

Preaching versus Practice

written by Princess R. Lakshman

We have become a society of ‘advisers and judges’. Everyone has a piece of advice or ‘WhatsApp Fatwa’ for another and most times the advice or judgment does not come from lived experience. We have become a society of preachers without practice.

Recently I was asked by a potential client if I had a psychology degree. I told him that I was a life coach not a clinical psychologist. He asked me how I could help him and his wife with their marital challenges when I did not have a psychology degree. I told him I had extensive life experience and in-depth knowledge, and experience since 2006 to know that I could help him and his wife to at least process any feelings of hurt, pain, trauma or self-loathing that are usually the key feelings that need processing when trying to rebuild a dysfunctional marriage.

He then asked me matter-of-factly, “What else?”

I answered, “Compassionate connection.”

It is fairly easy for people to observe and give advice however advice is only useful if these people can compassionately connect with the one they are advising and display to the person that they are actually walking the walk and talking the talk.

How to Connect Compassionately

No matter how optimistic you may be, your optimism may not necessarily affect another person who is feeling down and dark, unless you are able to connect with him/her with compassion. Cultivating compassion requires you to connect with your own true self first, your authentic or essential self. It’s a daily practice. Being compassionate with your own self will result in being compassionate with others.

Daily Affirmations to Cultivate Compassion

Compassion for	Daily Affirmation
Self	I am aware that I have made some choices in life that have not worked in my favour. I embrace my flaws and I move forward with ultimate faith in ALLAH (swt) that HE may guide me to make better choices.
My Spouse	I am aware that my husband/wife has had a different upbringing than mine. She/He deserves to be treated with respect. I respect and understand my husband/wife.
My Child	I am aware that my child is growing up in a different kind of world than the one I grew up in. My child has a different perception of the world than mine. I respect my child and seek to understand his/her perceptions.
My Parents	I am aware that my parents have a traditional approach to life. Their battles and challenges have been different from mine. I respect my parents and seek to understand them, learn from them and enrich my life through an open mind.

*It is easy to sit in the sunshine
And talk to the man in the shade;
It is easy to float in a well-trimmed boat,
And point out the places to wade.
But once we pass into the shadows,
We murmur and fret and frown,
And, our length from the bank, we shout for a plank,
Or throw up our hands and go down.
It is easy to sit in your carriage,
And counsel the man on foot,
But get down and walk, and you'll change your talk,
As you feel the peg in your boot.
It is easy to tell the toiler
How best he can carry his pack,
But no one can rate a burden's weight
Until it has been on his back.
The up-curved mouth of pleasure,
Can prate of sorrow's worth,
But give it a sip, and a wryer lip,
Was never made on earth.*

(a poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox)