

## 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: **Women Respecting Women**

There is no other way to say this, so brace yourself, because what I'm about to tell you is not pretty at all. I grew up in a household where sexual abuse on children and emotional and physical violence on teenage females were perpetuated by women.

There, I've said it. This is in no way to gain your sympathy but merely to request that you take a moment and reflect on your life to understand the women in your immediate and extended family. Most of you may not relate to my experience and that's fine. In fact, I'm grateful if you don't relate. However, if you examine your life carefully, somewhere along the way you too may find that there have been times where women have failed to respect each other.

Through observation and understanding of case studies of my own clients, I see a pattern where women may choose to surround themselves in deep insecurity, self-loathing and negative self-talk which then perpetuate disharmony in their relationships with other women in the home and in the community.

Sisterhood, a great blessing and mercy from ALLAH, is deeply affected when women disrespect each other. Some of the negative behaviours women tend to display with other women are:

- Passive-aggressive remarks
- Sarcastic remarks
- Aggressive outbursts
- Cyber-bullying
- Backbiting
- Interrogation (trying to get personal information from someone - such as husband's salary)
- Commenting on physical appearance ("you've gained weight", "you've lost weight", "you look really tanned, don't go in the sun so much", "you should go on a diet", "you need to get with the program").
- Commenting on and judging another sister's practice of her deen ("she took her hijab off", "why does she wear the niqab?")

I confess that I am guilty of at least one of the above. The state of the ummah can only improve if the state of each household and family relationships improve. This heavily depends on how women treat each other. It's

time to develop strategies to at least respect our differences and make a genuine attempt to understand one another.

Alhumdolillah, women are powerful beings. ALLAH has blessed women with an inherent power to persevere through life with resilience and courage, provided that she acknowledges these attributes in herself and use them to positively empower other women in her family and community. The following poem is dedicated to my fellow sisters.

### **SISTERHOOD**

She means well, just like you  
She has been hurt before, just like you  
She was once a little girl with dreams and demands, just like you  
She has her daily battles, just like you  
And sometimes loses her cool, just like you  
She cries every so often, just like you  
She loves wholeheartedly, just like you  
She deserves respect, just like you  
She is a unique creation of ALLAH, just like you  
Together we share a blessed sisterhood  
So treat her with love, compassion and respect  
Just like how you wish for her to treat you  
She is afterall, just like you.

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### **10 Strategies To Foster Sisterhood**

1. Listen without commenting.
2. If you feel the need to comment, THINK before speaking.
3. Send a kind text message to enquire how other sisters in your family/ community are doing. Your caring message could be exactly what they need that day.
4. Always ask for forgiveness if you cross the line.
5. Always forgive when another sister seeks forgiveness from you.
6. Refuse to part-take in backbiting. Walk away, simply and absolutely refuse.
7. Give a genuine compliment about the sister's wellbeing, not only about her physical appearance.
8. If you are unable to help another sister, tell her you will find someone else to help her. Do not leave her hanging on false hopes.
9. NEVER COMPARE her with anyone else. Never compare her circumstances with another person's circumstances. We are all fighting our own unique battles daily.

10. STOP JUDGING. Judging involves ego and ego is a sin. Be ALLAH conscious and stop judging your fellow sisters.

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If you wish to know about a specific topic with regards to Self-Care and Clarity of Mind, please text or email me or visit [www.muslimahmindmatters.com](http://www.muslimahmindmatters.com). If you wish to have a FREE one hour **Finding Clarity** telephone session, contact me on 0451977786



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