

motherhood requires a multitude of sacrifices, including high-flying career ambitions. But what about before motherhood or once the kids are in school & do not require 24/7 care? Surely there is then room for the mother to give back to society. Educated mothers benefit their children with whatever they have learnt. **There's no negative in education**, even if it doesn't lead to a super-career, as long as one affords it.

A Bit of Logic: In this technological world where everything is computerized try a dose of programming logic: How Muslim Brothers find a wife, get married & marriage life in Visual Basic:

```
function_findWife()  
{GotReligion(); add 1; else repeat;  
GotBeauty(); add 1; else repeat; }  
GotUGLY();add 0; EXIT/esc/freeze/reboot/HELP  
function_getMarried()  
{if[ gotReligion() & gotBeauty() ]=2, then:  
AskParents(); add 1; else restart;  
GetBIGDowry(); add 1; else repeat; Else restart; }  
Function_Marriage()  
{WifeRaiseChildren() continue++;  
WifeCookFood() continue++;}End;  
How to Look  
function potential_wife_sticks_around  
{var potential as Integer=0;  
if(husband.has.Religion)potential++;  
If(husband.kind)potential++;  
if(husband.not.Chauvinistic)potential++;  
if(husband.tidy)potential++;  
if(husband.not.Overbearing)potential++;  
if(potential>3) return true; Else return false; }
```

Funny msg 1: Guys know that there are 3 different kinds of wives & ways of keeping them: Patience to keep a **nagging** wife; fortune to keep an **ambitious** wife; four eyes to keep a **pretty** wife.

Funny msg 2: Love can be a dangerous narcotic. The new designer drug "Love," known as 'wuv' by users, has been linked with hundreds of suicides/countless assaults. Some 'luvvies' report listening to sentimental music & blowing all their cash on chocolates & flowers to feed the habit. "I just can't help it," one user said, "it's like it takes over your mind. I don't even like Lifetime movies but I put up with it because of the wuv." Mr Q. Pid, from the support group, Love's Arrow, added "All too often these 'wuv' users end up spending months of wages on small gold bands & collapsing on one knee in what has become known as a "proposal." That stance, if it wasn't for "wuv" would be like in a race. Run, boy, run...don't dare look back.

Funny/Serious Msg 3. If your *wuv* didn't work out take heart from what has happened to millions before you. It usually goes like this: **Strangers** > Friends > Best Friends > Boyfriend & Girlfriend > HeartBreak > **Strangers**. This should help to avoid you curling up in a fetal position in bed crying your heart out for months. No thoughts of suicide now. No boy/girl is worth *that!*

The serious message of the Power of Love. Trust, respect & friendship are the basis of every relationship, including marriage. When Abdullah Jafar's daughter was about to be married, he gave her this advice: "O my daughter, **avoid being haughty or making an issue of anything, for both are keys to the lock of divorce. Avoid anger & discontent** too, for they engender malice." This is the best counsel a father could give his daughter. It is an unwise father who teaches his daughter to be assertive in her in-law's house in the mistaken belief that this will give her the upper hand. A wise father would tell his daughter to adopt a conciliatory stance. The success or failure of married life depends upon the **willingness** or **unwillingness** to adapt. We all have issues. The key to overcoming our human failings is recognition & changing.

It is undeniable that happiness in marriage is closely linked with awareness. Awareness can make a marriage. Its absence can mar it. If it were given any serious thought, it would become evident that trouble with the in-laws is a problem created by default. It is also more **imaginary than real**. Stop living in a world of make-believe. Do not remain ignorant of the realities of life. The parental home is a haven where a girl receives natural affection. **The in-laws' home is a place where, by her own efforts, she has to create a niche for herself**. She must prove herself worthy of affection by the way she conducts herself. In this new home, affection has to be a two-way affair, unlike her parental home, where affection was unconditionally assured. If husband & wife choose to live separate as most do now then it should be on the approval of all parents. Don't forget the blessings of the parents & strike out on your own. It eventually leads to disaster.

