

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



October 13, 2015

All Citizens Should be Treated Equally

It is really imperative that a society must ensure that all its residents get their due rights. And these rights must be ensured without any sort of discrimination as all the members of the society stand equal as far as justice and fair play are concerned. The societies that are multicultural and consist of different ethnic or religious groups must make sure that the rights of minorities are properly guarded. In the similar fashion the rights of the special people – the people suffering from different sorts of disabilities, must also be ascertained through proper policies and actions by the relevant authorities. The underdeveloped and the developing countries, in particular, need to give proper attention towards the disabled as such countries face many other problems to tackle with; therefore, they are not capable of giving time and attention to them. Moreover, in such countries the opportunities and proper arrangements are not there that can help the disabled to fight with the harsh challenges of life and be the part of normal lives. Afghanistan is one of the similar types of countries where the opportunities are limited for the disabled.

Some NGOs on certain occasions made some efforts in this regard. They have provided fund and support to uplift their standard of living. Such efforts, if followed and monitored with determination, consistency and honest intentions will definitely support the disabled to live normal life and become productive citizens of the society. In addition, positive attitude of the society can assist the disabled in developing optimistic approach towards life and bring prosperity and development not only to themselves but to the country, as well.

Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the negative attitude of the people towards the disabled may discourage them to a large extent. Unluckily, it can be observed in our country that both the government and the people do not treat them properly. Although Afghanistan has signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, concrete steps are not taken yet in that regard. According to the convention people with disabilities must be given all the opportunities of having proper treatment and the feasibilities to live their daily lives normally. Unfortunately, the government of Afghanistan has been suffering on both the fronts. The medical facilities for the disabled are in no way sufficient. Hospitals and care centers for them are not enough, while the existing ones suffer seriously from the lack of modern equipments. The methods of treatment are obsolete. The compensations or improvements that can be made in their lives are not realized appropriately and they go unchecked. Furthermore, the endeavors of government to support them in their daily lives need to be invigorated and they should be supported voluminously.

However, it should be noted that the financial compensation alone is not enough to support their families. At present, the disabled people receive about 500 Afghanis a month from the government, which seems negligible, keeping in mind the rising inflation. It should be noted that more important than the compensation is the job opportunities and vocational training. That will support the disabled people in standing on their own and live a life of self-esteem and reverence. They cannot keep on depending on the favor of the government indefinitely – if the government feels sympathy they should get their share, if not they will stay underprivileged. It would be a better option to make them stand on their own and equal to their fellow citizens. Indefinite dependence on the kindness of the government or fellow citizens can in fact cripple them. They will get used to it and shun hard work; some of them may even opt begging. It is not peculiar to find the disabled people begging on the roads, taking advantage of the sympathy of the passersby.

Another important issue in this regard is the response of the fellow citizens towards the people with disabilities. Instead of assisting them out, most of the people further torture them by their discriminatory and even abusive attitude. There are so a lot of instances when such people are socially neglected. Since, they are not able to do the things in the way the other people do, they are considered weird and even called with various inapt titles.

The families with economic hardships and other difficulties curse their children with disabilities and treat them as burden on the family. Many of them are forced to go for begging; in addition, it is hard to find people who readily get into any type of relation with the disabled people. In particular, the females who are with disabilities do not get proper chances of getting married. They remain neglected throughout most part of their lives and suffer from severe kind of social isolation. It is really imperative to understand the difficulties faced by the people with disabilities; whether the disabled are so, naturally or as the aftermath of disasters or wars they should be treated appropriately.

The government has to make sure that they receive all the facilities for their treatment and modern facilities are available for them free of cost, and they get feasibilities that may support them in living their daily lives about normally. On the other hand there should be marked changes in the attitude through which the fellow citizens treat the disabled people; in particular, they should be considered equal human beings.

Controlling the Ghost of Anger

By Dilawar Sherzai

Anger has the capacity to do much damage to human beings. It does not only effect the person who possesses it but also many others who have interactions with the possessor. Anger is basically a human feeling that has a strong urge to retaliate towards a perceived wrong, humiliation or offense. Anger is one of the human emotions and is thus natural. In most of the cases it proves to be negative as it brings about many broken relations and many problems. However, it is not negative all the times. It can be controlled and through proper anger management it is possible to reduce its negative impacts and may even achieve something positive. Nonetheless, that is not always very easy to control anger and use it wisely; as quoted by Aristotle, "Anybody can become angry – that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way – that is not within everybody's power and is not easy."

