

They say, "Obedience (we observe)." But when they go away from you, a group of them conspires at night contrary to what they say. Allah records what they conspire. So ignore them and put your trust in Allah. Allah is enough to trust in.

Do they not **think** about the Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction. [Surah An-Nisa 81-82]

I am often asked about behaviour change, an area I specialised in while working in the Health service in application to problems around unhealthy eating habits, bad lifestyle options, smoking, alcohol abuse and countless other challenges. Often this behaviour change

These verses refer to the hypocrites who when they were in the presence of the Prophet(SAW) said they were obedient to him and accepted everything he had commanded but when they left his company, got together and planned how they disobey him. This two-faced attitude caused great pain to the Prophet(SAW). And Allah(SWT) told him (SAW) how to respond. A'ridh 'anhum (ignore them) and continue with your mission, placing your trust in the One who will never let you down as Allah(SWT) is All-Sufficient for him(SAW).

There are a number of points to make here:

1. Don't stoop to their level or even pay attention to them. Many jump on the bandwagon when they see some good. Drugs, anti-social behaviour, flytipping and the community garden.
2. Accept what is within your circle of influence. We may be concerned about many things - islamophobia, the state of the economy, the clothes your children want to wear, attitudes in society, the organisation you work for, the things your colleagues do, the way people drive their cars etc. However, there may be little you can do about many of these things since they are outside your influence. Devoting energy on them may be a waste of time - the equivalent of shouting at the television - and time and energy once spent cannot be reused. Rather focus on the things you can actually influence and you will increase influence.
3. Never correct people in front of others -Fudaylh bin Ayadh would say al mu'minu yastur wa yansah wal faajiru yahtiku wa yafdah a believer conceals and advises while a transgressor openly disgraces a person by announcing it.

Don't correct someone when you're angry because you'll end up saying things that you regret and you can't reverse them anymore. Even in your marriage, with your siblings, with your children, as a teacher or as a friend.

5 Questions to Ask Before You Correct others

These key questions are summarised in the acronym THINK which is the exact advice given after the ayah of the hypocrites mentioned in the beginning of this reminder:

3. Is this True?

- Did you personally witness the behaviour or have you heard it second or third hand
- Were you transferring a belief onto someone because you have a preconceived notion about that person and about how they act or behave?
- Do they ALWAYS do that?

There are almost always two sides to every issue. So, have you heard the other side? Just think about this, how many times have you believed something to be true only to later discover that you were wrong?

4. Is it Helpful?

The second question is focused more on the person than the event.

It may well be that someone else made a mistake but is it helpful to call them “a terrible, horrible, no good, very-bad, miserable, incompetent”? Probably not.

Is it helpful to say this in front of his co-workers?

A beautiful example is given in 2 young children who saw an elderly man making a mistake in his wudu. Rather than approach him directly, they asked him to watch them doing wudhu as they were unsure if it was correct. He smiled when he realised his mistake and was grateful to the childrens helpful advice.

5. Is it Inspiring?

Every one of us is a leader and every one of us is responsible. Yes, you as a father are a leader. As a husband. Even as a child, you are a Muslim and remember the world is looking at you as a representation of every other Muslim. As someone from Luton, everyone has eyes on you.

Remember that we have a responsibility to motivate and inspire the people so that they can perform at their best.

Inspiration isn't just nice words, rather the word inspire means to "breath life into" someone. Which means that if someone on your street, in your family or in your team isn't performing well—and you can help correct that behaviour, think about how you can motivate them to achieve it.

The Prophet(SAW) inspired the Sahaba saying: "Verily Allah has written down the good deeds and the evil deeds", and then explained it [by saying]: "Whosoever intended to perform a good deed, but did not do it, then Allah writes it down with Himself as a complete good deed. And if he intended to perform it and did perform it, then Allah writes it down with Himself as from ten good deeds up to seven hundred fold, up to many times multiplied. And if he intended to perform an evil deed, but did not do it, then Allah writes it down with Himself as a complete good deed. And if he intended it [i.e., the evil deed] and then performed it, then Allah writes it down as one evil deed." [Reported by Bukhari & Muslim]

This hadith encourages people to have great hope in the grace of Allah, and realise His great justice. It encourages to do good deeds and be observant of Allah and points to Allah's great blessings and generosity and also points to Allah's immense ability to do what He wants.

6. Is it Necessary?

In other words, something you might want to say could be true, but it might not be necessary for you to say it. Sometimes when someone messes up majorly and feel awful about it, is it really necessary to address it? Or is this one of those times where you know you don't need to say anything because you know how bad she feels?

Anas Ibn Malik, may Allah be pleased with him said: "Whilst we were in the Mosque with the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) a Bedouin came and stood urinating in the Mosque. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) said, 'Stop it! Stop it!' and were about to attack him.

But the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) said, 'Do not interrupt him; leave him alone.' [By interrupting him, he would likely have urinated on those around him and spread the urine even further as well as being upset]

So they left him until he had finished urinating, then the Messenger of Allah

sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) called him and said to him, 'In these Mosques it is not right to do anything like urinating or defecating; they are only for remembering Allah, praying and reading Qur'an,' or words to that effect. Then he commanded a man who was there to bring a bucket of water and throw it over the (urine), and he did so." (Muslim)

7. Is it Kind?

Even if you think it might be helpful or necessary to inform someone, can you do it kindly? Great leaders love their people. So, before they say anything, make sure you pass your words through the kind filter ("Is this kind?"). If not, discard. If yes, feel free to pass along. Ibn Hajar may Allah be pleased with him mentioned in his commentary on the hadith about the man who urinated in the masjid that "we should be gentle when dealing with one who is ignorant and teach him what he needs to know without rebuking him, so long as he is not acting out of stubbornness, especially if he is one who needs to be won over. - The Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) was kind and he dealt nicely with him."

So, there you have it. Five simple questions that will help you T.H.I.N.K before you speak (and save you a whole lot of lost time, relational capital, productivity and profits).

1. Is it **TRUE**?
2. Is it **HELPFUL**?
3. Is it **INSPIRING**?
4. Is it **NECESSARY**?
5. Is it **KIND**?