

# MARRIAGE, Setting Limits

## RELATIONSHIP OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

An unrestrained lifestyle is dangerous, so then, what can we do about it as parents and a community that surrounds parents? It involves setting some limits. One of the first limits we have to put is to keep having children from interrupting the necessity for building a strong relationship as husband and wife. So, that means that even after having your children, you've got to give some time to this relationship you have together. You have made a covenant in marriage. and what this is, this is an agreement, a covenant, this is very serious, strong thing that we do in a marriage and so that means that we have to give time and effort to loving, and cherishing, and honouring the person that we are married to. And sometimes that isn't easy. Sometimes we don't get the agreement of the one-year-old when its time to leave. We've got to focus on that relationship.

Another area of setting limits. Say goodnight. Bedtime. It's not appropriate to say, "Honey are you sleepy yet"? No. Wrong question. You just say, "It's bedtime." Children need to sleep. All kinds of grouchiness and lack of focus will be solved in lives if they get enough sleep, and you, as parents need that time to connect once the children are asleep, particularly with young children. We need to set limits there. It's part of having an ordered household, part of having a life together.

**RESPECT:** Another area where we need to set some limits is respect. There are limits on how our children can express themselves to their parents and to other adults. Now, we want our children to be honest and we want them to be free, but there are some things that you just can't be free to say it exactly the way you feel it, not and survive in society. So they're feeling, "oh I hate you. I hate you." It's not an appropriate thing for them to say that to their teacher every Monday morning. And we are teaching them certain limits on how to express themselves, that they can have these feelings and that we can talk about those things, but there are still limits. And so we are trying to build them in habits that will allow them to function well within the society around it, and then we need to model that respect in the way we talk to them as well.

**MATERIAL THINGS:** We've got to have limits on material things. You can't have what you want, when you want, and every time you want. We've got to get our children ready for the real world. We've got to learn how to have patience trying to get something that's important, to learn what it means to work and save in order to get something that is really important to them. These things are part of life. Its part of them succeeding in the long run, and its part of what we are trying to train our children to do. Setting limits is kind of like there are two bridges over a canyon. One of the bridges is this little rope bridge, but it has no hand rails on it, and so when you walk over it there is always that sense that any step now you might plummet over the edge, and what parental limits are, is where you actually put a handrail on the bridge. It still looks rickety sometimes and it is still going over something that you think might be a little bit dangerous out there, but there are those limits, there's that sense that if I am in between and hold on tight, I am safe. And that's what we are giving our children. It reduces their anxiety and it reduces ours, as parents, because they know there are dangers out there, but if I am here and inside of this I am okay.

So if you are at that point now when your children are at home, then let's do our best right now for Allah, while we've got the chance. And if we don't have children, let's do our best to support those families that do, to do our part as aunts and uncles and friends and grandparents and teachers, to do our best to support them, to shape a new generation, because what we want to do together parents and all the rest of us around, what we want to do together is to shape a new generation, we want to develop a generation that knows Allah and is willing to honour Allah.

Here are a few words of advice for the youth: You have to grow up early these days. When you have a problem, try to look at it individually and not compare it with what your friends may be going through. Each situation is different, and it is really helpful to find a kind, wise, older person to talk to because he or she may be able to help you see things more clearly.

Two wrongs don't make a right. You may have been treated badly, abused, or oppressed, but don't go out and do the same thing to others because that doesn't make the problem go away. If you don't find a role model in your family or close relatives, then look for another older person who is pious, wise, and responsible.

Don't believe everything you hear in the media and in films. News, films, games, and so on are written and designed by people like you and me, who have their own bias and message they want to get across. That message may not necessarily be good.

Try to spend some time every day in thinking and being honest with yourself. Read inspiring stories and biographies about people who overcame obstacles in good and positive ways.

Most important of all, if you ever face a problem or a confusing situation, you should turn to Allah the Almighty for help. Simply pray in your own language and open your heart to Him. If you take that first step, then be sure that His help is ever near.

In conclusion, we should keep in mind that the things which have the greater reward in life from Allah are those that are the most difficult for people to do. There is such a great reward for keeping family ties, for honouring parents, and respecting older people. The nature of life is challenges and obstacles. Our human context is the trials and tribulations that land on us as a result of the turmoil created from people following their desires instead of doing what is right, moral, ethical, and decent. You can be the one who can be the means of turning evil into good.