be all right which does not interfere with the purpose of their creation as women. Women are held mainly responsible and this is how they are created differently from man. To give birth to children, the future generation of mankind, look after them and bring them up in a way as the future of mankind is brighter and better than before; at least it is as good as the present, not worse. This is a very great and grave responsibility on the shoulders of ladies. If they are drawn much more to other hollow activities of life which begins to tell on their main function, and which begins to divert their attention from the main purpose for which they are created, then to that extent, humanity as such would begin to suffer. And they may leave such generations behind as would be in a worse state of human relationships as they would not be well brought up. So any profession which begins to interfere with this timely function of ladies would be that much discouraged. To that degree, it should be discouraged. But that is not a general rule. Some ladies have such professions that are very important for the lady folk itself, for instance lady doctors. Their profession also perhaps interferes, to some degree, with the primary purpose of creation, yet it helps the women folk in general and that in itself is a very useful occupation. So I fully support ladies becom[ing] lady doctors, particularly specializing in the diseases of ladies so that they do not have to go to men. But otherwise there are other

professions which draw them out to a life pattern that they are ill-suited ... So whatever we do in life, we should not let this main purpose of our creation be interfered with. (Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih, Question and Answer Session 8th June 1985)

Should a husband or wife have friends who are of the opposite gender? What if they are co-workers that they spend time with at work?

Hadhrat Umm Salamah (ra), wife of the Holy Prophet (sa), narrates, "Whenever Allah's Messenger (sa) finished his prayers with Taslim, the women would get up and he would stay on for a while in his place before getting up." (Bukhari)

Hadhrat Umm Salamah, wife of the Holy Prophet (sa), also said, "When the Messenger of Allah (sa) gave the salutation, he stayed for a while. By this people thought that women should return earlier than men." (Abu Dawud)

Concerning one of the entrances to his mosque, Hadhrat Ibn 'Umar narrated that the Holy Prophet (sa) said, "If we reserve this door for women (it would be better)" Nafi' said that Ibn 'Umar did not enter through it (the door) till he died (Abu Dawud). Also, once when the Holy Prophet (sa) was coming out of the mosque and men and women were mingled in the road, he (sa) said to the women, "Draw back, for you must not walk in the middle of the road; keep to the sides of the road." Then women were keeping so close to the wall that their garments were rubbing against it. (Abu Dawud)

Huzoor (aba) said that in our professional interactions with someone of the opposite gender, they being an Ahmadi or non-Ahmadi is irrelevant. Our interaction should be concerning our work and should not extend to socialization. Huzoor also said that we should think of students as students, and not as anything beyond that. (@ 56:27 <http://youtu.be/Zyjptl3Z0ts>)

Huzoor stated that men should do Tabligh to men and women to women. Men and women should not interact with one another unnecessarily. (@ 7:45 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bs2Uc3JgFVE>)

“Free mixing of both sexes and clandestine affairs between men and women are strongly discouraged. Men and women are both advised to abstain not only from casting covetous eyes at each other, but to abstain from such visual or physical contacts as may lead to uncontrollable temptations. Women are expected to cover themselves decently and are advised not to behave in a manner as to attract untoward attention from wayward men. The use of cosmetics and ornaments are not forbidden, but they should not be worn when appearing in public to attract attention. We fully understand that in the present mood of societies all over the world, this teaching appears to be rather harsh, restrictive and colorless. However, a deeper study of the entire Islamic social system may lead one to believe this judgement to be hasty and superficial. This teaching should, therefore, be understood as an integral part of the entire Islamic social climate.” (Islam’s Response to Contemporary Issues, p. 92)

How should a wife treat her husband’s relatives (and vice versa)?

“Hadrat Amman Jan advised ladies to consider their husband’s relatives like their own relatives.” (Hazrat Amman Jan (ra), An Inspiration for Us All, pg. 187)

How should the household/family chores and errands be divided between a husband and wife?

