

Chapter 2: The Knowledge and Mutual Co-Operation of the Educators

The training and upbringing of a child is not an easy and simple task that the parents can perform with little or no effort. This task requires, in fact, delicate handling and temperament. There are myriads of fine points to be considered to achieve success in the efforts. The mentor has to relate himself with the spirit of the child. He cannot perform the task without knowing the spiritual, psychological, educational and practical niceties of the job.

A child's world is a world of his own and his imaginations and fantasies will be unique to him. These cannot be compared to the thought process of the adults. The child's spirit will be delicate and will be very impressionable. The child will be a human being in miniature that has not as yet assumed a permanent identity but it has the capability to attain this change.

The mentor of the child has to be capable of fathoming and identifying a human being and, also, identifying the mind of the children. He should have a keen eye on the intricacies of the process of upbringing. He should be aware of the human capabilities and failings. He should have sense of responsibility and keen interest in the job on hand. He should be patient and courageous that the hardships don't overpower him.

Besides, the rules of training are not rigid and cannot be implemented the same way under different circumstances. In fact these rules have to be modified and applied to each individual child according to his physical make up and mental capabilities. The parents must keenly observe the physical built of the child and educate him keeping this factor in mind. Otherwise, the effort may not bring about the desired result.

The man and woman should acquire knowledge about education and training before parenting a child. The education of the child commences with its birth and, in fact, from the time of conception. During this period the foundation of the child's nature is established and his nature, behavior, thinking process starts taking shape.

It is not right that the parents remain unconcerned during this visibly dormant period.

They postpone the upbringing of the expected new arrival till its actual arrival. They tend to keep away this task till the child is capable of distinguishing between good and bad behavior. While it may be easier to correct the behavioral defects in the early stages, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to effect these corrections once the habits are formed.

‘Ali, The Commander of the Faithful, says:

“The most difficult politics is bringing about changes in the habits of people.”¹

“Habits settle down upon people.”²

“Habits become second nature.”³

Shunning habits is so difficult that doing it is considered amongst better invocations.

‘Ali, The Commander of the Faithful, says:

“Overcoming bad habits is amongst benevolent invocations.”⁴

Another important factor in imparting ideal training to the child is the coordination and cooperation between the parents and other mentors like the grand parents on the program of training to be followed. Their joint effort will produce the desired results. But if any one of them takes a cavalier attitude on the training process, the results may not be as desired.

The child should be made aware of its duty. When the parents give contrary directions the child gets confused. Particularly if they insist on their contrary points of view, there is likelihood of negative results in the process of the training of the child.

The biggest difficulty in imparting training to the child is that the father makes a decision about him and the mother or the grand parents insist on a contrary course. There is always a need for such understanding between the mentors that the child is able to clearly understand what he has to do and the idea of doing anything against this does not enter his mind.

Sometimes it happens that the father is well educated and reasonable and the mother of the child is ill tempered and uneducated. Sometimes the situation is reversed, when the mother is better equipped to train the child and the father is not. Many families face this problem. Children in such families do not receive proper training. But this doesn't mean that they should give up efforts of properly training their children.

In such a difficult situation the responsibility becomes more pronounced. The need in such a situation is to give more thought to the program of educating the child. The parents should make sincere efforts to overcome the lacunae in their character and behavior and give more attention to the children.

With good actions the parents can attract the children's attention and set a desirable example before them. The parent's action should help the child to decide what is good for him and what is not. If the mentor is wise, thoughtful and patient he can to a greater extent counter the negative impact of his wife's behavior on the training of the child. This is no doubt a difficult task but there is no way out of it.

One intellectual says:

"A family in which the father and the mother think alike about the upbringing of the children and are able to mould their character and actions accordingly the impact on the senses of the children will be ideal. The family unit is a small society in which the child's moral character assumes definite form.

A family in which the members are friendly towards each other their children are generally mild mannered, self respecting and judicious. Against this, a family where the parents have the habit of contradicting each other their children will be morally deficient, pretentious and excitable."

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1. Ghurar al Hukm, p. 181
 2. Ghurar al Hukm, p.580
 3. Ghurar al Hukm, p.260
 4. Ghurar al Hukm, p. 176

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