

Islamic Center of Indiana

AL-HUDA

NEWSLETTER



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VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1 - TARBIYAH

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

As we welcome the dawn of a new year and the first issue of Volume 2, we begin with heartfelt gratitude to Allah for the success of Volume 1. Your support and thoughtful feedback have been the foundation of this journey.

The reflections you offered have inspired us to strive even harder in this second chapter. With every suggestion, every kind word, and every prayer, you have helped us refine and reimagine what we can offer. In Volume 2, expect deeper insights, fresh perspectives, and new ways to connect and grow together as a community.

Stay tuned for the exciting initiatives and meaningful content we have in store, and we encourage you to continue sharing your valuable feedback. If you'd like to contribute to the newsletter, we'd be honored—simply check the instructions on the next page!



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Director of Visuals



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Editor

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The Significance of Tarbiyah

Tarbiyah is the process of growth, purification, and nurturing, both within ourselves and in those around us. Personal tarbiyah begins with mastering self-control and aligning our hearts with Allah's guidance.

Allah says which it means:

“Indeed, the self is inclined to evil, except by the mercy of my Lord.”
(12:53)



Through remembrance of Allah and accountability, we can train our nafs to seek righteousness. Prophet Mohammad ﷺ said: “The strong person is not the one who overcomes others, but the one who controls himself when angry.” (Bukhari, Muslim)

True tarbiyah nurtures a heart that fully submits to Allah's guidance, finding no resistance within, as emphasized in “then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in full submission” Yet, tarbiyah is not confined to the self. As parents, siblings, and community members, we have a responsibility to nurture others. The Qur'an emphasizes this duty:

“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones.” (66:6)

Tarbiyah of others requires wisdom, patience, and leading by example. The Prophet ﷺ, the ultimate murabbi, nurtured his companions with kindness and compassion. He said: “Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock.” (Bukhari, Muslim)

May Allah guide us to control our nafs.



Somalia boasts Africa's longest coastline, stretching over 2,000 miles. Its stunning beaches and rich marine life make it a hidden paradise for nature lovers. The country is also known for its vibrant culture, with a deep tradition of oral poetry, music, and storytelling that shapes daily life.

Islam reached Somalia in the early 7th century, during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Somali coastal cities, like Zeila, became some of the first places in Africa to embrace Islam due to their proximity to the Arabian Peninsula. It is one of the earliest Islamic settlements in Africa and home to ancient mosques dating back centuries. Muslim merchants and early migrants fleeing persecution in Mecca brought the faith to the Somali people.

Facts:

- **Capital:** Mogadishu
- **Population:** ~ 19 Million
- **Currency:** Somalian Shilling (SOS)
- **Area:** 246,199 square miles
- **Religion:** Majority Muslim
- **Language:** Somali & Arabic



Somalia is one of the few countries where almost the entire population is Muslim, predominantly Sunni. Somali traders helped spread Islam to parts of East Africa and the Indian Ocean islands through their maritime trade networks.

Somali poetry, a major cultural art, is often influenced by Islamic teachings and Arabic script. Somali cuisine, influenced by African, Middle Eastern, and Indian flavors, is a treat for the senses. From savory sambusas to spiced rice dishes, the food is as colorful and flavorful as the culture itself. Resilient, warm, and full of life, Somalia offers much to explore and admire.





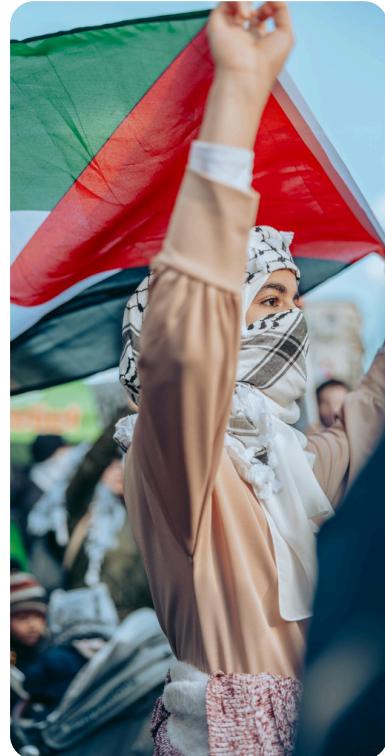
The Art of SEEING

By: Susan Zayed

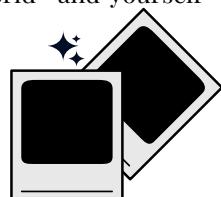
Over my 10+ years in professional photography, one truth has stood out: photography teaches you to see. Not just to look, but to truly see. Often, we move through life on autopilot, glancing in one direction and missing the beauty around us. Photography forces you to pause and notice—the glint of sunlight on raindrops, the unspoken stories in wrinkles, or the quiet power of fleeting smiles. It's in these overlooked moments that life reveals its richness.

