



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

## HOW TO PREVENT A “BREXIT” IN YOUR MARRIAGE

### INTRODUCTION

Marriage is an important aspect of the life of a Muslim. Marriage is a source of tranquillity and peace, and it is the best of the pleasures of this world. In it is that which Allaah has made a sign for His slaves, and He has mentioned it in His Book so that they may think and ponder the greatness of His might, may He be glorified and exalted. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

*“And among His Signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect”* h[30:21]

*“O Humans revere your Guardian Lord, Who created you from a single person created of like nature its mate, and from this scattered (like seeds) countless men and women. Reverence Allah through Whom you claim your mutual rights”* (Quran 4:1).

The advice of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) when he said: “O young men, whoever among you can afford it, let him get married, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding one’s chastity.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari (5065) and Muslim (1400).

Ibn Mas’ood said: If I only had ten days to live and I knew that I would die at the end of them, and I had any desire to get married, I would get married, for fear of fitnah (temptation).

## IMPORTANT INGREDIENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

### 1. SELECTING THE RIGHT SPOUSE

- ***Abu Hurairah related that the Prophet said: “Men choose women for four reasons: for their money, for their rank, for their beauty and for their religion, but marry one who is religious and you will succeed” (Bukhari, Muslim).***

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This of course, applies to women as well.

However, religion it seems, is not always foremost in the minds of many people. In fact, it's probably the last factor on too many Muslims' list.

According to Tasneem Qadeer, one of the seven volunteers who runs the Islamic Society of North America's matrimonial service, being a doctor or a lawyer is much more important to many Muslim women than piety.

And the men are not any better. Many matrimonial advertisements in Islamic publications for instance, demonstrate a key demand for a wife who is "fair, slim and beautiful".

### - **Lower your gaze**

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest. That is purer for them. Lo! Allah is aware of what they do" (Quran 24:30).  
"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms..." (Quran 24:31).

The Prophet (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "When one of you asked a woman in marriage, if he is able to look at what will induce him to marry her, he should do so. ..." (Abu Dawud).

This means the two potential spouses can look at each other but not ogle or stare. There is no limit on the number of times the two people can look at each other. However, both should fear Allah and remember the purpose of this is to satisfy the need for physical attraction to the person you are marrying.

### - **Getting someone to help look for a spouse**

Marriage is not something to throw yourself into all by yourself. Getting the help of someone, especially parents, relatives, an Imam, and/or respected and trustworthy members of the Muslim community to either look for the right spouse or initiate and participate in a communication process is very important. Involving others, by the way, does not mean signing over your right to say yes or no to a marriage proposal. It simply increases the likelihood of finding out important information about a prospective partner in a way that maintains rules of Islamic modesty (i.e. not meeting alone, see next point). Getting that third party involved also helps verify if the person you are interested in is decent, honest and respectful. This person(s)

often checks out references, asks about the individual's character and behaviour, and looks out for your best interest in general. This person should be a trustworthy Muslim, since you are seeking a Muslim in marriage, and would want someone familiar with the Islamic way of doing things.

For those blessed with Muslim parents, remember that they are probably your best allies and helpers in seeking the right husband or wife. They have known you all of your life, and have your best interest at heart.

However, parents must be open and attentive to what their children are looking for, and never forget the element of choice. Ultimately, it is their son or daughter who is going to make the final decision. They must never become too pushy or aggressive, whether this pressure is being applied on their own son or daughter, or on the person s/he is interested in.

If parents, other family members, an Imam or members of the community are not available, you can also try seeking a husband or wife through the matrimonial services offered by a number of different Muslim organisations.

- **Always ask for references**

This is also where your "third party" comes in handy. Not only will they be able to be your reference. They can also check out a prospective mate's references.

A reference can include an Imam who knows the brother who proposed to you, a sister who knows the woman you may want to marry well, a family friend, a boss, a co-worker, and/or business partner.

The advice of one of the companions of the Prophet, Umar Ibn al-Khattab, can help in this regard:

A man came to Umar ibn al-Khattab and spoke in praise of another. Umar asked him: "Are you his nearest neighbor such that you know his goings and his comings?"

"No."

"Have you been his companion on a journey so that you could see evidence of his good character?"

"No."

"Have you had dealings with him involving dinars and dirhams [money] which would indicate the piety of the man?"

“No.”