People get angry on different matters and each person has its own way of being angry. However, there is one think common in all the angers and that is the sharp hurting difference in what a person expects and what he basically faces as a reality; and a person feels being wronged or offended. Anger can be observed in daily life almost on daily basis. Sometimes we see it in our friends and classmates and at others in our family members.

Anger basically has different stages. It starts with a situation or happening that triggers it. This trigger changes the normal situation and compels a person influenced by it to react. The anger then enters the second stage which is known as the escalation stage. In this stage the anger escalates and the commitment to react becomes firmer. The person starts getting ready to retaliate and take any action that may be possible, not necessarily reasonable.

After escalation the anger then moves to the crisis stage. At this stage the retaliatory action basically takes place. There is always an action that is intended to bring harm to another person in this stage. It is a crisis in a sense that the interactions are at their worst and the human thinking and logical reasoning are at their lowest degree.

As the crisis stage ends, there is recovery stage. The anger then cools down and a person starts reanalyzing the whole situation logically and reasonably. At this stage there is decline from the crisis and blood pressure seems to get normal. Mostly the people, at this stage, repent as they do not find what they did to be reasonable.

The last stage is the stage of depression. Mostly, but not always, a person feels sorry for all that he has done during the crisis stage, which is followed by depression. This cycle completes itself all the times when a person gets angry. However, the anger is not bound to complete the cycle every time it is triggered. There are possibilities of controlling it before it esca-

lates into a crisis. But whenever, it reaches to crisis, it is bound to complete the cycle.

Tonni Morrison, in great hatred of anger, had said, "Anger ... it's a paralyzing emotion ... you can't get anything done. People sort of think it's an interesting, passionate, and igniting feeling -- I don't think it's any of that -- it's helpless ... it's absence of control -- and I need all of my skills, all of the control, all of my powers ... and anger doesn't provide any of that -- I have no use for it whatsoever." This is bound to happen if anger is not managed appropriately. Fortunately, there are ways of guiding anger towards the better path. Though it is inevitable, it is not unmanageable. As observed by C. JoyBell C, "Anger is like flowing water; there's nothing wrong with it as long as you let it flow. Hate is like stagnant water; anger that you denied yourself the freedom to feel, the freedom to flow; water that you gathered in one place and left to forget. Stagnant water becomes dirty, stinky, disease-ridden, poisonous, deadly; that is your hate. On flowing water travels little paper boats; paper boats of forgiveness. Allow yourself to feel anger, allow your waters to flow, along with all the paper boats of forgiveness. Be human."

There are different ways to manage anger. First it is necessary to try to alter the situation or one's own self both before the anger happens or even during it. A person can take some of the measures that may decrease the chances of serious anger even to be triggered. He can change his bad habits – the habits that may cause others to be angry. He can also ask others to do so but only with respect for others. He can change the view he possesses about the things around him or start analyzing a situation or a conflict from different perspectives so as to have a better understanding of the situation or to know what others think in the situation.

However, the most important thing would be to change the way a person reacts to a situation. Responding anger with anger would always result in a clash that may further deteriorate human relations. Therefore, it is necessary to control the way a person reacts to a situation, especially to a situation that is unfavorable.

The other way is to avoid anger is to avoid some of the avoidable things that may cause disruptions in human relations. It would be better to avoid people who make a person upset and who are the cause of anger for him. But this does not mean to run away from a difficult situation or a conflict when it has already been created; it means to avoid before a situation takes place.

Avoiding one's "hot buttons" would also be helpful in not letting oneself and others get angry. Moreover, extracting oneself away from a stressful situation would also be helpful, provided that there is no room for someone to do something in the situation and doing something would mean further deteriorating the situation.

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Political Instability – Afghanistan's Plight

By Hujjatullah Zia

The Taliban movement grew from the Afghan orphans or refugee children who attended madrasahs. Their rapid rise to power in 1994 must be seen in the context of chaos and civil war in Afghanistan, with irresponsible armed groups running amok and complete breakdown of law and order. The small band of Taliban was first led by Mullah Omar against a local warlord in Spin-Boldak and led to the capture of Kandahar in November 1994, with scarcely a shot being fired. The subsequent rise and spread of the Taliban in Afghanistan surprised most observers, and was generally welcomed by a war weary and destitute population.