The whole beauty of marriage is its naturalness. It is with one's marriage partner that we can be the most genuine & sincere at all times. Once there is a big secret that cannot be disclosed, we excavate part of ourselves in which to hide the infraction. But like a cancer, it grows & slowly you become two different people. We cannot be ourselves with our spouse & our informality & loss of constraints is forfeited. Soon petty irritations erode the foundations of the marriage. The issue is that the spouses have ceased to be each other's soul mates. **They have**

forfeited the expression of vulnerability & emotional nakedness that is such an essential part of every marriage. Instead they now wear the **garments of deception**. Love lies in ashes...the fires of longing having burnt out.

This is the beginning of mental torment & the development of a dual personality. Many spouses seeking "love" online. Without innocence there can be no peace. Without peace, there can likewise be no happiness. We simply are not effective in creating loving relationships with half our personality tied behind our backs. The same is true in marriage. A spouse who is unfaithful damages themselves & threatens their marriage. The damage occurs because it takes all one's self to be successful in showing love to one's spouse. When a spouse is hiding half their character because of wrongdoing, they will be ineffective companions. Rather than using their creativity to find new ways to be passionate, they use their intellectual faculties to hide their infidelities.

Prophet Abraham (p) the friend of God, married Ishmael (p) to a woman with a tongue like a scythe. When he asked Ishmael's wife about him, she replied: 'He has gone in search of our livelihood.' Then he asked her about their way of living & their condition. She complained: 'We are living in misery & destitution'. He said, 'When your husband returns, convey my salutation to him & tell him to change the threshold.' She was divorced. She was a complainer. One should not be trapped in a joyless & thankless marriage. One's passion should not be sacrificed for convention. **Do you like to complain?** The next wife went through the same question. Abraham asked her: 'How are you getting on?' asking her about their sustenance & living. She replied: 'We are well-off.' Then she thanked Allah. Abraham said to Ishmael's wife: 'When your husband comes, give my regards to him. Tell him that he should keep firm the threshold.' Marital woes on guys? Girls with vicious tongues must realize it's **not** a seductive trait.

May your life's partner be your partner in life, in love, your intellectual friend & spiritual soul mate. The Prophet (p) made Iman (faith) & good character as the main basic criterion on whether or not to accept a person for marriage. Divine emotional engineering is way better than earthly human manipulation. **Avoid being haughty or making an issue of anything. Both are keys to the lock of divorce. Respect is the key to a successful marriage...to survive & withstand the test of time & nerves.** "For one person to **love another for years** this is the most difficult of all our tasks," said a poet. And the most rewarding. True marital love bears it out even to the edge of doom. It affords a variety of illuminating emotions...fierce satisfactions & swooning delights. ooooh lala, indeed!

In **TRUE LOVE** THE SMALLEST DISTANCE IS TOO GREAT,
& THE GREATEST DISTANCE CAN BE BRIDGED.

Life's Partner

Muslims in love **OOOH LA LA**

LOVE IS WHEN THE OTHER PERSON'S HAPPINESS
IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR OWN.

AND OH...WHAT UTTER CONFUSION
& DOUBTS EXIST IN HER MIND...

MR. X, MR. Y, MR. Z...

HOW CAN ONE EVER BE CERTAIN..?

*He created for you mates
from among yourselves, that you
may dwell in tranquillity with them,
and He has put Love & Mercy
between your hearts.* (Quran 30:21)

Let there be spaces in your togetherness,
And let the winds of the heavens
dance between you.

Love one another,

but make **not** a bond of love:

Let it rather be a moving sea
between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup

but drink **not** from one cup.

Give one another of your bread
but eat **not** from the same loaf.

Sing and dance together and be joyous,

but let each one of you be alone,

Even as the strings of a lute are alone
though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts,

but **not** into each other's keeping.

For only the hand of Life

Can contain your hearts.

And stand together, yet **not** too near together:

For the pillars of the temple stand apart,

And the oak tree & the cypress

grow **not** in each other's shadow.

