

Brothers and sisters....Today, I want to speak about something that we always expect from everyone else, but many times we are hesitant to show it or give it to others ... empathy.

I want to speak about its role in our lives as Muslims, what causes its decline and how we can inculcate it to create a more moral, a more ethical, a more just and a more humane community.

Pity - I acknowledge your suffering Sympathy: I care about your suffering...

Empathy is the ability to recognize, understand and share the feelings of others, like walking in someone else's shoes. Sharing the feelings of others, when someone is sad, you feel sad with them, when someone is happy you feel happy with them, when someone is angry you feel angry with them...this is empathy....

Empathy is the cement and mortar which binds us as bricks to be a unified, solid structure and community, empathy is the thread of the moral fabric of true believing communities.

Empathy is what we expect from others, and many times we are stingy in giving it.

We want others to understand us, relate to our opinions and feel our pain. We want others to listen to us and relate with us. We want others to put themselves in our shoes and view the world from our perspective.

We feel close to the person who is empathetic to us, find it easy to share our thoughts with them, go to him or her when we're in problem and seek solace.

Each of us has a natural sense of empathy through which we connect to others. Humans are naturally tuned to show empathy; however for

Empathy
&
compassion
normally
lead one
to
actions

2

those who lack this ability, then we can still actively try to develop this trait and use it in our day-to-day lives.

The Prophet Muhammad was the master at showing empathy to other members of his community and expressed this in his actions, statements and behavior, that we find in numerous hadith:

“None of you will have faith till he wishes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself.” (Al-Bukhari)

This hadith necessitates cognitive empathy. You have to firstly imagine yourself in someone else's shoes and think from their perspective in order to understand what you would do in his situation.

And the Prophet Muhammad said:

“You see the believers as regards their being merciful among themselves and showing love among themselves and being kind, resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well then the whole body shares the sleeplessness (insomnia) and fever with it.” (Al-Bukhari)

A believer who has achieved excellence of faith will feel this special love for other believers. This is affective empathy.

Prophetic Examples of Empathy

empathy Throughout the prophet Muhammad's life we have many examples of Prophet Muhammad had an amazing sense of empathy. Allah said about him:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ -

{There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful.} (9:128)

The Prophet Muhammad would understand other people's problems before they even verbalized it, deal with different kinds of people differently according to their nature, and use ^{wisdom} ~~fact~~ when giving advice.

~~His life is packed with examples of his empathy.~~

Some examples of empathy of the Prophet Muhammad is that he would hasten the congregational prayer when he would hear a baby ^{cry, as he} crying. ^{said} "I stand in prayer, then I hear a child crying, so I make my prayer brief, because I do not want to cause hardship for his mother." (Nasa'i)

^{Another example of the prophet muhammad's empathy is what} Anas b. Malik reported: While we were in the mosque with Allah's

Messenger (□), a Bedouin came and stood up and began to urinate in the mosque. The Companions of Allah's Messenger (□) ^{yelled at him:} said: Stop, stop, but the Messenger of Allah (□) ^{told them} said: Don't interrupt him; leave him

^{so} alone. They left him alone, and when he finished urinating, Allah's Messenger (□) ^{the Bedouin} called him and said to him: These mosques are not the places meant for urine and filth, but are only for the remembrance of Allah, prayer and the recitation of the Qur'an, ~~or Allah's Messenger said~~

~~something like that. He (the narrator) said that he (the Holy Prophet) then gave orders to one of the people who brought a bucket of water and poured water over it.~~ ^{So the prophet was empathetic with the}

~~The prophet knew~~ ^{the Bedouin} that Bedouins normally answered the call of nature wherever they wanted to, and when ^{he} most likely didn't know that the place he was urinating in was a place of worship, ^{the prophet took}

^{that into consideration and wasn't harsh with him, rather he knew how the Bedouins thought and knew how they acted —}

Showed his

The Prophet even ~~had~~ care and empathy for animals. Once, upon entering a garden, the Prophet saw a camel that was just skin and bones. Upon seeing it, the Prophet began crying, then he put his hand on its head until it was comforted. He said to the owner of that camel: "Don't you fear Allah about this beast that Allah has given in your possession? It has complained to me that you keep it hungry and load it heavily which fatigues it." [Abu Dawud]

Brothers and sisters, showing empathy can change our lives....

