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With Whom Should I Socialize?

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Introduction

Do we really choose a friend, or is compatibility the magnet of friendship?

Many narrations confirm that every person is attracted to one like himself

كل امرء يميل الى مثله

or every bird nests with its type.

How do we choose a friend?

1) We pay attention to our comfort level when we're with a person. For example, we befriend people who encourage us, not those who are pessimistic, or always bombard us with negative comments or criticism, or ask us to do things we don't like.

2) We don't choose a friend who holds a different opinion than us. We usually befriend people who always agree with us and accept us 'for what I am'!

Islamic Recommendation of choosing a friend

1. You must be selective: you can often guarantee your success by having top quality people around you.

النبي (ص): انظروا من تحادثون، فانّه ليس من احد ينزل به الموت الاّ مثّل له اصحابه الى الله. فان كانوا خيارا فخيراء، و ان كانوا شرارا فشراراء، و ليس احد يموت الاّ تمثّلت له عند موته. -الكافي 2:466

The Prophet of Islam (S): “Be selective of those with whom you communicate, for there is none who dies but his friends will resemble him on his way to Allah. Then if they were good people the resemblance will be good, but if they were evil people, it will be evil. And none dies but I appear to him at the time of his death.”¹

2. Socialize with those who increase your faith

عن ابن عباس قال: قيل يا رسول الله أى الجلساء خير؟ قال: من تُذكّرهم الله رؤيته، ويزيدُ في علمكم منطِقُهُ، و
يرغّبكم في الآخرة عملُهُ. – وسائل الشيعة 12:23

Ibn ‘Abbas asked: O Messenger of Allah! What type of friends are the best? The Prophet (S) replied: “Those who seeing them reminds you of Allah, and their talk increases your knowledge, and their actions encourage you for the hereafter.”²

الامام على (ع): من دعاك الى الدار الباقية و اعانك على العمل لها، فهو الصديق الشفيق. – غرر الحكم 8775

Imam ‘Ali (a.s) said: “Whoever invites you to the lasting abode and assists you to act for it, he is your sincere friend.”³

3. Socialize with benevolent people

الامام على (ع): قارن اهل الخير تكن منهم و باين اهل الشرّ تبين عنهم. – نهج البلاغة – الكتاب 31

Imam ‘Ali (a.s): “Be close to benevolent people, you will be one of them, and stay aloof from people of evil, you will be away from evil.”⁴

4. Socialize with the one who doesn’t get angry with you easily:

الامام الصادق (ع): اذا اردت ان تعلم صحّة ما عند اخيك فأغضبه، فإن ثبت لك على المودة فهو اخوك و الا
فلا. – تحف العقول 357

Imam al- Sadiq (a.s): “If you want to know how sincere your friend is, make him upset (i.e. observe him when he gets upset), then if he stays with you as a friend, he is your mate otherwise not.”⁵

¹. Al-Kafi, 2/466.

². Wasa’il ush-Shi’a, 12/23.

³. Qarar al-Hikam, 8775

⁴. Nahjul Balaghah, sermon 31

⁵. Tuhaful-Uqool , 357

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