**LOVE: THE HOLINESS OF THE GAZE,
LISTENING AS WORSHIP, THE LANGUAGE OF TOUCH,
AND THE BODY BEING BOTH
THE ANGEL & MIRROR OF THE SOUL.**

Love is the supreme way of achieving self-realization & completeness as a human being. True love is a glorious & righteous thing – provided in this world by God for those who would seek it. And the consummation of such love is a pure & wondrous act – sacred in the eyes of God. **Lust is a very short-lived passion, that immediately decays upon growing familiar with its object.** So is this “love” thing a wicked trick. With both spouses having the same belief system you give yourself the greatest chance of staying together. **Forget eloping because you “love” one another.**

When we fall in love, this ushers in a special period, one with its own distinctive glow & magic. Glimpsing another person’s beauty & feeling, our heart opening in response provides a taste of absolute love, a pure blend of openness & warmth. This being-to-being connection reveals the pure gold at the heart of our nature, qualities like beauty, delight, awe, deep passion, kindness, generosity, tenderness & joy. Your dreams lie waiting. The fires of longing are burning brightly.

Get Married! It’s a command from God. If you only believe that “My Creator will take care of all those pesky ‘what ifs’” it’s the best start. Half your faith says Muhammad (p). **A successful marriage is always a triangle: a man, a woman & God.** Success is most likely (not guaranteed) if one looks for a spouse through the prism of religion. Marry a “Muslim in heart” **not** a “Muslim in tradition.”

The process of finding a suitable spouse feels like a mystical process...finding a perfect match needs a miracle. With hope, moments of despair & then a leap of faith, it happens. The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves & **not** to **cruelly twist** them to fit our own image. Otherwise we “love” only the reflection of ourselves we find in them. There must be changes to please the other; there must be sweet compromises. There must **not** be cruel manipulation fueled by an out-of-control jealousy & a need to control. The common thread underlying all control-freakish behaviour towards the other is **disrespect**. By dictating to others, you state that they are incapable of deciding what their behaviour should be.

Marriage can be intimidating & that’s putting it mildly. To be overwhelmed by nagging questions is to forget the purpose. Salatul Istikhara is important in your decision-making process. But don’t get the erroneous idea that because you “prayed” that all is “supposed” to be bright & beautiful. Reflect upon the marriage between Zaid & Zaynab. They prayed. Didn’t the Prophet (p) oversee this marriage? It collapsed. Does it need to be spelt out that it’s on every individual to bring “calm” to the marriage life. It’s **not** just about physical intimacy but emotional & spiritual intimacy.

Marriage is complex. Some thrive, some wither. **Persons have given up this intimate bonding, regarding the relational terrain as so fraught with romantic illusion & emotional hazards as to be no longer worth the energy.** However, Allah enjoins marriage & it is the practice of our Prophet (p). **Those are enough reasons to marry.** Marriage is a means to know our Lord. He gives boundless pleasure to hearts; when those hearts submit to His commands. If the marriage is good, we are grateful & thank Him. If the marriage is oppressive, we go to Him & beg for His help. In either case marriage opens up our hearts for a conversation with Allah. When we turn to Allah in difficulty & in ease we discover the sweetness of spending time with our Lord. We have the examples of Asiah, Pharaoh’s wife, who was married to the **worst of men** & Khadijah, who was married to Muhammad (p), the **best of men**. Both women are counted among the four perfect women. Both women have tasted the heights & depths of the realm of love embraced & love lost.

The Trap: What we see as “love” is a social construction. Why do you need to “fall in love” before you get married? That’s actually quite a recent development on the marriage scene. Promoted by the novel industry (Mills & Boon, Harlequin). Are you stuck in what is called the “dating cycle.” You meet someone, get really excited, date them for a few months, find something wrong with them, get disappointed & look for someone else. Getting really sick of this search for the perfect person to spend time with. Sick of the Harlequin Romance version of dating/sex. Romance feeds on obstacles, short excitations, and partings; marriage, on the contrary, is made up of wont, daily propinquity, growing accustomed to one another. Become not obsessed by the universal propaganda in favour of romance.

