

Youth and The Future

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The World Looks Forward to the Future

Everyone around us seeks his future. He does not want to simply watch with regard to his present and only to be tied to his past. For example, a barren land keeps its patience until rain falls on it and if its valleys are flowing with rain, it will shake, grow and make everything beautiful. Surely, this is its happy, fresh (well-watered) and green future.

And the night, though it, seems to be long, heavy and covered with a black and thick gown, the universe indulges in the hope of a sweet, bright and beautiful day in which the secrets of life and all beings are opened. Therefore, the bright tomorrow means the future.

The autumn, in which trees are undressed of their greenness, pleasant fruits and beautiful flowers, seem, to the beholder, dissonant and great skeletons which indicate death and termination, whereas the gardens, parks, and farms indulge themselves in the hope of a fruitful, bright and spring future in which the smiles of life will return to all this death and termination.

And what has motivated the farmer to spend most of his time under the flaming sun and in the severe coldness, but, the future hope his season filled with harvests in order to bear this suffering pain.

Indeed, the seasons represent a rich and perfumed future full of optimism.

And the mother who waits nine months, with their nights and days, and her heavy pregnancy, which weakens her body, and sufferings, is motivated by her future hope of seeing her a waited, newborn child.

Surely, she dwells in the birth of her new child. Without her belief of a future full of optimism, she could not bear the difficulties of pregnancy nor could she endure the sufferings of childbirth.

This is the world which looks forward to the future filled with optimism. It is expected - though it is unseen, and, one day, it will come carrying with it happiness, mercy and blessings, i.e., it is said: "While there is life, there is hope."

How many a sick man sleeps his night away while he hopes to be cured and how many persons who are concerned with afflictions and distress reach a stage in which they look forward to the next morning with the hope of dispelling their grief and worry. How many times does it happen that a complicated problem in which a concerned man has been subjugated, but, that he never becomes disappointed in finding a suitable solution for it. "...and whoever fears (the wrath of) Allah, He will make for him a way (out of the troubles), ...and provides him with sustenance from whence he reckons not..." Holy Qur'an (65: 2-3)

"...and whoever fears (the wrath of Allah), He will make for him his affair an ease." Holy Qur'an (65: 4)

With confidence, we say: Had thinking not been for the future, nor looking forward to it, surely the wheel of life would have stopped moving, the springs of movement among the creatures would have been dried up, and the whole universe would have been changed into a wide graveyard. Indeed, our life consists of three pages: Past, present and future.

The past is a passed page with its goodness and evil, and nothing remaining from it except its consequences and its sweet and bitter

memories. Regarding the present, it is a page of days in which we live with what surrounds it of easiness, difficulty, sufferings, delight, deeds, responsibilities, success and failure.

And as to the future, it is the page of our coming days which convey expectations and hopes. Mostly, each of us looks at such days with hope, optimism and cheerfulness and, surely, without it, life looks like a narrow and unbearable prison. Without the wideness of hope, life becomes narrow and limited.

Thus, the past, once, was present; the present will become past after a period (of time) and, one day, the future will become present. Indeed, the distance between us, and our future, is not so far. And as much as the past and present are bright, the picture of our future becomes like that, nevertheless, as we see later on, it is not a necessary condition. It may happen, in our life, that certain essential moves, in which we break the obstacles of motion and remove the hindrances of the road, allow us to fly towards the future with the wings of hope!

Caring for the Future

If you look around yourself, you will see that people are one of three kinds:

There is the one who does not care for his future. What is important to him is the moment in which he lives and is not concerned over what time brings of good and evil. Such man looks like a prisoner who is submitted to the accomplished fact, and who does not want to overcome or exceed it. Another one lives only in his present to the extent that he is extremely and wholly engaged in his past, in a way that his unsuccessful experiments of the past prevent him from facing new experiments and challenges. It may happen that he made some achievement and is satisfied with what he has achieved in the past or at present. He never looks for further invention, production, and development thinking that what he achieved is the end of the journey and the highest degree of his striving, and efforts.

The third one feels that what he has of powers and energies are few and, also, thinks that his self, his hidden forces and his great ambition contain stored efforts and energies which wait for the following opportunities to blow them up. Such man continuously strives towards achieving what is best and most useful by considering each day that passes, a new opportunity and a new page on which a new achievement can be written.