“A woman must be kept free, as far as possible, from the responsibility of earning bread for the family. In principle, this responsibility must fall on the shoulders of men. Yet, there is no reason why women should be debarred from playing their part in turning the

wheel of economy provided that they find themselves free to do so, i.e., without neglecting their prime responsibility of human reproduction, family care and concomitant involvements. This is exactly what Islam proposes.

Again, women in general have a weaker and comparatively frail constitution. Yet, surprisingly, God has provided them with tougher potentials in their physique. These attributes are mainly due to the presence of an extra half chromosome in their cells, which is responsible for the difference between men and women. This is obviously provided to meet the extra challenge placed on them during pregnancy, childbirth and the lactation period. All the same, this potential does not make a woman outwardly stronger and tougher. They should not be relegated to hard menial tasks in the productive economic field merely in the name of equality or any other name. This also requires that they should be treated with more tenderness and kindness. Women should have a lesser load to bear in daily life and should not be forced to bear equal load with men in public activities.

It emerges from the above that if the task of the running of a home is a special area of responsibility to be assigned to either man or woman, a woman has obviously much greater merit than a man to perform such responsibilities. Additionally, by nature women have been assigned the responsibility of looking after the children. Such responsibility can only be partly shared with men." (Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues, pp. 100-101)

What compromise should be reached if there is a discrepancy in the level of religious observance between the husband and the wife?

"So virtuous women are obedient and guard the secrets of their husbands with Allah's protection. And as for those on whose part you fear disobedience admonish them and keep away from them in

their beds and chastise them. Then if they obey you seek not a way against them. Surely Allah is High and Great" (4:35).

Here, three qualities of women have been given: virtuous, obedient and those who guard the secrets of their husbands. For those women who are virtuous, the first and best method provided by God for their reformation in any matter is to advise or admonish them. Hence, in any such instance the best course of action is to advise and understand by means of conversation.

"Women are influenced by their husbands. To the extent that a husband excels in piety and righteousness, his wife will also partake of it. But if the husband is wicked, the wife, too, will share his evil" (Malfuzat Vol 5 Pg 218)

"Marry with the intention of attaining righteousness" (Khutbat-e-Mahmood Vol 3 Pg 1)

This is like sharing one's life with a dead man. But still, as long as he is the husband then you have to do whatever is due to you to a husband from the Islamic point of view. Be good in worldly things and let him realize that his partner who regularly says prayers is a better partner in so many ways, well behaved, better behaved and that she has benefitted from whatever she was pursuing. So that should be the practical example that you must stick to and never change your attitude of kindness and goodness to that husband. Again we find in the Holy Quran the life of the wife of Pharaoh. What worse husband could you imagine than Pharaoh, for a poor wife who was a believer? And the advice rendered to her was to pray to Allah, seek help from Him. This is the second advice. First of all your conduct should be exceptionally good, an exemplary conduct. And secondly, to pray to Allah to change that husband's heart. Again the third advice is that you should see to it that you be more kind to your children than before. Attach them more towards you so that they escape the evil influence of the husband. Or, if it is not evil, at least the bad influence of the husband, and that they are more grav-

itated towards you to learn the Holy Quran, the prayers and all the good things of life from you, because you are now practically the single parent of the family. As far as Islam goes, the other party does not help at all, so you have to read along on one will alone and greater effort is required for that. (Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV, Question and Answer Session 2nd May 1994)

What is the right attitude towards implementing purdah?

"People have adapted extreme attitudes in respect of the veil. Europe has gone to one extreme in abolishing it altogether and now some naturalists, too, wish to follow suit, whereas it is clear that this licentiousness has flung open the gates of vice in Europe. On the other hand, some Muslims go to the other extreme and do not let their women step out of their homes at all, even though it is often necessary for them to travel or to go out on account of some other need. We believe that both these types are in error." (Malfuzat Vol 6 Pg 322)

What if a woman has extreme religious incompatibility with her spouse?

"If he changes his religion or it becomes difficult for the wife to live with him on account of some incompatibility; in all these situations, she or her guardian ought to report to the judge."
(Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in Vol 23 Pg 289)

Who is responsible for the finances of the household?