The Intoxication: Love is built out of respect and friendship first. To respect someone for who they are

& what values they have is more valuable than falling in love with someone who knows how to spout sonnets or speak eloquently. Respect breeds a love that is more lasting & stable. Aishah says: “Whenever the Prophet (p) sacrificed a goat he would tell me to send some meat to Khadijah’s friends. One day I became annoyed, ‘Oh no, not Khadijah again!’ I exclaimed. The Prophet (p) replied, ‘I have been intoxicated with her love.’” “Another day he mentioned Khadijah, I became annoyed: ‘She was just an old woman. In her stead, God has given you one who is better.’ This angered the Prophet (p), who said, ‘God knows, he has given me no better than her. She **believed** when others disbelieved. She had **faith** in me when others rejected me. She **supported** me with her wealth when others left me in the lurch. God gave me children by her, which He has not given me by any other wives.” This was why he was intoxicated. This is soul-based wisdom on affairs of the heart. Khadijah **helped** him (this is the most valuable asset in marriage...HELP)...for all young women contemplating marriage. Support. Help. It works.

Marriage is a responsibility that requires a level of emotional maturity. Girls getting married at 17/18 would probably be unreasonable & insecure about a lot of things and make those crucial first years of marriage extremely hard for themselves & spouse. If the husband isn’t a sensitive, patient man then the marriage would end in failure. **A husband shouldn’t have to “raise” his wife.** Fathers, make sure your daughters are “ready” for the toughest examination in life. To have blanket rules about the age of marriage, (18 too young, 28 too old) puts a lot of unnecessary pressure to be mature, take on responsibility against a clock, as opposed to truly growing into it.

Some spouses treat each other like adversaries rather than partners. The husband feels that he is the boss, & whatever he says goes. The wife feels that she must squeeze everything she can out of her husband. Some wives are never satisfied with anything he does or buys for them in order to trick him into buying more. They make him feel like a failure if he does not give them the lifestyle that their friends/families enjoy (if they can only see that life is not that greener on the other side). It’s a cop out on your relationship to say “That’s just the way I am...” Engage in a liberating activity called Compromise.

Freedom to Choose a Marriage Partner: Islam has given freedom of choice to those who wish to get married. The mutual choice of the would-be-spouses is given the highest consideration: “**Do not prevent them**

from marrying their husbands when they agree between themselves in a lawful manner.” (Quran 2:232) The process of mate selection should be a function of a **healthy balance** between the freedom of choice of the would-be-spouses & consideration of the influence & consent of the parents. **Repeat:** The freedom of choice of those who wish to get married should **not** preclude the influence & consent of the parents nor should they ignore the wishes & consent of the would-be spouses.

When matches are made based on very high level attributes: (hijab: check, good looking: check, he makes over \$\$: check, same ethnic background: check) you forget about other components such as temperament, attitude toward extended family, which can cause some **real problems**. No university degree shows the “attitude” of a person. An A-grade character supersedes the grades of academia. It brings true success here & after.

The Choice: The Boy: She must be beautiful, pure, **slim**, shapely, fair-skinned, **slim**, educated, rich or at least her father is, holy, **slim**... Ammm, ok she’s holy? Wears hijab? That’s nice. You’re living in Alice’s world.

The Girl: I love his religiosity, mum. But did his religion come in the latest SUV. I really do love that he wakes up for Fajr, but Mum, can I just take a peek at his bank-book. Then, **then**, if it is sizeable, I can wake up for Fajr, too. Mum, I’m not asking for much, am I?...He must be **Rich**, educated, **Rich**, mirror-shattering good-looks, **Rich**, ummm ok prays, **Rich**, he must be hottt, loves dinners at the finest restaurants, **Rich**, a clone of Sharukh Khan... You’re living in a **reel** world...wake up.

The Mother-in-Law: Groom must be a doctor & must earn six figure salary. Groom must look like a superstar. Those aunties who go shopping for suitors at parties need to find another hobby. Or stay home with their hubbies.

As for the education part, can’t deny that it would be pretty weird if the girl was the one working & the guy was the one taking care of the kids. Its less the brothers, its their mothers, who are **scared of the prospect that an educated wife = career wife = their son will be chopping tomatoes for dinner.** Educated does not necessarily equate to being career-orientated. Smart women realize that

A woman may be married for



4 reasons: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty & her religion.

Prophet Muhammad (peace)

Marry the one who is religious & you will be satisfied.

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