

# ALI 340: Elements of Effective Communication

## Session Eight

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَنْ لَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ  
وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَלَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ ۖ وَتَعْرِفْنَهُمْ فِي  
لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ

Do those in whose hearts is a sickness suppose that Allah will not expose their spite? If We wish We will show them to you so that you recognize them by their mark. **But you will recognize them by their tone of speech**, and Allah knows your deeds.

**Sura Muhammad, 47:30**

# Agenda

- The Holy Quran
- Dealing with difficult people
- Types of difficult people
- Different reactions to difficult people
- Minimizing impact of difficult people
- Confronting difficult people
- Examples from the Holy Quran

# The Holy Quran

إِنِّي لَأَعْجَبُ كَيْفَ لَا أَشَيَّبُ إِذَا قَرَأْتُ الْقُرْآنَ

I am surprised that I don't age  
when I read the Quran

**Holy Prophet (s)**

Mizanul Hikmah, H#16241

The Holy Prophet also mentioned that verse 112 of Sura Hud made him old – *so be steadfast as you have been commanded and those who turn [to Allah] with you.*

# Dealing with difficult people

Nothing is as challenging as interacting and communicating regularly with difficult people. Communicating with difficult people can drain energy, provoke negativity and create stress and tension in life.

It is important to understand that most people do not set out to be deliberately difficult. They just operate at their own level of consciousness.

Dealing with difficult people often brings out the best in you. It enhances your abilities and understandings and helps you achieve higher levels of virtues.



# An Important Point

Identifying a difficult person is all relative.

Everybody is somebody's difficult person

‘you probably frustrate several people yourself,  
because everybody is somebody's difficult person  
at least some of the time’

(<http://sourcesofinsight.com/ten-types-of-difficult-people/>)

وَكَذٰلِكَ فَتَنَّاۢ بَعْضَهُمۡ بِبَعْضٍ

And thus do we try some of them by others

**Sura An'am, 6:53**

Social differences between people are sometimes a means of testing and revealing certain qualities in them, and a cause of growth.

(Aghae Muhsin Qaraati, Tafsire Nur)

# Hadith on ill nature - سوء الخلق

From Imam Ali (a)

- 1) Ill nature causes life to be miserable and torments the soul.
- 2) Whoever is ill natured his family becomes weary of him.
- 3) Whoever has low tolerance will see his comfort reduce.

**Scale of Wisdom, H#s 1957, 1958, 1959**

# Types of difficult people

- Criticizers – fault finding, unappreciative, negative.
- Complainers – blaming, whining, never finding solutions themselves.
- Pessimists – negative, angry, bitter, doubtful, disappointed
- Sensitive – over reacting, egoistic
- Demanders – unreasonable, egoistic, lacking empathy



# Different reactions to difficult people

- Ignoring
- Tolerating
- Resenting
- Worrying
- Handling
- Confronting

# Minimizing impact of difficult people

- 1) Know what to expect – most people have patterns of behavior. When you identify their patterns you can react more effectively.
- 2) Assess your own behavior.
- 3) Do not take it personally. It's not about you, it's about them. You are a small player in their inner drama.
- 4) Separate the issue from the person – It's not the person, it's the behavior. Don't be hard on the person, be hard on the issue or behavior.

# Confronting difficult people

- 1) Build a rapport with them through patience, active listening and understanding.
- 2) Specify what exactly is bothering you about the person.
- 3) Convey that clearly.
- 4) Plan solutions – suggestions, communication meeting to explain things to them.

# Examples from the Holy Quran

## Nabi Musa (a) and Firaun

- Talks to Firaun, explains Tauheed
- Counters accusations
- Makes a clear demand
- Proves his point
- Plans a communication meeting

**Sura A'raf, 7:102-108**

**Sura Taha, 20:49-59**

**Sura Shuara, 26:18-33**



## Nabi Ibrahim (a) and the idol worshippers

- Talked to them
- Explained Tauheed
- Proved his point
- Made them realize the foolishness of their beliefs.

**Sura Anbiya 21:51- 67**