

?How can a Muslim Youth be Successful

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Question : What qualities do you think a good Muslim youth should have to be successful ?

The answer : I think he or she should possess the following qualities :

1. Sincerely believing in Allah and completely relying on Him.
2. Being able to control and lead himself.
3. Always looking for progress and success within what Allah has permitted.
4. Driving fear away from inside him.
5. Being magnanimous and patient.
6. Not belittling himself.
7. Observing the Islamic principles and dealing with people accordingly.
8. Making use of every blessing Allah has given to him.
9. Caring for his health and the right of his body over him.
10. Not being excessive in eating and drinking.
11. Not leaving himself without money that he often needs.
12. Serving other people as much as possible.
13. Not being confused when someone disagrees with him concerning his true belief, for people, throughout history, are different.
14. Liking to undertake and carry out responsibilities.
15. Being frank and honest and not beating around the bush.
16. Not delaying in doing good.
17. Reading useful books that will benefit him.
18. Making friends with good people.
19. Not thinking of gaining the content of every one around him, because this requires hypocrisy.
20. Avoiding disputes and idle talks.
21. Not mocking others.
22. Mentioning the good deeds and fine qualities of others.
23. Criticizing himself and watching his deeds.
24. Persuading himself that he is able to do what is required.
25. Thanking Allah for every blessing.
26. Not being like a tool in the hands of others.

- 27. Knowing his position in life well.
- 28. Showing his opinion with evidence when needed.
- 29. Looking at his listeners when talking with them.
- 30. Being more a listener than a speaker.
- 31. Participating in the meetings of joy considering their etiquette and the meetings of consolation considering their etiquette.
- 32. Offering presents to those who have given him presents on occasions.
- 33. Believing that he is important in life and has a value in the existence.
- 34. Not involving himself in bad doings, and when this happens, he has to repent, pray to Allah to forgive him, and try to restore his morale.
- 35. Not living idly and not wasting his time.
- 36. Looking forward to the future and trying to achieve it sincerely.
- 37. Arming himself with good deeds to receive the death that he shall meet inevitably.
- 38. Not spending his life unmarried.
- 39. Reciting the Qur'an and supplications with understanding and reflection.
- 40. Sparing something of his moneys for emergencies.
- 41. Not being satisfied with a certain limit of success and stop going forward.
- 42. Pardoning those who do wrong to him.
- 43. Strengthening his relations with his kin and being dutiful to his family.
- .44. Ordering his life, relations and all his affairs

How can I make use of my age and youth ?

Question : How can I make use of my age and youth ? When I see the others (old people) who did nothing worthwhile in life and wasted, during their youth, their times in nonsensical and absurd things that did not provide them with a good future, I become more determined and tell myself "I do not want to be like them". But I do not know what to do or how I should begin and what the causes of failure are. Please show me the way!

The answer : There are three main factors that waste one's time, age, and good opportunities, and consequently they throw man into the afterlife empty-handed save with regret. The first factor is the individual himself through :

- 1. living nervously
- 2. being busy with trivial and unnecessary things
- 3. living irregularly without organizing his times and works
- 4. procrastination and laziness

5. curiosity and interfering in others' affairs
6. having poor information about the necessary issues of life
7. loneliness and little association with the society
8. hesitation and not being determined in taking decisions
9. not planning for the future

The second factor is the individual and the others around him through :

1. long idle meetings
2. guests that come with no appointment
3. speaking on the telephone for a long time on trivial and unimportant matters
4. unreasonable requests of others
5. associating with aimless persons
6. amusement programs, especially sitting for hours to watch TV serials and cinema movies

The third factor is accidents, like :

1. illness
2. traffic accidents
3. losing things such as money, books, and other things

Dear brother, you should be aware of these things that deprive you of your time and ease, and you should not engage in these behaviors. On the other hand, you should read the life histories of the great and successful people. You will learn how to make use of your time, how to build your life and future, and then you will make your family and other people proud of you. The thing more important than all that is that you will please Allah and He will please you when you will meet Him lonely and then He will grant you the eternal bliss. This is the right way and .all else is loss and torment

How do I ask forgiveness for my sins ?

Question : I am a young man. I have been involved in a great sin. Feeling sin on the one hand and my weak determination before my lust on the other hand have made me desperate of the forgiveness of Allah, and I feel that I will definitely be in Hell. At the same time, I fear that I am not right in this opinion. Would you please guide me to the right solution ?