But seeing isn't easy—it requires failure. The blurry shots, missed angles, and underexposed frames—they teach you more than perfection ever could. It's through mistakes and setbacks that we grow, adapt, and improve. They remind you that art isn't meant to please everyone—it's meant to connect with the right people. And most importantly, it's meant to connect with you.

When I began my photography, I rarely saw anyone who looked like me. That absence taught me another layer of seeing: the ability to notice who isn't being represented, whose stories aren't being told. Photography allows us to rewrite the narrative, to include those who've been overlooked and give them visibility. We often complain about a lack of Muslim representation in creative spaces while discouraging those pursuing creative fields. The thing about representation is that you don't truly understand its power until you see someone who looks like you in a space you never imagined yourself belonging to. Representation, after all, is a way of seeing—and being seen.



Photography doesn't just teach you to see the world differently; it helps you see yourself differently. Your perspective matters. The way you interpret life deserves to be seen. Somewhere out there, the right people are waiting for your art to resonate with them. Don't deprive the world—or yourself—of that gift. Share your vision. Teach the world—and yourself—to see.



GUIDING OUR YOUTH



Our youth are navigating a world filled with distractions—peer pressure, the lure of fleeting pleasures, and the overwhelming influence of social media. They are bombarded with ideologies that confuse their sense of identity and pull them away from the beauty of our faith. Many feel lost, seeking fulfillment in places that only deepen the emptiness within.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “A person is upon the religion of their close friend, so let each of you look at whom you befriend.” (Tirmidhi) This reminder highlights the need to guide our youth toward good company that fosters righteousness.

TIP:



Don't shy away from answering questions. Your youth need answers and the adults in their life are the best place for them to get it.

To address these challenges, we must first listen to them with empathy. Provide them with environments that balance love with discipline, and show them that the restrictions of Islam are blessings that shield them from harm. Let's be mentors, offering them purpose and connection to Allah.

A Parenting Capsule

Alhamdulillah, I moved to the United States six years ago to start a new chapter in life for myself and my family. Initially, I felt confident about guiding my family to remain steadfast in faith. However, alarming statistics about Muslims leaving Islam after generations filled me with concern for my children's faith. This fear drove me to explore parenting resources from Islamic, Eastern, and Western perspectives, reading books and articles. Today, I am going to share three essential lessons and three practical tips with you.

Lessons:

First Lesson:

Your child is not a great listener but an excellent observer. To teach them Islam, let them see it in your actions before they hear it in your words.

Second Lesson:

Even you, yourself, cannot guarantee your own steadfastness in faith without Allah's will—what about your children? Sincerely guide and teach them, but always remember that only Allah controls their hearts.

Third Lesson:

Parenting is like gardening—there are no shortcuts when nurturing human souls. Children are a blessing and guiding them is a way to show gratitude to Allah.

Practical Tips:

Practical Tip #1:

Be the disciplined Muslim you want your child to become. For example, if you want them to pray on time, let them see you prioritize prayer, even during busy times. Stop whatever you are doing to pray promptly, demonstrating its importance through your actions. Over time, this consistency will inspire your child to follow your lead naturally.

Practical Tip #2:

Make dua daily for Allah to keep you and your family firm on His path. Seek moments of acceptance, such as during the last third of the night or between adhan and iqamah. For instance, wake up early on weekends to pray for your children's guidance, even if just for a few minutes.

Practical Tip #3:

Enjoy parenting and never tire of giving advice. Use stories or examples to teach lessons. One day, you'll see how deeply your efforts have influenced them. This sincere work will never go to waste either in this world or in the Hereafter.

