

PANEL DISCUSSION ON CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL/ADDITIONAL NEEDS

EXAMPLES IN OUR FAITH

ISLAM RECOGNISES THAT ALL CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM ALLAH AND HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE EQUAL LIFE CHANCES REGARDLESS OF BEING ABLED OR DISABILITY. THE POSITION OF A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY IS GREAT WITH ALLAH AND THEY SHOULD NOT BE TREATED DIFFERENTLY BUT MUST BE GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE AN INCLUSIVE AND DIGNIFIED LIFE.

THERE ARE MANY HADITHS ABOUT PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S PBUH INVOLVEMENT WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND HOW HE DEMONSTRATED A GREAT LEVEL OF CARE, COMPASSION AND EMPATHY TOWARDS THEM.

ONE EXAMPLE AS NARRATED ON THE AUTHORITY OF ANAS (MAY ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH HIM) THAT A WOMAN, SOMEWHAT MENTALLY UNWELL, SAID, "O MESSENGER OF ALLAH! I HAVE A NEED THAT I WANT YOU TO MEET. HE RESPONDED, "O MOTHER OF SO AND SO, CHOOSE THE WAY YOU LIKE TO WALK IN SO THAT I MAY KNOW YOUR NEED AND MEET IT." HE WALKED WITH HER IN SOME ROUTE UNTIL SHE HAD HER NEED FULFILLED (MUSLIM). THIS HIGHLIGHTS HOW THE PROPHET PBUH DEDICATED HIS TIME AND ATTENTION IN LISTENING AND ANSWERING THE NEEDS OF THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

COMMUNICATION

BE MINDFUL OF THE WORDS THAT YOU USE, AN EXAMPLE OF THIS IS INSTEAD OF SAYING "YOU ARE VERY CLINGY YOU TODAY" TO "YOU ARE BEING VERY LOVINGLY TODAY", CHANGES THE MEANING OF THE ACTION FOR THE PARENT AND THE CHILD. TRY AND REPHRASE WORDS WHEN SPEAKING TO CHILDREN WITH ADHD AND AUTISM, INSTEAD OF USING WORD SUCH "HYPERACTIVE" AND "DISTRACTED" TO "ENERGETIC" AND "ATTENTIVE TO THE WORLD IN A DIFFERENT WAY".

GET DOWN TO YOUR CHILD'S LEVEL, MAKE EYE CONTACT, AND GIVE SIMPLE AND DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS. AVOID USING ANALOGIES, METAPHORS AND SARCASM AS CHILDREN WITH AUTISM HAVE DIFFICULTIES UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING, SUCH AS "IT'S RAINING CATS AND DOGS."

ADAPT YOUR COMMUNICATION STYLE: THESE INCLUDE PICTURES, GESTURES, SIGNING, SYMBOLS AND COMMUNICATION BOARDS AND BOOKS.

SIGN AND SYMPTOMS OF AUTISM AND ADHD

EVERY CHILD IS A UNIQUE CHILD AND DEVELOPS AT THEIR OWN PACE AND IN THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL WAYS, THEREFORE DO NOT COMPARE THEM WITH ANOTHER CHILD.

AUTISM IS A BROAD SPECTRUM AND CONDITION CAN RANGE FROM MILD TO SEVERE. SOME OF THE SYMPTOMS ARE POOR EYE CONTACT, EXTREME SENSITIVITY TO TASTE, SMELL AND SOUNDS, REPETITIVE MOVEMENTS SUCH AS FLAPPING HANDS AND ROCKING BODY AND MAY PLAY ALONGSIDE OTHER CHILDREN BUT NOT WITH THEM.

SIGNS OF ADHD IN CHILDREN ARE EASILY DISTRACTED, FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO CONCENTRATE AND FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS.

SEEK SUPPORT FROM YOUR HEALTH VISITOR AND GP IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS AROUND YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT.

BUILDING RESLIENCE

IT'S IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS AND PROCESS EMOTIONS YOU ARE FEELING RELATED TO YOUR CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS. THIS CAN BE DONE BY SPEAKING TO FAMILY, FRIENDS AND PROFESSIONALS SUCH AS A COUNSELLOR.

MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF: ALLOCATE SOME TIME DURING THE DAY/WEEK DOING SOMETHING YOU ENJOY, I.E. PAINTING, READING, PRAYING, GARDENING ETC. EATING WELL AND EXERCISE.

INCLUDE RELAXATION AND GROUNDING EXERCISE INTO YOUR DAY.

REAFFIRM YOUR INTENTION TO ALLAH AND MAKE DUA: WRITE 3 THINGS THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR AT THE END OF THE DAY

NURTURE YOUR RELATIONSHIP, IT IS IMPORTANT AS A COUPLE TO MAKE TIME FOR EACH OTHER BY PLANNING IN THINGS THAT YOU CAN TOGETHER.

THE CHOSEN ONES (6 TIPS)

- MAKE DUA AND REMEMBER ALLAH.
- SEE THINGS FROM THE CHILD FRAME OF REFERENCE.
- OVERCOME YOUR FEARS AND STAY GROUNDED.
- SHOW EMPATHY NOT SYMPATHY.
- MAKE TIME FOR SELF CARE.
- REWARD FROM ALLAH SWT, SEE YOURSELVES AS THE CHOSEN ONES.