Islam and Sociability

One of the characteristics of a healthy personality is sociability. A sociable person is one who likes other people. As a matter of fact, Islam develops a great deal of sociability in the believer. This sociability is developed not only by telling the Muslim to be sociable, but also by actual training and practice and through many channels.

The Role of Prayer

In prayer, Muslims are urged to perform prayer collectively in the mosque. There, a Muslim stands with hundreds of other people in the same direction, repeating the same words, and performing the same movements. This collective performance of prayer is an act that trains the person socially and develops in him the quality of sociability.

Collective Prayer

This collective prayer in Islam is preferably done five times a day in the mosque. However, the Friday noon prayer has a special status; this prayer must be performed in the mosque. This means that Islam gives the Muslim no choice but to be sociable.

In a mosque, the Muslim is advised not to always pray in the same location. The wisdom behind this seems to be to lead the Muslim to sociability, make him mingle with other persons, and maximize his attachment to people in general.

In fact, Prophet Mohammed, (peace be upon him), said, “Your faith is not complete until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.” Islam, through its practices, leads the Muslim to be social and sociable.

Social Duties

Islam instructs the believers to visit the sick, to help the needy, and to assist the weak. If the sick are visited, the needy are helped, and the weak are assisted, sociability will grow.

Prophet Mohammed, (pbuh), said, “Smiling at your brother’s face is an act of charity.” Islam orders believers to be nice to other people, kind, and sympathetic. Certainly, the smile for your brother is a symbol of respect, a symbol of sympathy, and a symbol of affection.

Believers’ Brotherhood

Prophet Mohammed, (pbuh), said, “The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim. He does not wrong him or let him down.” Of course, brotherhood is an advanced stage of sociability. Islam always emphasizes the brotherhood of believers. The brotherhood implies sociability.

Prophet Mohammed, (pbuh), said, “Allah Subhanahoo Wa Ta-alaa (swt) will help you if you help other brethren.” This help covers a wide range: answering a question, lending money, showing the way, granting money, giving a hand, feeding a poor person, giving a nice word, giving a smile, and doing a favor, the list is very long. Help given and taken, develops the sociability of believers.

Obedience to Parents

Islam develops sociability within the family itself. God orders the believer to be kind to his parents. This order of kindness to parents is often associated with worshipping Allah (swt). Allah (swt) says in the Holy Quran, “Allah orders you to worship none but Him and to be kind to your parents.” In the Holy Quran, kindness to parents is mentioned directly after worshipping Allah. Of course, this emphasis on kindness to parents is justifiable. How can a person like other people if he does not like his parents, who brought him up and looked after him since his birth? Therefore, the logical starting point in the individual’s sociability is his kindness to parents. Then this sociability extends to people outside the family.

Kindness to Neighbors

Islam develops the individual’s sociability by regulating his relations with relatives and neighbors. The Muslim is ordered to visit his relatives. Prophet Mohammed, (pbuh), said, “You are not a believer if you harm your neighbor.” Prophet Mohammed, (pbuh), said, “If you believe in Allah (swt) and the Last Day, be kind to your neighbor. If you believe in Allah (swt) and the Last Day, receive your guest well.” He also said, “The best is the one who is best to his neighbor”.

The Role of Fasting

Islam develops the individual’s sociability through fasting. All Muslims fast in the same month, break their fasting at sunset, and share a similar experience. These shared experiences of fasting in the same time and manner reinforce the feelings of sociability among believers. Prophet Mohammed, (pbuh), said, “No Muslim is allowed not to talk to his brother for more than three consecutive days. The better one is the one who greets (his brother) first.” This is another step towards sociability.

The Role of Pilgrimage

In pilgrimage, Islam trains the Muslim to be sociable. All pilgrims go between the same two places, i.e. (Safa and Marwa), and are dressed in the same simple dress, i.e. of white cloth. This collective performance of
pilgrimage in the same place and the same time is a real exercise of sociability and equality.

Charity

In Islam, all Muslims are required to pay two kinds of “Zakat”: money charity and food charity. The food charity is given at the end of Ramadan, the fasting month. Besides these compulsory charities, Muslims are strongly advised to help the poor and needy throughout the year. This is what is known in Islam as sadaqa. These are all acts of practical sociability.

Thus, Islam develops the believer’s sociability through direct instructions and through worship, through prayer, fasting, charity, and pilgrimage. In Islam, sociability is developed in the individual in a variety of circles and levels. Islam organizes the individual’s social relations with his parents, family members, relatives, neighbors, guests, and other people. Islam orders the Muslim to be sociable and trains him to be sociable. Islam is a perfect system of faith and practice of words and deeds. By developing sociability, Islam helps the individual gain the social life. These social skills are essential to establishing the psychological health of the individual.

For more information:

The Islamic Information Center of Seattle
2301 S. Jackson #214
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 322 – 0162

Islam Presentation & Invitation Center
P.O. Box 77790
Seattle, WA 98177
(206) 361 – 8899
www.ipicseattle.org

Masjid Jamil Muslimin
5945 39th Ave. S.
Seattle, WA 98199
(206) 723 – 7677

Idris Mosque
1420 NE Northgate Way
Seattle, WA 98125
(206) 363 – 3013
www.idrismosque.org

Masjid Abu Baker
7713 Rainier Ave. S.
Seattle, WA 98118
(206) 722 – 6777

Islamic Center of Kent
20857 108th Ave. SE
Kent, WA 98031
(253) 850 – 2260
www.ickent.com

As-Salam Masjid
3040 S. 150th St.
Seattle, WA 98188
(206) 781 – 3537

Southwest Seattle Islamic Center.
(Masjid Al-Tawhid)
1022 S.W. Henderson St.
Seattle, WA 98106

Islamic Center of Olympia
(Masjid Al Nour)
4324 20th Lane NE
Olympia, WA 98516
(360) 438 – 3570

Tacoma Islamic Center
2010 Bridgeport Way
Tacoma, WA 98466
(253) 565 – 0314

Masjid Al-Tawhid
1022 S.W. Henderson St.
Seattle, WA 98106

Masjid Al Nour
4324 20th Lane NE
Olympia, WA 98516

Islamic Center of the Eastside
14700 Main St.
Bellevue, WA 98007
(425) 746 – 0398
www.bellevuemosque.com

Ethiopian Muslim Asso. Of Seattle (E.M.A.S)
11851 Glendale Way South
Seattle, WA 98168
(206) 835 – 5144
emasbadr@yahoo.com

Recommended Web Sites on Islam:

www.islamworld.net
www.english.islamway.com
www.qss.org
www.islamicity.com
www.islam-guide.com
www.fatwa-online.com