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (ra) said, "Those men are Qawwam who financially provide for their wives. Those useless men who live off of the income of their wives are not at all Qawwam." (Commentary 4:35)

Huzoor (aba) said, "Every married man is the guardian of his family, and looking after their needs is his responsibility. Man has been made the Qawwam, and to provide for the expenses of the home and for the education of the children is his responsibility. However, unfortunately in the Jama'at there are some men who, rather than providing the expenses of the home, instead ask their wives to pay their expenses. However, they have no right on the income of their wives. If a wife pays some expenses, then that is her favor to her husband." (Khutbate Masroor 2004, pg. 184, March 5 2004)

Huzoor (aba) said, "Those men who look to their wives' wealth should remember that this responsibility is there's, and they have no right on the woman's money. Men are themselves responsible for fulfilling the financial needs of their wives and children. Therefore, whatever the circumstances, even if they have to do labor to meet the expenses of the home, it is their obligation that they meet the expenses of the home. If they pray along with this effort, Allah places blessings and creates ease." (Khutbate Masroor 2004, pg. 455, July 2 2004)

Should there be a joint bank account, or should the husband and wife's earnings be kept separately?

Lead a life of kindness and equity with your wives (4:20)

"In our family, most often than not, the property of the husband and the property of the wife are just like one. There is no difference

whatsoever. Nobody keeps count of who is taking money from whom and how much to give and how much not to give. Practically, when the wife needs something it is as if the whole property of the husband belongs to her. And if she also has a property at a time of need she offers it to the husband and this is in fact the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet'saw first wife Hadhrat Khadijara. When she got married to the Holy Prophetsaw, she offered her entire property to the Holy Prophetsaw. He also behaved like that to her and to the following wives; because it is never mentioned in any tradition that he kept anything from himself alone as apart from the money he distributed to his wives. Although it was a very meagre living, and the Holy Prophetsaw lived very meagerly with his wives, but the point is that he never kept money to himself and gave little to the wives, that situation never arose. Whatever he had, that is obvious that he gave it to the poor and others but never kept things from his wives. So that Sunnah is from both sides, from the side of the wives and from the side of the Holy Prophetsaw and this is an ideal home. No better time can be conceived in any country, in any situation than this form the style of which we learn from the Holy Prophet-saw". (Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Question and Answer Session 5th November 1984 at the London Mosque).

Is a wife required to share her earnings to help run the household?

Huzoor (aba) said, "Those men who look to their wives' wealth should remember that this responsibility is theirs and they have no right on the woman's money. Men are themselves responsible for fulfilling the financial needs of their wives and children. Therefore, whatever the circumstances, even if they have to do labor to meet the expenses of the home, it is their obligation that they meet the expenses of the home. If they pray along with this effort, Allah places blessings and creates ease." (Khutbate Masroor 2004, pg. 455, July 2 2004)

Is a husband required to pay his non-working wife a monthly allowance for her personal use?

Men are guardians over women (4:35)

Men are considered to be the breadwinners of the home and, hence, must tend to every financial matter of the household, including the finances of the wife. Hence, in today's day and age this can manifest itself in a monthly allowance if needed. In essence, it is the husband's job to ensure that the wife's needs are met, as this is one of his primary duties in marriage.

Mu'awiyah ibn Al-Qushayri reported:

I said, "O Messenger of Allah, what are the rights of women over us?" The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "You should feed her when you eat, clothe her when you clothe yourself

(Sunan Abu Dau'ud)

To what extent should a husband/wife pursue their own personal hobbies and interests after marriage?

"Women must be granted the right to remain at home far more than men; if, at the same time, they are absolved of the responsibility of earning their livelihood, the free time available to them must be employed for their own sake or for the sake of society as a whole. That is how the concept of 'a woman's place is in the home' is born. There is no question of their being tied to their aprons or imprisoned in the four walls of the home. In no way does Islam infringe [upon] the rights of women to go out in their spare time to perform any task or to participate in any healthy pursuit they may choose, providing, again, that they do not jeopardize the interests and rights of the future generation of mankind entrusted to them. Among other reasons, this is why over-socializing or the free mixing of sexes is strongly discouraged by Islam. For Islam to propose that the home is the center of a woman's activities is a very wise and practical solution to most ills of modern times. When women shift their interests away from the home, it has to be at the cost of family life and the neglect of children."

(Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues, pp. 101-102)

How much, if any, financial support should a husband or wife give to his/her parents after marriage?

"If parents are in need and they do not have wealth with which they can support themselves, then, according to circumstances and capacity, the son is responsible for providing for them." (Fiqh Ahmadiyya, vol.2 pg.108).

How should the task of parenting be divided between a husband and wife? Is the wife solely responsible for the well-being of the children?

"It emerges from the above that if the task of the running of a home is a special area of responsibility to be assigned to either man or woman, a woman has obviously much greater merit than a man to

perform such responsibilities. Additionally, by nature women have been assigned the responsibility of looking after the children. Such responsibility can only be partly shared with men." (Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues, pp. 101)

What are the duties of children (husband and wife) towards their parents?

Huzur (aba) said, "So after marriage, if the husband and wife want to live separately and they can afford to, and the parents have arrived in that last part of life where they are in need of someone's support and they have no child with them, then it is a different matter and they have to sacrifice (and live together), and that is the responsibility of the son. But if they have no son, then the daughter is obliged." (Khutbate Masroor, 2004 pg. 934)

What if the families cannot afford two separate homes and associated expenses?

"At times, the cause of discord in marriage is because the husband does not have his own house and is living with his parents. Sometimes this is because the husband may be experiencing financial difficulties or is still studying and, therefore, it is not possible for him to buy his own house. In such an instance, the wife should support him and live with her in-laws until he acquires the means to purchase his own house. In certain cases, the women and her parents end the marriage and so such practices are completely wrong. If the girl cannot live with the in-laws then she should have voiced her reservation from the outset. However, there are certain men who are living at home with their parents because of their irresponsible actions and simply cite the excuse that they want to support their elderly parents."

(<https://www.alislam.org/friday-sermon/2017-03-03.html>)

If your spouse wrongs you, should you talk to your friends and family about it?

They are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them. (2:188)

“Hadrat Amman Jan advised that it is most meritable [sic] that one’s husband be one’s main confidante, rather than female friends.” (Pg 187 – Hazrat Amman Jan (ra), An Inspiration for us all)

What does Islam says about hitting one’s wife?

“With the exception of indecency, all weaknesses and petulant behavior peculiar to women should be tolerated. I find it shameful that a man should fight a woman. God has made us men, which is the consummation of His grace upon us, and we should express our gratitude for this great bounty by treating women with kindness and compassion.” [Malfuzat, vol. 1, p. 307]

In commentary of 4:35, Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) writes, "In case of disagreement between the husband and wife, the husband has no right to chastise or punish the wife except for manifest immorality. In such a case, four respectable residents of the neighborhood must testify that she has been actually guilty of immoral conduct. He must, however, begin by admonishing her. If she persists in her conduct he should separate from her for a period which must not exceed four months. This means discontinuance of conjugal relations, but the husband will still be bound to maintain the wife. If the period of separation exceeds four months, the husband will be compelled by law to resume conjugal relations with the wife. If the discontinuance of conjugal relations also has no reforming effect on her conduct and the testimony of four righteous men of the neighborhood is forthcoming, she may be chastised by the husband but her bones must not be injured and no bruise or mark should be left on her body. All this, however, is prescribed only in cases of manifestly immoral conduct

A husband has no right to punish his wife for other faults or neglect of duty."

(Ahmadiyyat Ya'ni Haqiqi Islam, pg 161, Ahmadiyyat or the True Islam, pg 238, 239)

What should be the relationship between a husband and wife be like?

