

*Salam aleikum wa rahmatullaahi wa barakatuh,*

Alhamdulillah five years ago in a pizza shop on the Gold Coast, I became Muslim.

Only about 3 weeks before that, I knew nothing about Islam. Through Allaah's blessing, by listening to the Quran and believing that it was sent by Allaah to the Prophet Mohammad, *sallallahu aleyhi wasallam*, I took my shahada with the Gold Coast Imam and the pizza shop owner as witnesses.

I sent my boys to the Gold Coast madrassah classes run by Imam Imraan and his wife to learn about Islam and how to read Quran. May Allaah reward them all for all the good of their actions. At home, my husband taught the boys tajweed and we did our best to minimise the potential of bad influences on the kids' behaviour and thoughts in order that they learn and grow into Islam, because you can't just leave Islam to the mosque and madrassa.

When we moved to Brisbane 2 years ago, Zaahid started coming to Qari Sahib's classes. I have never spoken to him but he has been a big part of our lives for the last 2 years and inshaAllaah he will remain so. May Allaah shower him and his family with blessings. Ameen.

Five years later, by the will of Allaah, Zaahid has memorised the Quran, Allaah has taken us to His House on Hajj and we are inshaAllaah just beginning our journey in discovery and learning about this perfect way of life, Islam. Before Islam, while I was involved with other religions, I remember thinking that I would like to live in such a way that, if everybody lived like that, the world would be a better place.

Islam is the way. Islam is Allaah's perfect way of life, worshipping Him and following His final Messenger *sallallahu aleyhi wasallam* in our daily lives.

When we become Muslim, we must look at our lives in a new light. Before, we didn't know the rules, so we made up our own. Now we are Muslim, there are prescriptions for every action and situation. There are ways of doing things and ways not to do things; permissible actions and non-permissible actions. We must take stock and change that which does not fit within Allaah's laws. We know we were wrong before so we must try to correct ourselves.

I would like to invite everyone to do this. Pretend you are a new Muslim. Take the shahada. Now ask yourself what you need to change. Apply the corrections within.

We must do our best to present the best face of Islam to the world as well. There are so many people searching for the right way to live, and most of them don't even know it until they finally see it. Islam is beautiful. It shines like the sun. It stands tall and proud. Don't water down your religion to please others; they will not respect you for it.

It might be a talk by a speaker. It might be a Quran recitation. It might just be a small kindness that you show to a stranger in the street, or when you keep your calm when someone insults you. We don't know what will cause someone to look into Islam. We know Allaah is watching us, but we never know who else can see and perhaps be influenced by our actions.

All praise is due to Allaah alone. May Allaah bless all the people who have come into our lives in the last five years and grant them entrance into Heaven. May He cause anyone who I have offended to forgive me. May He cause my family to enter Islam; and may He grant all of us the best of this world and the best of the Hereafter. Allaah's Peace and Blessings on the Prophet Mohammad, his family, and his Companions. Ameen.