Showing empathy will improve your relationships and develop your character as a Muslim, ^{can?} ~~because~~ you will become a more compassionate and helpful person. When you show someone that you understand them, either by reflecting their feelings or summarizing what they've said, you bring instant comforting relief and peace to that person.

In the field of counselling, showing empathetic understanding is usually more helpful to a person in distress than giving them advice.

~~Action Tip:~~ The next time people you care about are feeling upset about a situation, rather than give advice, simply listen, and then try to reflect their feelings back to them to show you understand them accurately. Then notice how they respond.

Empathy transforms your social relationships because it gives you a more accurate and deeper understanding of issues and conflicts. Empathy is a key trait to becoming a better spouse, parent, teacher and friend.

Showing empathy at work enhances your professional relationships because you will begin to deal with your co-workers and clients by trying to first understand what they want, think and feel.

~~Practicing~~ empathy will also help us rectify our hearts
 and souls.
 Personally

We often think we understand ourselves well enough, but when you take the time to name your feelings and really clarify how you feel, you will be amazed at the relief and inner peace you feel within yourself!

~~Action Tip:~~ The next time you are feeling a negative emotion of some kind, try being empathetic to yourself. Name the feelings that you are experiencing. Notice how just clarifying your inner thoughts and feelings helps you feel better! Similarly, daily journaling is a great habit to do regularly as a way of long-term self-reflection and emotional wellness.

Take account of your actions, statements, thoughts, ~~and~~ feelings and emotions.... if we don't feel empathy then we need to learn to develop it inside ourselves...
 50 How To Develop Your Empathy

Empathy is a trait that improves with time, and the more you develop this trait, the more it will benefit your life. Basically, when you make the intention to be empathetic with other people, your practice will in turn improve your empathic abilities.

The first step is to make the intention to try to "walk in the shoes" of others.

The next step is to understand yourself and your own feelings better. The better you understand your inner world, the better you will understand the inner world of others. Realize that your life experiences help you to develop your empathy, so make a point to use your life experiences to improve this trait.

~~Action Tip:~~ The next time you have an experience that arouses strong emotions of some kind, tell yourself to use this experience to become more empathetic. For example, the next time you are very sick, notice

your feelings of perhaps hopelessness or negativity (or any other feeling). Make a mental note of this experience and use it to feel empathy for other ill people in the future!

The purpose of showing empathy is to improve your life along with the lives of others, by spreading compassion, care and comfort. Being empathetic does not mean that we put the needs of others above our own needs. Empathy is a tool that we use to make more effective decisions and to show that we care. ---

Brothers and sisters in Islam ---

When we see that our brothers and sisters throughout the world are experiencing hardships, difficulties, homelessness, being murdered, and expelled from their homelands like our brothers and sisters in Burma, Syria, Iraq, ^{Palestine} and many other places we should have empathy for them and do whatever we can within our means to aid them, first starting with the most powerful weapon we possess...dua...then financial aid

and hands on help and assistance. ~~And to conclude I'll mention one more example of the empathy of the Prophet Muhammad from the Sunnah as one of the companions reports:~~ ^{Islam provides}

one Day

While we were in the company of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in the early hours of the morning, some people came there (who) were barefooted, naked, wearing striped woollen ^{garments} ~~clothes~~, or cloaks, with their swords hung (around their necks). ~~Most of them~~ rather all of