“No other religion has safeguarded the rights of women as Islam has done. It lays down the injunction so succinctly: ‘Just as men have rights upon women, so do women have rights upon men.’ It is said of some people that they treat their wives like shoes and require them to perform the lowliest of services. They abuse them and despise them and enforce the injunction regarding the veil with such harshness as to virtually bury them alive. The relationship between a husband and wife should be like two true and sincere friends. After all, it is the wife who is the primary witness of a man’s high moral qualities and his relationship with God Almighty. If his relationship with his wife is not good, how can he be at peace with God? The Holy Prophet (saw) has said: ‘The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.’” (Malfuzat, vol. 5, pp. 417-418)

What constitutes as negative prenatal interference?

Huzur (aba) stated:

“One malady, because of which homes are being destroyed and a constant state of fighting and restlessness in homes exists, is that boys are staying with their parents and siblings in the same house even after marriage, despite having means and without any legitimate reason. If the parents are elderly, there is no one to serve them, they cannot move about doing activities, and there is no helper, then it is necessary and obligatory for that child to keep them with him and serve them. However, if there are siblings who are living with them, then there is nothing wrong with having a separate home. Nowadays, much harm are created because of this. If by living together you fall into more sins, then this service is no goodness.”

“(Verse 24:62 of the Holy Qur'an) gives guidance that homes should be separate. The mother's home should be separate and the married children's home separate - only then will you go to one another's homes and eat there. This perception of people, that if they live

separately from their parents then that would be a great sin, is wrong. Some parents instill fear in their children and blackmail them, as if they will be hell bound as soon as they start living separately. This is an extremely wrong attitude.

Many times I have asked girls; in-front of their mother-in-law and father-in-law they say that they are living by their own choice; in fact, even their husbands say this. However, when I ask them separately, the response from both of them is that they are living together because they have to. The result is that sometimes the daughter-in-law is transgressing against the mother-in-law and sometimes the mother-in-law is transgressing against the daughter-in-law."

Huzur (aba) stated, "Most families live with great love, but those who cannot should not make emotional decisions. Rather, if they have the capacity and facility, and there is no necessity, then it is better that they live separately. This is a very good point by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (ra) that if living together is so important, then why have the homes of the parents been mentioned separately?" (Khutbate Masroor vol. 4 pg. 570-571)

Can a husband take his wife's money?

Huzoor (aba) said, "Those men who look to their wives' wealth should remember that this responsibility is there's, and they have no right on the woman's money. Men are themselves responsible for fulfilling the financial needs of their wives and children. Therefore, whatever the circumstances, even if they have to do labor to meet the expenses of the home, it is their obligation that they meet the expenses of the home. If they pray along with this effort, Allah places blessings and creates ease." (Khutbate Masroor 2004, pg. 455, July 2 2004)

How to take care of the emotional needs of your wife?

"Do not ever consider women to be contemptible and insignifi-

cant!! Our perfect guide, the Holy Prophet (saw) has said: 'The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.' How can one claim to be pious when he does not behave well towards his wife ... It is unacceptable to get furious or hit one's wife on the slightest pretense. There have been instances where an enraged husband hit his wife over some slight matter ... and mortally wounded her. This is why God Almighty has said concerning them: "Consort with them in kindness." There is no doubt that admonition is necessary if a woman behaves improperly. A husband ought to impress upon his wife that he will not tolerate anything which is contrary to the faith, and yet he is not a tyrant who will not overlook any mistake on her part. For a woman, her husband is a manifestation of the divine. According to a Hadith, had God been pleased to enjoin prostration before anyone but Himself, He would have enjoined upon a woman to prostrate herself before her husband. Hence, a man should be both hard and soft, depending on the occasion." (Malfuzat, vol. 3, p. 147)

[Divine revelation to the Promised Messiah (as)] 'Such behavior is not appropriate; 'Abdul Karim, the leader of Muslims, should be dissuaded from it.' [Promised Messiah's footnote about the above revelation]: "This revelation contains guidance for the whole Jama'at, that they should treat their wives with kindness and courtesy. Your wives are not your slaves. In fact, marriage is a covenant between man and woman. Try, therefore, not to break this covenant. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an: 'Lead a life of kindness and equity with your wives.' And it is mentioned in a Hadith: 'The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.' Therefore, be good to your wives both spiritually and physically. Keep praying for them and avoid divorce. A person who is hasty in divorce is sinful in the eyes of God. Do not hasten to break like a dirty vessel that which God has brought together." (Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah , Ruhani Kha-za'in, vol. 17, p. 75)

How to take care of the emotional needs of your husband?

