



Every parent is responsible for their child. As such, it is the duty of every parent to train and equip their child with the necessary and relevant skills, knowledge and understanding that they will require throughout their life.

Be it training in matters of hygiene, such as potty-training, teaching the child to bath himself, clean his teeth, etc., or in other basic skills, such as preparing a simple snack, packing the laundry away, cleaning a mess, etc. – every responsible parent ensures that their child receives practical training in order for the teaching to be effective and take root.

In the very same way, when it comes to matters of Deen, it is absolutely vital for parents to give their children practical training, according to their age, understanding and capability, so that the child will be equipped to traverse the path to Jannah. Through practical training, the lesson and teaching will become firmly entrenched and embedded in the heart and mind of the child and will remain with him until his death.

Consider the example of our beloved Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam). On one occasion, he was eating with his step-son, Sayyiduna ‘Umar bin Abi Salamah (radhiyallahu ‘anhuma). While eating, the young boy moved his hand around the platter, eating from different sides, despite the platter containing one type of food. Observing this, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) addressed him, with love and gentleness, and taught him to recite “bismillah” before eating, to eat with the right hand and to eat from the side that was close to him. (*Sunan Ibn Maajah #3267*)

In this way, while eating with him, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) practically taught this young Sahaabi the etiquettes of eating and of sharing a platter with another person, ensuring that the lesson was absorbed and understood.

Thus, we must ensure that we practically teach and train our children to uphold the teachings of Islam. While they may learn the teachings of Islam in madrasah or elsewhere, it is ONLY the parents, in the home, who are able to train the child to make these theoretical teachings a

practical part of their life. They may learn the number of rakaats of each salaah in madrasah, as well as the various masnoon du'aas and how to recite the Quraan Majeed, etc. but it is only the parents, at home, who can make the child practically implement these teachings in his life and become a 'practising Muslim'. Additionally, the more importance the parents will show to these aspects, the more importance the child will then show them in practising them in his life.

The month of Ramadhaan is fast approaching. Together with conducting ta'leem in the home and impressing on the children the great importance and significance of this month, we should encourage them, according to their age and ability, to commence fasting. Be it from 3pm until iftaar for smaller children, or a 'half-fast' from after lunch, or even a longer fast commencing after breakfast, it is some form of training that will create the mindset of fasting within the child and will prepare them to fulfil this responsibility later on in life. (When the child completes their 'half-fast', then perhaps some special treat can be given, highlighting to him that our happiness revolves around pleasing Allah Ta'ala and fulfilling His commands.)

The women of the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) implemented this same practical training with their children. Hence, Sayyidah Rubayyi' (radhiyallahu 'anha) mentions that the women of the Ansaar would encourage their children to fast, and when the children would begin to ask for food, then to distract them, they would give them toys made from wool to play with. (*Saheeh Bukhaari #1960*)

May Allah Ta'ala assist us all to give our children the correct training and to equip them adequately for their journey to Jannah.

While a child may **learn** the teachings of Islam **in madrasah**, **ONLY** the **parents** can make him **practically implement** these teachings in his life and become a **'PRACTISING MUSLIM'**.

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