The answer : Confess your sin before Allah and pray to Him to help you with a real repentance!

You do not need to ask for forgiveness with a difficult language or eloquent words. Speak easily and spontaneously and say what is inside your heart in any way you can, for Allah knows what is in one's heart even before it comes to his tongue.

Know well that despairing of the forgiveness of Allah is a sin even greater than the sin you

were originally involved in, because despair opens the door wider before you to commit all sins and it is this that will get you into Hell and not your first sin! Therefore, Islam has considered despairing of Allah's mercy as the greatest of sins. It is this that Satan, the first enemy of man, wants for you on the Day of Resurrection. O young man, fill your heart with a big hope of getting the forgiveness of Allah and try determinedly not to commit the sin again! When you commit a sin, you should hasten immediately to Allah and ask Him to forgive you. You should never cut your relation with Allah in any case. If you go east or west, you shall not find a god like your Lord, Whom you disobey but He, although able to punish you at once, grants you a respite and says that He loves those who ask Him for forgiveness, loves the repentant, and loves those who purify themselves. Besides, He loves to reward you with His Paradise if you turn to Him sincerely.

O young man, whatever you may have done to disobey Allah, you are still not a polytheist. Allah has made incumbent on Himself to forgive everything other than polytheism. Let the Satan not delay you in seeking forgiveness and make you lose the opportunity, for you do not know when you shall die.

You may die at the moment of your procrastination and then you will have wasted the opportunity and lost the eternal happiness. When you decide to return to Allah, do not forget that the crux of repentance is feeling regretful for what you have committed, determining to give up that sin forever, giving the dues of people back to them, and offering the missed obligations as much as possible! Abide by this sincerely and you will find that the pleasure of lawful things is sweeter than the pleasure of unlawful things.

How should I deal with having a friend who I care about but who has bad behavior ?

Question : I am a teenager from a religious family. I have a friend who is corrupt, but I am very fond of him. I do not know what to do!

The answer : Use your love towards him as a means of advising him and saving him by taking him towards guidance! It has been narrated in a Prophetic tradition that guiding one person is better than the worldly life and all it contains. Do not forget that love is good when it reaps goodness and it is a means of deviation when it transfers bad morals from your friend to you!

A rational person is one who thinks of the outcome of things and then considers the actual situation – what is important and what is more important. Try to be more reasonable than sentimental because if emotion overpowers you in the important situations, it will destroy you .and then convey you to Hell! Of course, this is not what you want nor can bear

How do I get rid of the habit of lying ?

Question : I know well that lying is one of the vices, but I practice it easily in small or great situations. I do not know how to get rid of it. Please guide me, may Allah reward you with good!

The answer : Every action may change into a habit whether it is good or bad. Lying has become a habit to you and so, although it will be difficult, you have to defeat this habit by being very careful for a period of time until it changes into its opposite, which is truthfulness.

First, repent and ask Allah to forgive you this sin before death surprises you and then you would go to the painful punishment that Allah has prepared for the liars.

Second, be alone with yourself, ponder on the reasons that have led you to this vice and try to finish off those causes in order to get rid of the result.

Third, compare the advantages of truthfulness and the harms of lying on every side – family, society and individually! For example, you can read some books in this concern and then the motives of straightness will be able to treat your case.

Fourth, accustom yourself to do good deeds such as reading religious books, pondering on the hereafter, helping the needy, being dutiful to parents, and teaching others what you have learnt of religion!

Fifth, always remember the tradition, 'A believer does not feel the pleasure of faith in his heart, until he gives up lying, whether it is done seriously or jokingly.'

Sixth, think that if your lying is uncovered before others, which it undoubtedly will be, then what will your situation be? How will you meet with that embarrassment ?

Seventh, know well that a liar has no dignity near people and near his relatives! Do you want to be worthless near people?

I hope, with these practical points, that you are able to rid yourself of a feature that you know .well to be one of the worst vices

Because of my illness I get distressed very easily. How can I be happy with my life ?

Question : I am thirty years old. Pain and illnesses have done to my body what they have not done to old people's bodies. I have become tired of doctors and drugs. I have become desperate of everything, even supplications and vows though I respect religion and the Ulama".

I am very angry due to my state and always ask myself why Allah has afflicted me with these distresses that have made me suspect my religious beliefs and become nervous at any excitement. I hope with your help that I may be happy in life with my wife and children who suffer with me.

The answer : The Iranian magazine Ittila'at Ilmi, vol.23, seventh year has quoted from the magazine (Reader's Digest, Feb. 1993) a scientific study emphasizing that most bodily

illnesses are results of psychological disorders. According to this fact, man causes himself bodily illnesses if he does not care for his psychological health. The study adds, 'For example, cancer and tuberculosis attack complaining and desperate persons. Peptic ulcer attacks persons who pant for high positions. Arthritis and chronic inflammations are the shares of rigorous persons whose hearts are full of hatred against others and who do not pardon or forgive others. Headache attacks those who keep their anger inside them. Psychological disorders, like anger, fear, and distress, exhaust precious powers of the mind and the body and then psychological fatigue, pains, and illnesses come instead.' The study adds, 'Self-confidence and not letting fear and being upset overcome oneself make man carry out his daily activities in a way that delights his heart and comforts his mind. With comfort and hearty relief, man's body enjoys safety and healthiness. In fact, even a broken bone recovers earlier if one's mind is peaceful and his heart is calm and satisfied.' The author of this scientific study says, 'Man, for the sake of his bodily health, must free himself from the complex of failure and defeat.

If he imprisons himself in this complex or he fails to free himself from it, he will face problems, pains, and illnesses such as asthma, headache, and nasal sinuses inflammation.' Dear brother, what I want to tell you is that what we all need to do is take care of our health. Let us achieve it and recommend others to it so that our minds and bodies enjoy peacefulness and safety because "a sound mind is in a sound body".

Islamic traditions have indicated these solutions and emphasized that the healthiness of the body is the result of the healthiness of mentality. Islam was the first to show the scientific method of keeping psychological and physical health. This study, which has been preceded by the Islamic theory, emphasizes the Islamic instructions by recommending the following :

1. Assure yourself every day that you are sound and safe because this self-suggestion prevents you from feeling weak or submitting to illness!
2. Try to live normally and do not be greedy and do not pant for this life so that you become involved in some situations out of greediness!
Doing so exhausts your intellectual, psychological, and physical powers.
3. Assign to yourself some times for rest, relaxation, and harmless amusement!
4. Believe in Allah sincerely so that you feel the warmth of this faith inside your heart, and this will make feel comfortable and delighted whenever you mention Allah and worship Him!
5. Tell yourself everyday that you are better than you were yesterday and actually be so lest your conscience says to you: away! O you, self-deceiver!

If you adhere to these five recommendations after perceiving the medical fact mentioned

above, you will be delighted and psychologically cheerful and this is what brings you physical healthiness and fruitful activity. You should know that distrusting the true religious beliefs is itself a cause of psychological diseases that cause bodily diseases.

At the same time when that scientific study and the sayings of many western psychologists declare that faith in Allah has a great role in curing psychological troubles and bodily diseases, it does not fit a Muslim to let the Satan or his followers in the society whisper evil to him and play with his mind.

It is narrated that the Prophet (S) has said, 'I wonder at a believer why he becomes angry at illness! If he knows what benefit he receives because of illness, he would wish to remain ill until he meets his Lord.' Of course, this is if the illness is chronic and doctors cannot cure it or the ailing believer is unable to pay for the treatment. Dear brother, I hope you will return to your religious beliefs and strengthen your morale by them in order to not fail in this trial because then you would lose this life and the afterlife together. You should know well that losing this life and its pleasures is easier to you than losing the eternal Paradise .where there will be no pain, no disease, no old age, and no death

How do I reform my elder brother who commits major sins ?

Question : My elder brother commits major sins. He dares to beat my father who is an old man. We do not know how he has become like that when we are a religious family and nobody else from amongst us is like this elder brother.

The answer : There are some reasons behind this phenomenon. The most important one of them is negligence in the upbringing of this brother from his childhood and not watching him whenever he went out of the house and when he associated with bad friends. Some families may be excused because of being busy with their living affairs or because of the poor cultural level of the parents or the absence of the master of the family as if when the father is in prison for example.

The result is that a serious deviation happens to one of the family members. Advice usually does not have any effect after the deviation roots deeply inside that person. The severity of that deviant person against the adviser is another result of deviation. Nevertheless, despairing of reforming this deviant one is not permissible.

It compels you to keep on advising him gently and kindly and trying to keep him away from his bad friends by sending some good persons to make friends with him and to busy him with lawful amusement. The troubles of these attempts are less than the troubles of leaving him .alone as he is bound to commit more sins

How can I smile when I do not feel happy or delighted inside myself ?