“I think you saw him standing in the mosque muttering the Quran and moving his head up and down?”

“Yes.”

“Go, for you do not know him...”

And to the man in question, Umar said, “Go and bring me someone who knows you.”

(quoted from *Islam The Natural Way* by Abdul Wahid Hamid, p. 66)

This gives you three types of people you can ask about a prospective mate's character: a neighbor, business colleague or someone who has travelled with them.

- **Do not meet alone your potential spouse**

The Prophet said: “Whenever a man is alone with a woman the Shaytan makes a third” (Tirmidhi).

He also advised men: “Not one of you should meet a woman alone unless she is accompanied by a relative within the prohibited degrees” (Bukhari, Muslim).

- **When you speak, speak in a business-like manner and to the point**

The purpose of meeting and talking to each other must also remain within Islamic guidelines. That means no flirtatious speech of a sexual nature on either side.

Some of the topics discussed can include each other's interests, financial situation of the man, who is Islamically responsible for providing for his wife and children, and the two potential spouses' relationship with their parents.

Conversations between potential mates cannot be talking just for the sake of talking. There should be a firm and clear intention of either pursuing engagement and marriage, or, if one of the two or both the man and woman feel they are not compatible, a quick end to the relationship.

This ensures both sides are safe from getting hurt more than they could in this kind of a situation and remain within the bounds of Islam, Insha Allah.

With regards to questions pertaining to a person's sexual history (for example, has s/he had a boy/girlfriend, does s/he have any type of sexually transmitted diseases), Imam Nur Abdullah says these things have to be investigated at the very beginning, when the communication for marriage begins. This is not something that should be brought up at the last stage.

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Other topics that should also be discussed at the early stages include level of Islamic knowledge and practice, future career and education plans, home making skills and where the couple will live right after marriage and in the future (state and/or country, with in-laws or in their own apartment/home).

The couple can even get a blood test to ensure both are healthy. Some states require this before marriage.

### - **Pray istikharah**

Make sure you choose the right time to pray


Make sure you have no preconceived intention to marry – keep your mind free in order to be able to see and seek Allah's signs

Repeat the istikharah prayer 3 times at least

- Mistakes on selecting the right spouse: too much culture and tradition that are not Islamic, letting the parents control the choice, focussing on the looks and career, or beauty,

## 2. TAQWA

Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam's marriage sermon consisted of 3 verses which focused on Taqwa:

- *O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah. 3: 102*
- *O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship) . Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you. 4: 1*
- *O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger ( ) he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and made to enter Paradise). 33: 70-71*

We MUST understand that our purpose in life is ONLY to worship Allah. A marriage is supposed to enhance and increase this important purpose in life, and not get distracted by the attractions of the dunya.

## 3. PATIENCE

Marriage requires a lot of patience because

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- i. Men and women are completely different
  - Women in general can multi task, men cannot
  - Women are more emotional and insecure, men are thick skin
  - Women in general are more sentimental and wants romance, and men may seem aloof and not interested
  - Women likes to talk and settle disputes immediately, and men likes to chill out and take a break to avoid harsh confrontation
- ii. Muslims do not date before marriage nor live together
  - So, literally, you only get to know your spouse after marriage, including habits of a spouse which may irritate the partner.

### **4. PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SHAYTAN**

- Shaytan will never rest and sowing dissensions between husband and wife is one of shaytan's ways to ruin a perfectly good marriage
- Don't get angry because anger is from shaytan
- Remember the good things of the spouse, not just his/her weaknesses which may irritate you

### **5. MAINTAIN THE ROMANCE AFTER MARRIAGE**

- Go for holidays – ONLY husband and wife – children should be left behind for a few days if possible with parents-in-laws, etc.
- Surprise each other with presents
- Hold hands when walking
- Call each other by loving names
- Keep yourself attractive – keep fit and dress nicely occasionally
- Always smile and keep each other company

### **6. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AS HUSBANDS AND WIVES IN ISLAM, BUT DO NOT ABUSE THESE RIGHTS**

- Some people use the incorrect application of Islam to control the wife and ensure that the wife stays at home all the time
- Wife must know that her duty is to her husband

### **7. INCREASE ISLAMIC KNOWLEDGE, EVEN FOR THE WIFE**

- Many women have no opportunity to go to seek knowledge, and with poor knowledge on the Deen, the children will also have poor knowledge of the Deen
- Praying in congregation at home with husband as the imam will give a good example to the children on the importance of the prayers

### **8. PROVISION/WEALTH**

On many occasions, debt and monetary problems will affect a marriage. The husband is always the breadwinner and the wife may assist to increase the provisions in the family.