Hence, taking care of the future is before the eyes of every man who is asked by the Almighty, Allah, to strive in the present world. Striving, as we all know, is considered a movement which is more energetic than regular walking. As it is a swift movement, it is, also, a purposeful movement aimed at achieving a certain purpose, and he searches for a result to his striving and activity:

"And that there is not for man (aught) save what he strives for, and that his striving shall soon be seen. Then shall he be recompensed to the fullest measure." Holy Qur'an (53:39-41)

"And whoever intends for the hereafter and strives for it a (sincere) striving and he is a believer, these, their striving shall be (recompensed fully) accepted." Holy Qur'an (17: 19)

Indeed, striving in a believing man's life, despite its being two strivings: one for the present world and the other for the hereafter, is considered as one (striving), particularly, for the one who contemplates well. Because any striving in the present world, if it is done for man's welfare, his family, his society and his nation is, indeed, a striving in the way of the hereafter. "And seek, with the means which Allah has given you, the Abode of the Hereafter, nor forget your portion in this world,..." Holy Qur'an (28:77)

People, who have made wide and confident steps in the fields of science, art, economics, and culture, are those who have devoted their great attention (importance) for their future and who have never been satisfied with what their offspring have of bright and material or spiritual reality. For example, look at Japan, and how it advanced and progressed out of the huge ruins and destruction which afflicted it during the Second World War, searching for its brilliant future, in spite of the simplicity of its material capabilities.

The world today, no matter where it goes, looks after its future in research, studies, and specialized associations in this active field. Indeed,

Islam preceded in its emphasis on having a better future, for the whole Muslim nations, than their today and yesterday. In this respect, a du'a (supplication) says: "O My Lord, make my tomorrow (future) and what follows it, better than my present time and my present day."

Another supplication says: "O My Lord! Make life abundant for me in every good."

It is an open call that requests more good, deeds, inventions, and blessings. It includes all introductions which benefit humankind, decrease their sufferings, and make them reach the highest degrees of dignity, prosperity, renaissance, development, and competition with other nations in the fields of science, knowledge, and righteous deeds, and this cannot be achieved except through our efforts altogether.

Indeed, our right religion, Islam, invites Muslims to meet their needs and the necessities of other Muslim nation in the fields of knowledge, and in all life activities.

Islam considers the acquisition of science and knowledge a duty, which is incumbent on every person in the Muslim nation, to strive towards fulfilling and achieving it for the sake of development which fills space and supplies essential needs so that the Muslim nation be not obliged to lose its honor and dignity by depending on others.

If some people among the Muslim nation do their duty and meet those requests, others are not obliged to, otherwise, all people will be responsible for this. Such matters require a continuous striving from the Muslim generations particularly its enthusiastic youth, not only in building the flourishing present, but also, in establishing the principles, the foundations and pillars for a future having more prosperity. In this regard the Almighty, Allah, says:

"Who created death and life that he may try you (to prove) which of you is best in deeds; He is the Ever-Prevalent, the Oft-Forgiving." Holy Qur'an (67: 2)

Surely, active nations do not rely on their old past glories, nor are they content with the achievements of their present days, but, they plan to make their future more glorious and progressive. Nations are known through their children, especially the youth.

Therefore, caring for the future is a common responsibility. On one side, it is the responsibility of an individual, himself, and on the other side, it is the responsibility of the family that holds its individuals. It is, also, the responsibility of a school as a place which brings up new generations. Also, it is the responsibility of a society as a complete entity, like the responsibility of a state, which is the great shepherd and the first chief regarding the affairs of their subjects and guiding them towards great signposts.

The Future - Hope

Indeed, one cannot think of the future without looking at it through the eye of optimism and hope. The connection between the two is close and intimate because man, in his nature, always tries to go out of the narrow surrounding of his life in order to move towards wide horizons even if it is achieved by flying on the carpet of wishes and the wings of imagination.

The inmate who does not possess his freedom; who looks and finds all the doors and windows are closed around him, and who gazes out at his destiny, sees it unknown but, nevertheless, he does not lose the breath of hope.

Another example is that of an inmate who relates that he was living in a difficult situation full of despair, pessimism, and full isolation, to an extent that even his prison friends wished that the judgement passed against them was life imprisonment because, mostly, the common judgement was the death penalty.

Then, the (the prisoner) addressed them with a spirit full of optimism and trust in the Mercy of the Almighty, Allah, and said: "Why do you ask that from Allah? Why do not you ask for relief? Concerning me, even if they put the rope on my neck, I believe in Allah's power to change the situation at any moment!!"