Question : How can I smile when I do not feel happy or delighted inside myself? I want to be active and not sad and idle. Would you please tell me how I could arrive at this aim ?

The answer : First, let your conscience be satisfied and at ease because this is the thing that makes you smile and feel real cheerfulness! This comes from believing in Allah and following what He has revealed to His Messenger (S) and what the Infallible Imams (a.s.) have declared.

They have declared that believing in Allah, contentment, and avoiding greediness brings man mental relief and being satisfied with one's fate increases and solidifies that relief.

If you obtain this relief through these religious beliefs, problems and troubles will not deprive you of your smile and you will not worry at all. Allah the Almighty says, (And be not infirm, and be not grieving, and you shall have the upper hand if you are believers. Holy Qur'an, 3:139.

Religion has declared that serving people, helping the needy and fulfilling the rights of one's family cause the relief of one's conscience. Looking at the green nature, pondering on the stars, listening to the singing of birds, and listening to good maxims make man happy and delighted.

When man achieves some success in one of his aims, he feels the ecstasy of triumph which affects his activities and a smile appears on his face. Islam has encouraged all that because it is the religion of activeness, vigor, progress, and production and not of laziness, worry, boredom or grief. As for crying for fear of Allah in the heart of night, crying for the wronged saints on the sad historical occasions, doctors and psychologists have proved many advantages and said that if man knew the advantages of crying, he would throw drugs away. Thus, the comprehensiveness of our great Islamic religion and its perfect verdicts have been proven just because it is from a Great, Wise, One, Unique and Eternal God. Dear brother, with all that, you will reach your aim. May Allah be with you. Do not forget your smile and do not let it fade or leave your face

How do I lead an active life ?

Question : Where does tiredness of the body come from? Most of the time I feel sluggish and I do not know how to restore my vigor and energy. Would you please guide me to a solution ?

The answer : Tiredness of body, inactiveness, and feeling weak are results of two factors: The first is a bodily factor. It includes insufficient or intermittent sleeping, anemia, little or big proportion of iron in the blood, influenza, and others. A doctor can treat these conditions and the recovery is from Allah the Almighty.

The second is a psychological factor. It includes many things such as fear of future, worry, shocks of divorce, traffic accidents, big financial losses, being insulted before others, thinking

of previous failures, and thinking of high ambition while worrying about one's actual inability.

All these psychological troubles cause physical exhaustion and fatigue and the cure is to submit to Allah and His fate in the cases where man has no power or choice. As for the mistakes of man himself, the cure is obtained by repenting and asking Allah for pardon and forgiveness.

It would be better for one to give people's rights back to them so that his conscience becomes relieved; besides that, he must organize his time according to the religious obligations and activities of life.

Here, I draw your attention to an important point: if you want to know the cause of your fatigue, whether it is physical or psychological, see if it disappears or lessens after sleeping or if it continues. If the first case holds, most often the cause of your fatigue is physical, and if it is the second, most often the cause is psychological. If man watches himself well, he will know .from what he suffers, whether physical or psychological troubles

As a young man how do I achieve success to attain happiness ?

Question : Please teach me the way to success and tell me how I can attain happiness! I am a young man. I would like to see myself in the best position in this life and in the afterlife. What is the way to that? Everyone has an opinion, but I, because of my young age, do not know which opinion is the best.

The answer : The way to a successful life begins with you. The beginning is the self, which if you change, Allah will help you reach success and happiness, but if you leave it to do as it pleases, you will never reach whatever it is you dream of. Therefore, I would like to guide you to the following :

1. Discover yourself! In this life you can be great and your mention will be recorded in the list of the great if you can only discover your own talents and abilities.
2. When you assign an aim to yourself, know that you not only need accurate thinking, but you also need a strong spirit and high determination to help you reach the advanced steps in the way of success. The source of this strong spirit and high determination is the true belief that connects you with Allah the Almighty, intellectually and practically. To get this source, you have to recite the Qur'an deeply and ponderingly and have to worship Allah in the heart of the night and offer night prayers.
3. To keep your success safe from plagues, you have to be aware of the plagues. They are the following:
 - a. Bad friends

- b. Imagining oneself to be ill
- c. Putting off the work of today until tomorrow
- d. Convincing oneself to retreat from doing good deeds
- e. Not acquiring new information that concerns oneself

How do I cure my nightmares ?

Question : My dreams are nightmares. Would you please show me a cure to my bad predicament before my youth wastes away ?