**9. COMPROMISE AND ACCEPTING THE SPOUSE'S SHORTCOMINGS**

Not everyone is perfect. Nobody will ever find an "ideal" partner. There will be a few things which may irritate you. You either need to address it nicely, or learn to compromise. To love someone is to accept them for who they are. It is selfishness to try and mould someone as we wish them to be. True love does not attempt to crush individuality or control personal differences, but is magnanimous and secure to accommodate differences.

**10. FORGIVING AND MERCIFUL**

Either husband or wife may make mistakes which irritates the other party. Forgiveness and being merciful for the mistakes made by the spouse will help improve the relationship.

**11. RESPECTFUL**

To love is to respect and value the person, their contributions, and their opinions. Respect does not allow us to take for granted our loved ones or to ignore their input. How we interact with our spouses reflects whether we respect them or not.

**12. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Trust is the most essential ingredient of love. When trust is betrayed and confidentiality compromised, love loses its soul. Especially with social media now, all marital problems must ONLY be kept within the husband and wife. It should not be exposed in times of anger.

If you have issues with the other party, you need to discuss them calmly. If the issues cannot be resolved, then get someone from husband's family and wife's family for arbitration. If still cannot be resolved, go to the marriage counsellor (Islamic) for counsel.

**13. THREATENING WITH DIVORCE**

The word "talaq" is often used during anger which may ruin a relationship.

**14. CARING**

Love fosters a deep fondness that dictates caring and sharing in all that we do. The needs of our loved ones take precedence over our own.

15. **KINDNESS**

The biography of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is rich with examples of acts of kindness he showed towards his family and particularly his wives. Even when his patience was tried, he was never unkind in word or deed. To love is to be kind.

16. **GROWTH AND MATURITY OF THE MARRIAGE**

Marital love is not static, for it grows and flourishes with each day of marital life. It requires work and commitment, and is nourished through faith when we are thankful and appreciative of Allah blessings.

17. **TRUTHFUL**

Love is honesty without cruelty and loyalty without compromise.

18. **Conceive** a child at least after 6-12 months after the marriage in order to get to know your spouse

19. Do NOT bring the problems at work into your household and do NOT bring the problems in your household into work.

20. Communications. – Always communicate and try and resolve even small issues. Do NOT HIDE things under the carpet and pretend it will go away

21. Do NOT be unnecessarily suspicious all the time.

Do NOT check each other's emails, WhatsApp, Facebook, etc. Every couple needs a degree of privacy

22. Continue to seek knowledge even when you have children

O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not, (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded. 66: 6

Your wealth and your children are only a trial, whereas Allah! With Him is a great reward (Paradise). 64: 15

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**HOW TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS IN MARRIAGE**

Jabir reported that Allah's Messenger Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam said:



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“Iblis 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.” A’mash said: He then embraces him.” [Sahih Muslim]

So to Iblis (Satan/Shaytan/the accursed devil) there is an ultimate goal considered most beloved and pleasing to him. This is: breaking up between a husband and wife and creating disagreements between them.

Rule of thumb:

1. Be patient
2. Seek protection from shaytan
3. Communicate calmly – you do not need to shout or scream or use vulgar language
4. Think before you speak.
5. You may need to let it rest until you calm down and talk to your spouse. In times of anger you may say things which you do not mean.
6. Do NOT use violence
7. Do NOT always communicate about marital problems with anyone!
8. If you cannot resolve the issue – seek arbitration/counsel perhaps from family members each. The whole community MUST not be informed
9. If you cannot resolve issue, then seek counsel from marriage counsellor...for e.g. Ajmal Masroor and his company – Barefoot Institute
10. Do NOT seek counsel from scholar in Makkah and Madinah which have scholars with different environmental and social issues than the UK. – a good place for fatwah is perhaps the Islamic Council of Europe – shakyyh Haitham, etc.
11. Do NOT expose any of these problems on social media
12. Make a lot of du’a to Allah
13. If still cannot resolve, separate for a few days/weeks
14. If still cannot resolve, then seek divorce procedure calmly, knowing that this is a test from Allah.