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "If a husband

calls his wife to his bed and she refuses and causes him to sleep in anger, the angels will curse her till morning." Bukhari 3237.

Hazrat Sayyidah Nusrat Jahañ Begum gave the following advice to her daughter, Hazrat Sayyidah Nawab Mubarakah Begum, at the time of her wedding.

- Never do a thing keeping it secret from your husband. Never do anything that you feel the need to hide from your husband. Even if the husband may not be observing, but God does see, and the wife loses her respect when the matter is disclosed at the end.
- If a thing is done against his wishes, never try to hide it. Inform him clearly, as that is the way to retain respect. To hide it leads to disgrace and disrespect.
- Do not argue with him when he is angry. If he is angry with you or a child or a servant, and you know that he is at fault, even then do not respond to him. When he calms down, then gently let him know the truth and make him realize his error. The woman who argues with her husband when he is angry loses her respect. It will be a great disgrace if he uses harsh words to her in his anger.
- Consider his dear ones and their children as your own dear ones. Never think of harming anyone even if he is doing wrong to you. You should have good will in your heart for all, and do not take any action in revenge against anyone. Then you will always behold God doing good to you. (Seerat Hazrat Ammañ Jan, Part II, pp. 167-168, compiled by Mahmad 'Ali 'Irfani)

To what extent should a husband be tolerant towards the shortcomings of his wife?

"With the exception of indecency, all weaknesses and petulant behavior peculiar to women should be tolerated. I find it shameful that a man should fight a woman. God has made us men, which is the consummation of His grace upon us, and we should express our

gratitude for this great bounty by treating women with kindness and compassion.” (Malfuzat, vol. 1, p. 307)

Who should apologize first when you fight?

“Never argue with one’s husband whilst he is in an angry mood. Even if one’s opinions/actions are justified, a dignified wife will express this after her husband’s rage has subsided. This leads to a more harmonious household and wins the pleasure of Allah Almighty.”

“Hadrat Amman Jan advised ladies never to keep secrets from their husbands. She said that if one makes a mistake, one should openly admit it rather than attempting to conceal it.” (Page 186 – Hazrat Amman Jan (ra), An Inspiration for us all)

Why can’t I raise my voice against my spouse?

“As for me, I once addressed my wife in a loud voice and I felt that my tone was indicative of displeasure, though I had uttered no harsh words. Yet, thereafter, I sought forgiveness from God for a long time and offered supererogatory prayers with great humility and also gave alms because I felt that my harshness towards my wife might have been occasioned by some unconscious weakness in my obedience to God Almighty.” (Malfuzat, vol. 2, p. 2)

I realize my mistakes now and want to repent?

It should be borne in mind that there are three conditions for repentance, without fulfillment of which true repentance is not achieved. The first condition is to get rid of wicked fancies which arouse evil propensities.

Fancies have great influence. Every action is preceded by a fancy. Thus the first condition for repentance is that evil thoughts and fancies should be discarded. For instance, if a person has an illicit

relationship with a woman and desires to repent, it is necessary that he should conceive of her as ugly and should call to mind all her low qualities. As I have just said fancies exercise a powerful influence. I have read that some Sufis carried their fancies to such a length that they saw a person in the form of an ape or pig. Thus the first condition of repentance is that all thoughts which give rise to evil pleasures should be discarded altogether.

The second condition is remorse. Everyone's conscience admonishes him over every evil, but an unfortunate person leaves his conscience suspended. So a sinner should express remorse over his sin and evil action and should reflect that the pleasure to be derived from them is temporary. He should also consider that every time there is a decline in that pleasure and that in the end, in old age when his faculties are weakened, he will perforce have to give up all these pleasures. Then why indulge in that which in the end has to be given up anyhow? Most fortunate is the person who turns in repentance and becomes determined to discard all corrupt thoughts and vile fancies. When he gets rid of this impurity, he should be remorseful.

