

Advice to Husbands

Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said, "The best amongst you are those who are best towards their wives, and I am the best to my wives." (Tirmizi #4651)

Entering and leaving the home:

1. When leaving home in the morning don't leave without *salaam*.
2. When entering the home, always make *salaam* cheerfully, no matter how difficult your day may have been. *Salaam* is a means of engendering great love and happiness in the home. *Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam)* advised *Anas (radiyallahu anhu)* thus: "O my son! When you enter your home, make *salaam* to your family. It will be a means of blessings for you and for them." (Tirmizi #2698)

General conduct:

1. Live with her and speak to her in the manner that you would want someone to treat your own sister or daughter.
2. Implement the beautiful *sunnah* of smiling. Smile more and frown less. This virtuous act of smiling should not be expressed outside to strangers only, rather more to one's own wife. Smiling is an act of charity.
3. Create such a loving presence at home that your family members look forward to see you; they should not be dreading your return or hoping that you never come home.
4. Express your love to your wife often and make her feel wanted.
5. Laugh and joke with her within the limits of *sharee'ah*. *Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam)* used to engage in light-hearted conversation with his wives.
6. Endeavour to eat and drink from the same utensil. Sometimes place a morsel of food in each other's mouth (not only to be practiced when newly-wed). This will increase mutual love and one will be rewarded for this.
7. Spend quality time with your wife and children. The time spent with them is an act of *'ibaadat* (worship). Apart from religious activities and necessary business activities, devote yourself to your family. *Insha-Allah*, it will reap excellent dividends.
8. Share in the upkeep and maintenance of the home. Doing household chores is a *sunnah* of *Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam)* that breeds humility and displays compassion and kindness. Examples of this are cleaning, sweeping, laying the food-cloth, looking after the children, etc.
9. Control your tongue at all times. Remember that wounds afflicted by swords may heal, but the wounds afflicted by the tongue very seldom heal.
10. Avoid raising your voice and NEVER yell at your wife.
11. Regard your wife's parents as your own, address them politely, and treat them kindly as you would treat your own parents. Accord them the same respect and honour as your own parents.

Spending and Giving Gifts:

1. Support your family and spend generously on them according to your means. Regard this as an Islamic responsibility and not as a favour upon them, nor as a burden on yourself.

2. Spending on bare necessities is not sufficient to engender true love and a happy home. However, be moderate in your expenditure as there should be neither extravagance nor miserliness.
3. Shower your wife with gifts (within your means). Never remind her of the favours that you confer upon her.
4. Provide her with her own monthly allowance (according to your means) over and above your household expenses. This money will then belong to her, thereby allowing her freedom of choice to purchase items for her personal needs, without having to account for how it was spent.
5. It is your Islamic obligation to be the breadwinner of the family. Never shirk in your responsibility and unduly burden your wife with the onerous task of supporting your family. This unnecessary strain on her will be a cause of great sorrow. You will be answerable to Allah Ta`ala for neglecting your fundamental duty to your family.

Encouraging and Complimenting:

1. Compliment your wife's cooking after meals. Overlook the little shortcomings, e.g. if the salt is less or if the food is not prepared on time.
2. If your wife is troubled with worries or is depressed, then be sympathetic and encourage her to discuss the problem with you. Make *du`aa* for her. Be an anchor of support and a pillar of strength for her by practically expressing your moral support. This will *Insha-Allah* make her truly appreciate your heartfelt concern for her.

Forgiving and Overlooking:

1. Learn to tolerate slight misbehaviour, or little displeasing acts committed by your wife.
2. Endeavour to change her habits like carelessness, laziness, etc. with advice and admonition. This must be dealt with tactfully, with wisdom and patience. RULE WITH LOVE AND NEVER WITH THE IRON FIST. It is among her rights upon you that you tolerate her. Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) has said: "A woman is created from a crooked rib (therefore there is crookedness in her character). If you try to straighten her, you will break her. Hence, take benefit from her despite her crookedness." (Muslim #3634)
3. Learn to forgive your wife. Forgive her as many times as you would like Allah Ta`ala to forgive you for your errors. Remember the proverb: "To err is human, to forgive is Divine."
4. If you dislike some qualities in her, she will possess other qualities that will please you. Focus on her positive qualities. No one is perfect. Remember that the grass always seems greener on the other side.
5. When you are overcome by anger and wish to physically or verbally abuse her, then remember that Allah Ta`ala, whose trust she is, possesses greater power than you do. Immediately move away from that place, drink water, and recite *a'oozu billahi minash shaitaanir rajeem*. If possible, make wudhu. Remember that after the expression of every bout of anger, there is regret.