By: Ahmad Soliman



Past & Future Events

December Highlights



Syrian Celebration



Hour of Code



Miftaah Conference

Start the year strong by attending the following Events

- ▶ MY QURAN MY LIFE
Every Monday And Thursday

- ▶ ESTEEM AND EMERGE
Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday

- ▶ JUZ AMMA REVIEW DAY
January 24th

- ▶ QIYAM NIGHT
January 25th

- ▶ TAFSEER LESSONS
Every Tuesday

- ▶ SHIEKH NASSER ARABIC CLASSES
Every Thursday

- ▶ SHIEKH QIYAM QURAN CLASSES
Every Wednesday

- ▶ WHAT MUSLIM KIDS SHOULD KNOW
Second and Fourth Sunday of Every Month



Mohannad Mofawaz
Editor-In-Chief

I am a Ph.D. Candidate at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, focusing on financial sustainability and endowments. I have dedicated my efforts to creating sustainable financial systems that benefit the most vulnerable populations. During my B.S. in Industrial Systems Engineering in Saudi Arabia, I reflected on how I could best contribute to social equity. This led to a career shift, earning an M.A. in Philanthropic Studies. I served as the COO and Strategy Manager at Al-Fozan Academy at King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, focusing on enhancing nonprofit leaders across Saudi Arabia and the GCC. Additionally, I serve on the boards of various organizations in Saudi Arabia, concentrating on youth initiatives.



Omar Hesham Abdelalim
Director of Content

I was born in Egypt and raised in Medina, Saudi Arabia. In 2018, I moved to the U.S., earning a bachelor's in computer engineering by 2022 and a master's in computer science by 2023.

Now, I work as a software engineer developing medical device programs and run a tutoring agency, Noosa Engage. In my free time, I enjoy sports, writing about philosophy and religion, exploring coffee shops, and spending time with friends.

Staying active in the Muslim community is a priority. The masjid brings me peace, and I love attending, organizing, and contributing to events and halaqat.

Starting this newsletter with an amazing team has been a highlight of 2024. I pray it benefits our community and that Allah accepts our efforts.



Ziad Hefni
Director of Visuals

My name is Ziad Hefni, born and raised in Indianapolis, IN. I've been blessed to witness the growth of Indiana's Muslim communities over the past two decades. A proud graduate of Eman Schools and IUPUI (B.S. in Computer Science), I've always been passionate about creating purposeful work that builds for the akhirah.

As a husband, dreamer, and story-teller, I help communities and individuals through my company, Apicem Studios. We've been creating impactful videos for over half a decade by Allah's blessing. I'm honored to work with our dedicated team on the next volume of the Alhuda Newsletter. May Allah put barakah in our efforts.



Amal Rasheed
Editor

Assalamu Alaikum, my name is Amal Rasheed. I was born and raised in New Jersey, but I've lived in Indiana for almost 10 years now. I earned my bachelor's degree in Psychology from IUPUI and am currently pursuing my Master of Social Work (MSW) at Ball State University.

Outside of my academics, I enjoy cooking, painting, and writing. Alhamdullilah, I am blessed with an incredible husband and family to spend time with.

As editor of this newsletter, I'm excited to contribute content that inspires our community. I believe in the importance of connection, personal growth, and fostering positive change. Through this newsletter, I hope to make a small but meaningful impact, and I'm truly grateful to be part of such an incredible team.



We are immensely proud to spotlight Shifa Saltagi, who was honored with the prestigious National Book Award 2024 for Young Readers last November for her captivating book, *Kareem Between*.



To delve into Shifa's inspiring work and support her, find further details about *Kareem Between* and purchase options by scanning the QR code provided.

Shifa embarked on her literary journey as a Muslim book reviewer, a role she embraced as a new mother eager to instill pride in her children about their Arab American and Muslim heritage. Books became a cherished connection point at bedtime, providing a sense of visibility and belonging.

Recalling her childhood dream amidst a collection of beloved books, Shifa transitioned from reader to writer, bringing her own stories to life. *Kareem Between* intricately weaves the experiences of Kareem, a seventh-grade Syrian American boy. As he confronts the trials of middle school—from losing his best friend to failing his football tryout—Kareem's resilience is further tested when he must guide a new Syrian refugee student and navigate complex moral waters.

The narrative deepens as Kareem grapples with his mother's fraught trip to Syria and the subsequent travel ban that bars her return, pulling him into a vortex of personal and cultural conflicts. Through these challenges, Kareem discovers his voice and learns the profound value of navigating life's gray areas.

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