

## Self-Care and Clarity of Mind...a weekly column by Princess Lakshman (Sister Iqra)



Welcome to my weekly column on **Self-Care and Clarity of Mind**. If you're taking time out to read this, pat yourself on the back because you have shown commitment to taking care of your mind and body.

Today, In Shaa ALLAH, we will explore the topic: **Practise Understanding and Give Up the Need to Be Right All The Time**

Take an honest account of your life these past few weeks...have you in any way been operating on a default program to feel the "need to be right all the time"? By this I mean, have you stubbornly persisted with a certain mindset about a situation without practising any kind of understanding?

Understanding does not mean agreeing. It means to open your mind to listen to another person's perception about a particular situation. It means to acknowledge that the other person has the exact same right to an opinion about an issue as you do. It means to respectfully listen to each other's viewpoints.

When you fail to open your mind, you fail to understand. When there is no understanding, there is an ongoing need to be right. And when there is this addictive need to be right, there is the obsessive attachment to judge others.

### For example

Notice the tone of this conversation between a father and his son who has recently lost his job and despite all efforts, remains unemployed.

Father: "Shouldn't you be looking for a job? You are locked up in your room everyday."

Son: "Whatever."

Father: "So, you're just going to give up? When I was your age I supported an entire family."

Son: "What's your point?"

Father: "My point is that you are lazy because you have everything given to you on a platter."

Son: "Abba, I'm trying."

Father: "Yes, but you're not trying hard enough. You are lazy, spoilt and think that you are entitled."

The Son storms off to his room and bangs the door shut.

Father to Mother: "He is the laziest boy on earth. Shame!"

In the above scenario, the Father failed to open his mind and understand his son. The moment he said the words, "**Yes, but you're not trying hard enough**" was when he was operating on his addictive need to be right.

**Practise Understanding - Give Up The Need To Be Right**

Now, let us look at the following conversation from an angle that displays understanding and empathy.

Negative	Positive
Father: "Shouldn't you be looking for a job? You are locked up in your room everyday."	Father: "What was the most interesting job you applied for recently?"
Son: "Whatever."	Son: "Whatever."
Father: "So, you're just going to give up? When I was your age I supported an entire family."	Father: "Yes, I know. It is challenging. Back in my day it was probably different, now times are different."
Son: "What's your point?"	Son: "What's your point?"
Father: "My point is that you are lazy because you have everything given to you on a platter."	Father: My point is that perhaps we could sit together one day and talk about your dreams. I'd like to know what your passion is, what gives you joy. I was a young man once too. I understand how frustrating it can be when you feel the weight of the world on your shoulders. I just want you to know that I'm on your side, son. I understand.
Son: "Abba, I'm trying."	Son: "Abba, I'm trying."
Father: "Yes, but you're not trying hard enough. You are lazy, spoilt and think that you are entitled."	Father: "Alhumdolillah, son. May Allah reward you for your efforts. I know you are trying. Is there any way I can help you in your efforts, son? I'd really like to. Like I said, I understand. I've been there.
The Son storms off to his room and bangs the door shut.	Father and son hug it out.

When you consciously practise understanding you are in fact detaching from ego. It is ego that demands the addictive need to be right all the time. Remember to catch yourself out every time you feel the need to be right. Detach from that and embrace an open mind with which to practise understanding.

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## **Princess Lakshman**

Writer, Clarity Coach, Founder and Facilitator of **Healing Words Therapy - Writing for Wellbeing & Muslimah Mind Matters**

E: [info@healingwordstherapy.com](mailto:info@healingwordstherapy.com) / [info@muslimahmindmatters.com](mailto:info@muslimahmindmatters.com) Ph: 0451977786

Website: [www.healingwordstherapy.com](http://www.healingwordstherapy.com) / [www.muslimahmindmatters.com](http://www.muslimahmindmatters.com)