Dont's:

1. Do not disclose your wife's secrets or faults to any family member or friend. Always conceal one another's faults. Even worse is to speak about one's intimate matters to others. Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) said: "One of the worst people in the sight of Allah Ta`ala on the day of *Qiyaamah* is a man who was intimate with his wife and thereafter he publicizes it." (Muslim #3542)
2. Never compare nor mention the beauty, character, or qualities of other women to your wife. This is extremely insensitive and may cause jealousy, suspicion, and unnecessary doubts in her mind. Accept your wife for what she is and do not cast lustful glances at other women. By doing so, you

will lose the love of your wife. When a woman emerges from her home, *shaytaan* beautifies her in the eyes of men. By controlling one's gaze, one's love for one's wife will increase and one will attain the sweetness of *imaan*.

3. Do not keep in touch or communicate with any female acquaintances from the past, even if they are 'just good friends'. This is forbidden and extremely detrimental to the marriage.
4. Never allow your wife to mix with strange men. This will severely harm your marriage. The *hadeeth* says that *Allah Ta'ala* has made *Jannah haraam* on a man who allows his wife to talk and freely mix with other men. (*Ahmad* #5372) You too should abstain from talking unnecessarily to strange women. NB: Strange (*ghayr-mahram*) in the *sharee'ah* refers to all people with whom marriage is permissible in Islam. Included among them are cousins, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, parent's brother's and sister's spouses, father and mother-in-law's brothers and sisters, etc. Rasulullah (*sallallahu alaihi wasallam*) said: "The male relatives of the husband are death (in other words, just as one fears death, one should fear *fitnah*, mischief, and corruption from his male relatives with regard to his wife)." (*Bukhari* #5232) There are many cases where an illicit relationship was established in family circles. The consequences of not upholding the laws of *hijab*, especially between a woman and her husband's male relatives are disastrous. Never trust the carnal-self.
5. Never use the word '*talaaq*' or 'divorce', either in jest or in anger. Don't threaten her with divorce. If the marriage totally breaks down, seek the advice of a learned and experienced '*Aalim* before resorting to divorce.
6. Never demand back any gift given to your wife, even if the marriage ends in divorce. It is totally forbidden to repossess gifts given at the time of marriage or at any other time.

Maintaining the balance between parents and wife:

1. Fulfil the rights of your parents as well as your wife.
2. Serving your parents is YOUR responsibility. Out of love a wife will generally assist in this duty. However do not impose anything on her.
3. Do not disrespect your parents for anything, especially because of any issue with your wife.
4. Totally refrain from carrying tales or relaying any comments and remarks from either side to the other. You will only make your life a misery.
5. In any issue be totally impartial but never be disrespectful.
6. Issues between one's wife and parents can sometimes become complicated. It is best to take advice from an experienced '*Aalim* in such matters.

Dealing with problems:

1. Misunderstandings and minor differences should not be suppressed. Rather discuss them in an amicable manner, or else this could ultimately lead to a broken marriage (*Allah Ta'ala* save us).
2. Learn to communicate constructively. Make a resolution that at the time of a problem you would sit down with her and discuss your problems in a dignified manner, without raising voices or being abusive; or you will seek advice from someone you both can confide in.
3. You cannot choose not to communicate. Even your silence and body language can send important messages and they may be misinterpreted and could cause more harm.
4. Don't ever argue in public or in front of the children as this can affect the children psychologically and could prove detrimental to the marriage.
5. Never discuss a problem in the state of anger. Calm down first.
6. In a serious conflict, call in arbitrators from both sides and let the matter be solved amicably.
7. Learn to admit your mistake as this is a sign of humility. Do not attempt to justify your mistakes with lame excuses.

8. Exercise patience. Never make hasty decisions which you will regret later. *"Allah is with those who exercise patience."* (Al-Baqarah: 153)
9. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said: "The most detestable of lawful things to Allah Ta'ala is *talaaq* (divorce)." (Abu Dawood #2178) Don't abuse this responsibility of issuing *talaaq*, given to you by Allah Ta'ala. *Talaaq* has been allowed as a last resort after all avenues of reconciliation have been exhausted, the marriage has totally broken down and there is no other way out.
10. Don't react violently by meting out injustice and cruelty upon her with verbal and physical abuse. Never take her curse. Don't become an oppressor, a tyrant, and a blackmailer. Unfortunately, many of our sisters bear untold misery and suffer in silence, day in and day out for years on end, having none to turn to besides *Allah Ta'ala*. Remember, O husband, when that lonely, broken heart cannot tolerate anymore injustice and those hands rise up complaining to none other than Allah Ta'ala, then be rest assured that her tears and pain will not go unanswered. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said: "Beware of the curse of the oppressed person, since there is no veil between it and *Allah Ta'ala*." (Bukhari #1496) *Allah Ta'ala* says to the oppressed person: "I will assist you, even though it may be after some time." (Tirmizi #3598)

REMEMBER, that your wife has made the great sacrifice of leaving the confines of her parent's home and her near and dear ones to come and spend the rest of her life with you. This she does with great hopes and expectations. Do not destroy them. Fulfil all these requisites which you have made binding on yourself through marriage. Appreciate and value these sacrifices. *Allah Ta'ala* will surely reward you in this world and the hereafter.