The answer : Some dreams – as psychologists have proven – are a reflection of one's psychological worry during wakefulness. To cure yourself, you have to follow the following points :

1. Purify your daily activities from unlawful things and if something unlawful takes place, purify it by asking Allah for forgiveness!
2. Be satisfied with what Allah has given you of wealth, beauty, health and the like!
3. Perform ablution (wudu') before sleeping and recite a portion of the Holy Qur'an, and when you lie in your bed, think of what you have recited or try to sleep while thinking good thoughts!
4. Be certain that those who have been happy in their lives have faced problems too and that their lives are not free from troubles now, but they are well aware that worry is a problem much greater than those problems. So why would they increase their troubles by worrying when they need to decrease them ?
5. Remind yourself of your good actions and successful deeds and do not think of your failures and shortcomings! Every one has bright pages in his life and even the successful and great people are not free from defects. Dear young man, set out in the way towards Allah the !Almighty and rely on Him

How do I get my students to refrain from wearing un-Islamic fashion & clothing ?

Question : I am a teacher in a secondary school. I see too many students imitating western fashions in their clothing. What is the reason for this difficulty and what is the solution?

The answer : There are many reasons :

1. Unawareness of the attractive Islamic examples that are the best alternatives to imported foreign examples.
2. The spread of western cultures and fashions in our countries via the media (films, posters, ideas, and advertisements), which we call "cultural colonialism" or "intellectual subordination".

3. The weak Islamic media and the inability to give a beautiful picture about the Muslim youth as Allah, the Wise Creator, has willed.

4. The weak school programs, which are devoid of the true intellectual gist of religion (Religious lessons are taught in schools in a shallow and boring way because most of the teachers of these lessons are officials and not people of a religious vocation. Therefore, there is no motive for the teachers to teach the pupils religion sincerely.).

5. The family sphere at home, which may contain many things that are contrary to the instructions of Islam (This has a great effect on students in leading them to imitate foreign fashions and bad examples and to be busy with trivial hobbies.)

The solution to this problem is for everyone – individuals, families, and societies – to act in a manner opposite to these reasons. They all have to make their efforts together to guide these youth and to show them the harms of imitating the foreigners. We can warn our youth of imitating the foreigners by quoting the statistics that the foreign newspapers have published about the crimes, problems, griefs, and the high numbers of suicides in the western countries..

What field should I specialize in at the university in order to be useful for society ?

Question : I am a student who is about to join the university. I am confused as to what I should specialize in. As you are more aware of the needs of society than I am, please guide me to the right vocation and I will be grateful.

The answer : There is no doubt that if man distributes his powers among several points and aims, his concentration weakens, and then he does not get the best result in each of his aims; rather he gets the optimal result if he concentrates all his powers on one aim within certain points.

I believe in specialization and my advice to you is that you have to make a decision and choose the field nearest to your inclination and ability and the nearest to the needs of your society. Then you should concentrate all your powers in achieving the best result. Do not forget to rely on Allah and pray to Him to assist you because real success is in His hand.

But since you ask me to advise you as to the most important fields of specialization, I consider the humanities, especially psychology and sociology, to be of great importance, especially when supported by accurate studies in the Islamic books of these concerns.

Specialization in commercial fields and economics is also of great importance, as well as studying in the Hawza, after completing your university study, which is of even greater importance. See what your real desire is and then choose it. Rely on Allah and make your life, study, and future for the sake of Him so that if you die at the beginning of the way, the middle, or at the end, you will gain His paradise. Is there any profit greater than this

How do I cure myself from being mean ?

Question : Frankly, I say that I suffer from the complex of meanness. What is a practical treatment to save me from it and from its bad effects ?

The answer : First, you should recognize the cause so that the treatment can be easy. Here are some of the main causes of this complex : 1. Either you are imagining it or others are making you imagine it.

2. Repeated failures in life and not achieving an aim that was once in your mind For the cure, we suggest the following :

1. Try to achieve success in your life to strengthen your morale and then you can aim for another success and a bigger step!

2. Read some books regarding this topic in order to achieve some success!

3. Seize any opportunity to prove your personality in a lawful way; I do not mean that you seize others' opportunities or show off by doing good.

4. Persuade yourself that you are a successful person by the assistance of Allah!

5. Do not forget to make your intentions sincere and just for the sake of Allah when doing good deeds, because this is the moral secret of everlasting success and progress