To the development agencies, the Taliban government brought some respite from incessant conflict. However, their tribal and medieval interpretation of religious tenets led to the imposition of draconian policies restricting the rights of women and ethnic minorities. Their edicts on female education, dress code, and employment were largely based on an extremely orthodox ideology, and a source of great distress to many in the Islamic world. In an ironic twist of fate, the Taliban era also saw Afghanistan suffer from one of the worst droughts of this century, which virtually wiped out many sectors of a largely agrarian economy. Despite plentiful evidence of the impact of economic sanctions on the most vulnerable in society, especially children, Afghanistan was progressively deprived of assistance to the extent that even humanitarian agencies found it difficult to operate.

Notwithstanding the hardship due to drought and sanctions, the Taliban policies brought disproportionate suffering and impoverishment to war widows and families in Afghanistan. Food shortages and malnutrition had their biggest impact on Afghan female children. Less obvious are the psychological trauma and mental stress experienced by Afghan women and children and the impact of continued illegal employment of child soldiers by all warring factions.

The lasting impact of war on the psychological state of women and children is well described. Many have post-traumatic stress as a consequence of witnessing or experiencing parental loss in war. Political repression and state terror have also been shown to result in significant psychological sequelae.

The invasion of Afghanistan was intended to target terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization, which was based in the country, as well as the extreme fundamentalist Taliban government that had ruled most of the country since 1996 and supported and protected al-Qaeda leadership. The Taliban, which had imposed its extremist ideology on the entire country, also perpetrated countless human rights abuses against its people, especially women. During their rule, large numbers of Afghans lived in utter poverty, and as many as 4 million Afghans are thought to have suffered from starvation.

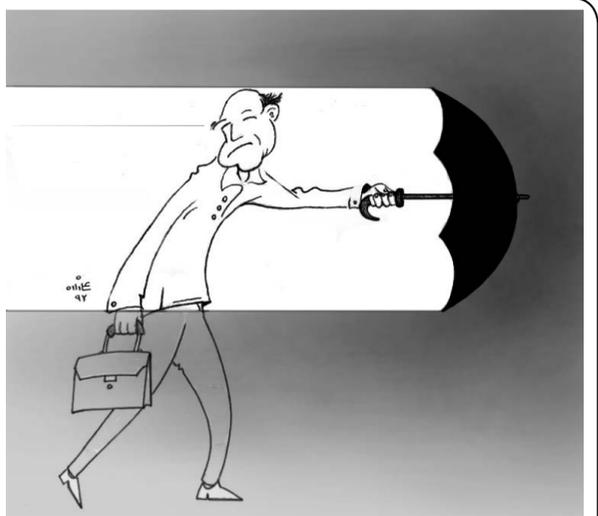
The US military forces toppled the Taliban government and disrupted bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network. On May 2, 2011, bin Laden was shot and killed by United States Armed Forces in Pakistan. The Taliban leadership survives in hiding throughout Afghanistan, largely in the southeast, and continues to launch guerrilla attacks against foreign forces and Afghan soldiers and civilians. Even as Afghanistan began to take the first steps toward democracy, Taliban forces began to regroup in the mountainous border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan. They continue to engage U.S. and Afghan troops in guerilla-style warfare and have also been responsible for the deaths of government officials and aid workers and the kidnapping of ordinary people and ethnic minority groups. Hundreds of American and coalition soldiers and thousands of Afghans have been killed and wounded in the fighting. Afghans continue to make up the largest refugee population in the world. According to the United Nations' refugee agency, UNHCR, more than 40,000 Afghans have sought asylum in Europe from January until August this year.

"Until last year, Afghans were the largest global refugee population at 2.6 million people – almost 10 percent of the country's entire population. Today, estimated at 12 percent, they are ranked as the second largest group (after Syrians) to have reached European shores and borders."

A landmark survey conducted by UNICEF, few years ago, on the effect of war on children aged 8-18 years in Kabul indicated that 41% had lost one or more parents because of the conflict, and over half had witnessed torture or violent death. Over 90% of the children interviewed expressed the fear of dying in the conflict. A particularly gruesome practice of encouraging children to witness public amputations and executions has an enormous impact on impressionable minds. Over 80% of the children interviewed felt they could not cope with events and that life was not worth living. While such events can lead to considerable psychological trauma and distress, they may also inure a young mind to violence. The Taliban are a product of the same cycle of violence and social upheaval experienced from early childhood. Ignorance, isolation, and a daily ritual of violence greatly temper their vision of the world.

It is stated in the Declaration of Independence as, "All men are created equal ... and are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed" Indeed, it is the government to create a society void of violence and bloodshed and secure the life, liberty and property of the citizens. The government has to plan effective strategy to eradicate terrorism and militancy from the country and free people from the persisting challenges.

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