The third condition is a firm resolve that he will not revert to those vices. If he adheres to this resolve, God will bestow upon him the strength for true repentance and he will be rid altogether of his vices which will be replaced by good morals and praiseworthy actions. This is a moral victory. It is for God Almighty to bestow the power and strength for it for He is the Master of all power and all strength, as He has said: All power belongs to Allah (2:166) (Malfoozat, Vol. I, pp.132-134).

What is emotional blackmailing and what does Islam say about it?

Huzur (aba) said sometimes parents emotionally blackmail their sons in staying together. He added that the Promised Messiah (as) came to spread love and that we should desist from spreading hatred in this way. Having said all this, Huzur (aba) added that

indeed the commandment to take care of close relations on both sides of the in-laws is fundamental. Huzur cited part of (24:62) and with reference to the writings of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I (ra) explained a most excellent point that a joint family system is only beneficial if it promotes love and affection, otherwise there is no commandment for it. This is obvious as the verse clearly mentions separate abodes for parents and siblings, etc. If this system were followed, the traditional hostility between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law would cease. The Quranic verse is indicative that living in a joint family system is not obligatory. (Friday Sermon, November 10th 2006)

What if I cannot convince myself to like my spouse??

Huzur (aba) said unfortunately there is a trend that as soon as the marriage takes place, feelings of hatred emerge. It seems that Ahmadis are being influenced by the others in this. If the marriage is not of one's liking, then in accordance to the pledge of the Nikah, one ought to abide by Taqwa; however, if feelings of dislike continue to develop, then ponder over it all, reflect over it and seek mediation.

(<https://www.alislam.org/archives/2006/summary/FSS20061110-EN.html>)

When men decide to marry a second wife...

Huzur (aba) another factor that is creating issues is when men decide to marry a second wife. However, although Islam has permitted marrying more than once, there are certain conditions and circumstances. It is certainly not to fulfil one's carnal passions.

Regarding this, the Promised Messiah (as) states that the law of God Almighty should not be used contrary to its purpose, nor should it be invoked to serve as a shield for self-indulgence. To do so would be a great sin. God Almighty has repeatedly admonished against yielding to carnal passions. Righteousness alone should be your motive for everything.

The Promised Messiah (as) then said:

"Remember it well that the actual Will of God is that you should not be entirely overcome by lustfulness and that to perfect your Taqwah (righteousness), if a genuine need arises, marry again (the real basis for marrying a second time is Taqwah). Thus, to marry again is permissible. However, all those who wish to marry a second time need to assess whether they are doing so based on Taqwah or merely out of their lustful desires?" (Friday Sermon, March 3rd, 2017)

Huzur (aba) said at times he receives complaints that despite having families, men want to have a second wife. Huzur (aba) said if one cannot be fair then one should not marry a second wife. If one has no choice but to marry a second wife, then one has to take care of the first wife more than before – unlike the instances that one hears of where the rights of the first wife are slowly eroded in flagrant disobedience of God's commandments. Indeed, one has to be very wary that there is no unfairness in financial and other rights of the first wife, because the Promised Messiah (as) has likened any such injustice to a trial. (Friday Sermon May 15th 2009)

When children are brought into marital discord...

Some men, who in their presumption avail of 'resources' that are available to them and are perhaps not available to their wives, are in fact preparing a fire for themselves. These include men who flee with the children to other countries, separating them from their mothers. Immediate action should be taken [by the Community] against such men and whoever aids them. Then there are those who prejudice the children against their mothers and these children go on to give evidence against their mothers in courts. Huzur (aba) said it is unfortunate that some office holders help such men. All this destroys the children's sense of morality. (Friday Sermon, November 10th 2006)

How to deal with an irreparable situation?