~~them~~, belonged to the tribe of Mudar. The colour of the face of ~~the~~ ^{wretched} Messenger of Allah changed when he saw them in such a state of

poverty. He then ordered Bilal to call the Athaan, ~~then~~ they prayed, ^{and} then he ~~reminded~~ ^{→ admonished the people with a reminder} the people to fear Allah, and put forth good deeds now to benefit you in the hereafter... (Then ^{all of a sudden} the companions began to compete with one another in giving charity.) Some donated a dinar,

others a dirham, some donated clothes, some donated ~~some~~ wheat, some donated dates; they kept donating until Allah's messenger said: (Bring) anything you have even if it is half a date. Then a person from among the Ansar came with a ^{huge} bag full of money which was so heavy he could barely lift it, ^{and} ~~then~~ the people continued to donate and give everything they had to these impoverished people, until there were ^{enormous} two heaps of food and clothes, and ^{then} the narrator says... then I saw the face of the Messenger (ﷺ) glistening, like gold (on account of joy) of what occurred. Then Allah's messenger said: He who sets a good precedent in Islam, there is a reward for him for this (act of goodness) and reward of that also who acted according to it subsequently, without any deduction from their rewards; and he who sets in Islam an evil precedent, there is upon him the burden of that, and the burden of him also who acted upon it subsequently, without any deduction from their burden. *So who from amongst us wants to meet Allah while he is pleased with us, who wants to meet the prophet on the day of resurrection while he is smiling at us?....*

So be the first one to set a good precedent today, show empathy towards your brothers and sisters in Islam who are experiencing difficulties throughout the world, and only when we do this and feel this, will we truly experience the sweetness of faith and the joy of brotherhood, sisterhood and Islamic unity and solidarity. end first khutbah

The Prophet said: 'Allah will not cease to aid His ^{worshipper} servant as long as the ^{worshipper} servant is aiding his brother'

Aiding your brothers and sisters in Islam does not only benefit ^{them} ~~you~~, but ourselves as well. So when we rush to the aid and support of our brothers and sisters, then we will find the help of Allah in all of our affairs, Allah will aid us to rectify our souls and hearts and purify them,

Allah will aid us with the raising of our families, Allah will help us financially, Allah will help us in all aspects of our lives.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: Allah (mighty and sublime be He) will say on the Day of Resurrection: O son of Adam, I fell ill and you didn't visit me. He will say: O Lord, how could I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds? Allah will say: Did you not know that My servant So-and-so had fallen ill and you didn't visit him? Don't you know that had you visited him, you would have found Me there with him? O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you didn't feed me. He will say: O Lord, how ^{could} should I feed You when You are the Lord of the worlds? Allah will say: Didn't you know that My servant So-and-so asked you for food and you didn't feed him? Don't you know that had you fed him you would surely have found ^{great} that reward for doing so with Me? O son of Adam, I asked you to give Me ^{to} drink and you didn't give me anything to drink. He will say: O Lord, how should I give You something to drink when You are the Lord of the worlds? Allah will say: My servant So-and-so asked you to give him something to drink and you gave him nothing to drink. Had you given him something to drink you would have surely found that with Me...."

Brothers and sisters in faith ----

From amongst those who are in dire need of our empathy, ~~and help~~ supplications and help ^{in these days are} to our brothers and sisters in Burma. The Rohingya are described presently as "the world's most persecuted minority". There are as many as 420,000 Rohingya refugees in Southeast Asia, who are in need of our aid.

Put yourself in their situation... no home... no food... walking tens of miles... being slaughtered like sheep at the butcherhouse
So if we're in need of Allah brothers and sisters, let's start showing more empathy towards our brothers and sisters in Islam, and then we

Put yourself in their situation... no home... no food... walking tens of miles... being slaughtered like sheep at the butcherhouse

will find Allah there to fulfill all of our needs, and remove all of our pains, and take away all of our stress and hardships.

- اللهم أعز الإسلام والمسلمين

- إن الله و ملائكته يطوفون على النبي

- إن الله يأمر بالعدل والإحسان ~~و~~ وإيتاء ذى القربى

و ينهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر والبغى يعظكم لعليكم

تذكرون ... فاذكروا الله كثيرا بكرة وأصيلا

و لذكرا الله أكبر والله يعلم ما تعملون