

Allah the Most Magnificent sent the Prophet Muhammad as a teacher and an educator to all of mankind. He clarified to the people what their lord was revealing to him, and taught them what they needed to know and learn in order to live a wholesome, righteous and correct lifestyle. Education and the importance of education amongst the Muslims used to be one of the most important and distinguishing affairs and concerns of the early generations of Muslims. The positive influence of Islamic education upon the communities of the past and specifically the youth were well known and recorded in History. But when the concern for Islamic education amongst parents and families was neglected, not deemed important, or not shown concern... the teachers and the educators became weak and unconcerned as well, so year after year the teachers and educators became weaker and the students became lazier.

Brothers and sisters in Islam we are observing a new school year, and we want to remind ourselves how was education amongst the Muslims of the past, amongst the Prophet Muhammad and His companions. What were the characteristics of the teacher and educator? What were some of the techniques that the teachers and educators used. And what were some of the traits of the students....

Servants of Allah, if the educator and teacher is blessed with sincerity to Allah the Most High, then this has the greatest effect upon his/her conveyance of Islamic knowledge to the students. If the educator adorns his/herself with sincerity they will taste the sweetest fruits of education and will see the most apparent and greatest effects of his/her teachings upon his/her students. Not only that, but they will also receive bountiful and endless rewards from Allah the most gracious. The intentions of our educators and teachers during this school year and for every school year, should be to raise and nurture our Muslim youth with the proper Islamic creed, as well as upright manners and etiquettes. The intentions of our educators should be to teach and raise a generation of young believers who will carry this religion to their grandchildren and be beacons of light and guidance everywhere they go.

Educators, teachers, parents....Al Ikhlaas....is fundamental, and every believer should adorn themselves with it wherever they are and whenever they are worshipping Allah.

The crown that should be worn by every educator and teacher is 'Sidq' honesty, truthfulness firstly with Allah and secondly with one's students. From the signs of 'Sidq' is that one's actions and statements are in agreement with each other.

"O you who believe why do you say that which you do not do?"

(يا أيها الذين آمنوا لما تقولون
ما لا تفعلون)

How can a teacher or educator positively affect or teach his/her students if they are doing opposite of what they teach their pupils? How can the teacher, educator or even parents speak to their children about the Islamic appearance or Islamic etiquettes and their appearance and etiquettes are non-Islamic???? How can the female student be expected to wear Hijab and proper Islamic attire if her teacher is not wearing Hijab or not proper Islamic attire...

Another trait that the educator should adorn his/herself with is justice in statements and actions. This trait is that which attracts the students to him/her and makes the students respect their teacher. (وَأَمْرٌ بِالْعَدْلِ بَيْنَكُمْ) - (وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا)

The teacher and educator should also adorn themselves with 'iffah' which means restraint, abstinence, chastity, virtue and purity, whether it is restraining oneself from following one's desires or restraining oneself from acquiring or earning wealth in an impermissible way.

The teacher and educator should constantly adorn themselves with mercy, leniency and fine manners and Islamic etiquettes, as Allah says:

(Ali Imran: 159, Tawbah:129)

(فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَدَأَفَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ)

The teacher and educator should also humble themselves as Allah said: "humble with the believers". Humility and humbleness is that which attracts the hearts and draws the students to love and listen to the teacher.

The teacher and educator needs to have patience, and more patience and extra patience...Our students and youth are constantly bombarded with new ideas, beliefs, theories and are always seeing new practices that are non-Islamic in our communities. With this bombardment of foreign ideas and practices that they see that are non-Islamic, it is upon the teacher and educator to teach their students what is correct and what is incorrect and why this or that is correct or incorrect.

Second Khutbah

Our beloved prophet and messenger Muhammad used to teach his students and companions with a variety of different techniques. When he used to speak, he used to speak in a manner and tone that every word he spoke could be understood, counted and heard. He wouldn't speak fast so that the intellects and hearts could not comprehend or keep up with what he was saying. He would speak in a way that all people could understand, the young child, the adolescent, the adult and the elderly all at the same time.

The prophet Muhammad would occasionally raise his voice when he was warning his companions from something, or during his khutbahs, or he would raise his voice to bring attention to something that was related to the acceptance or denial of an action of worship, such as prayer, wudoo, hajj, etc....

The Prophet Muhammad would sometimes redirect the questions of his students and companions from trivial affairs and connect them and educate them with beneficial knowledge related to the affairs they would ask about.

Sometimes the Prophet Muhammad would remain silent with his students after asking them a question, to make them think and ponder. Sometimes his students would ask him question and

لقد جاءك
رسول من
نفسك عزير
كل ما علمت
بالحق عليه
البرصين
صبر

he would make body movements or gestures or sometimes remain silent altogether and allow his students to re-think and question and re-phrase it.

The prophet Muhammad would also look at his students in certain ways, sometimes showing signs of approval of what they were doing and sometimes showing signs of disapproval either in his eyes or in his facial expressions.

However, from one of the most well known traits about our beloved Prophet Muhammad was 'at Tabsum' smiling. He used to teach his companions and students in ways no one could ever excel him in . He used to teach them through words and actions. He would pray in front of them so that they could learn how to pray, he sometimes prayed on the minbar to teach the people. He would teach the people according to their level and he would address them at their intellectual level and capacity. He would speak to the youth about complex issues that they were not intellectually or physically ready for, nor would he speak to adults about issues that he knew they already had knowledge of.

The Prophet Muhammad also used to recite and read to his companions stories of the previous nations and stories of the prophets and righteous people of the past. He would use analogies and parables to keep their imaginations and minds working and thinking.

Finally, my dearly beloved brothers and sisters is the importance of teaching our students Islamic manners and etiquettes. As our youth, our parents, or brothers and sisters are in more need of learning good manners than learning information. And the information that they are learning and we are teaching, if it is not refining our character, then it is just information and not truly beneficial knowledge.