Huzur (aba) said he receives complaints from wives that husbands do not pay attention to their needs and are predisposed to the other. In instances where there is only one wife, husbands maintain that they will neither leave the wife nor look after her. Then matters are unnecessarily lengthened in Qadha; some do not give divorce so that in desperation the wife seeks 'khula' and the man thus escapes paying the Haq Mehr (dower). All these matters distance one from taqwa (righteousness). If one seeks God's mercy then one has to demonstrate mercy, if one wishes to partake a measure of God's mercy one has to expand one's mercy. Huzur said the verse following the aforementioned verse states, 'And if they separate, Allah will make both independent out of His abundance; and Allah is Bountiful, Wise' (4:131). Here, God commands that if there is no way to reconcile, then do not leave them suspended; rather, separate in the best manner. Ahadith cite divorce as a most unpleasant act, however, if a relationship cannot be maintained on taqwa, then God knows what is in the hearts and if separation is sought while inclined to Him, the All-Embracing God makes bountiful arrangements for all concerned. Huzur (aba) said this verse also establishes the principle that matrimonial relations should not be decided on emotions; rather, they should be decided after careful consideration and seeking the help of God who is All-Embracing. Such matches are blessed by God and He graces them with great scope. (Friday Sermon May 15th 2009)

What is the etiquette of divorce?

Huzur (aba) said that at times men make matters of divorce drag on. There are clear and distinct commandments regarding the rights of the wife after marriage that has lasted a period of time and also where there are children. However, God commands man to fulfil the rights of a wife in the instance of a divorce even where the 'going-away' ceremony has not taken place and the marriage has not been consummated. It is stated in Surah Al Baqarah, 'It shall be no sin for you if you divorce women while you have not touched them, nor settled for them a dowry. But provide for them — the rich man according to his means and the poor man according to his

means — a provision in a becoming manner, an obligation upon the virtuous' (2:237).

Huzur (aba) explained that the Holy Prophet (saw) was most specific about this matter. Once the matter of an Ansari man was brought before the Prophet (saw). The man said that he had divorced his wife before settling on Haq Mehr and without consummating the marriage. The Prophet (saw) asked him if he had paid anything to the wife out of kindness. The man replied he did not have anything to give. The Prophet (saw) told him if he had nothing else to give then he should give her the cap that he wore. This illustrates the significance of the rights of women in marriage. This, of course, is an instance where Haq Mehr was not settled on. In the instance where it is settled but the marriage has not been consummated then the command is to pay half of it. (Friday Sermon May 15th 2009)

Remember these seven things to bring happiness into your marriage

1. Remember, the system of marriage and love between spouses is a sign of Allah.

[30:22] And one of His Signs is this, that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect.

2. Don't be quick to break the knot

The most hated of permissible things to Allah is divorce. (Ibne Majah)

3. Remember, shaitan makes us fight

"Iblis (shaytan) places his throne upon water; he then sends detachments (for creating dissension); the nearer to him in rank are those who are most notorious in creating dissension. One of them comes and says: I did so and so. And he says: You have done nothing. Then one amongst them comes and says: I did not spare so and so until I sowed the seed of discord between a husband and a wife. The Satan

goes near him and says: 'You have done well and then embraces him.' (Muslim)

4. Remember to listen. Communicate carefully

Allah's Messenger said to Ayesha(ra) : "I know when you are pleased with me or angry with me." I said, "Whence do you know that?" He said, "When you are pleased with me, you say, 'No, by the Lord of Muhammad,' but when you are angry with me, then you say, 'No, by the Lord of Abraham.'" Thereupon I said, "Yes (you are right), but by Allah, O Allah's Messenger, I leave nothing but your name." (Bukhari)

5. But don't argue, for Allah's sake

"I guarantee a house in Jannah for one who gives up arguing, even if he is in the right... " (Abu Dawud)

6. Remember to be thankful to each other

"He who does not thank the people is not thankful to Allah." (Abu Dawud)

7. Be each other's friends

The relationship between a husband and wife should be like two true and sincere friends. [Malfuzat, vol. 5, pp. 417]