As a result, optimism and the future are as inseparable as two horses and one cab. There is no future without hope which leads towards it and decreases the burden of suffering at its highest point.

Usually, we are concerned about the future; did you not experience that in your academic life, in your work, in your thinking of the projects of building, production, marriage and others? Indeed, a secondary student is worried about his studies in a university which will achieve his expectations and wishes; a university student is worried about his functional and practical future. A young man and a young woman are worried about their partners and their marital house; the parents are worried about their children; a sincere and keen leader is worried about the future of his country and his people and so on. Is this kind of worry horrible?

Will such a worry be an obstacle in our way?

Nay, surely it is a beloved and recommended worry, or let us say, that it is a worry of which there is no fear. It is a positive worry which pushes towards activity, vitality and striving in order to achieve the desired objectives. It is a kind of worry that seeks for what increases the standing of one's essence and the development of the personality. In this connection, a saying says: "The value of every person is of what he achieves." Even the striving of a believing man and his sacrifice is for the sake of others or for the sake of building a better future for his nation, which pours forth, in the end, in the stream of his psychological tranquillity.

Do you not see your parents who dedicate, sacrifice their lives, and spare no efforts for the sake of your future and the future of your brothers and sisters? And the highest happiness for them is that you will all be happy in spite of your being unsuccessful in achieving some of their expectations in the future. Indeed, you are their future in which they see their happiness.

Consequently, it is the worry of a hope, and the seeking for a better future, because the loss of hope means the loss of life. In this regard, a woman affected by bone cancer, says: "I will live every day Allah grants me; as if it is my last day in this life and to the day of my death; I will live my life to the fullest."

Indeed, she does not look at cancer - this malignant illness - as something which destroys her life, rather, she resists by her faith which Allah gave her, by considering each day has a new occurrence. And who knows better than that Allah, Who owns all things, may change many things which we never expect.

"...every day He is in a (new) splendid manifestation." Holy Qur'an (55: 29)

Once, a man came to Allah's Apostle, Muhammad (s.a.w.), and said: "O! Allah's Apostle, I have passed a long dark, night (i.e., very severe, and painful). He (s.a.w.) replied to him: "Praise be to Allah" Thus, the man was surprised saying: "I say a long, dark night, while you say: 'Praise be to Allah.'" He (s.a.w.) said: "Praise be to Allah because it has passed."

Future - A Will

Hope has its main role in moving towards the future and it is one of the most important motives which makes us hurry to move towards a better tomorrow. But, a will, since it is a stirring power and self-motivation, makes expectations possible to be achieved and dreams able to be facts and events.

Surely, the force of will and its ability for stirring man's powers depends on the size of the aim towards which man is striving to reach, and as long as the goal is great, the force of will or its incentive power will be great, too.

The firebrand extinguishes once it reaches a desired aim. For example, if a student strives exhausting efforts for the sake of getting a diploma, surely, the firebrand of rushing will be limited with such a goal, i.e., it extinguishes as soon as it reaches that certificate.

And as long as our goal - as Muslims - is to seek the Almighty Allah's pleasure, surely the firebrand of will, which stirs movement towards this goal, will not be completely extinguished. Whenever we finish a stage, we will see other stages before us. This means that we should strive towards abundance and the spreading of good in whatever represents a gift for humanity. We should not be satisfied or stop at a station, among the stations of a long way, because we would look like a greedy businessman who adds profits to his wealth and raises his funds. When a businessman is lazy, but we do not say he is satisfied, because laziness is against satisfaction. Thus, in such a case, surely he loses a golden opportunity for improving his conditions and 'opportunities pass like clouds.'

Indeed, we, as Muslims, should deal with such profitable, active and secure trade with Allah, the Most High Who says:

"O you who believe! Shall I show you a merchandise which will deliver you from a painful chastisement? (That) you should believe in Allah and His Apostle, and strive in the way of Allah with your possessions and your selves; that is better for you, if you but knew! He will forgive you your sins and admit you into gardens, underneath which flow rivers and excellent abodes in the gardens of eternity; that is the supreme achievement. And another (blessing will He bestow) which you love, (that is) the help of Allah, and a victory at hand; so give you (O Our Apostle Muhammad!) the glad tidings unto the believers." Holy Qur'an (61: 10-13)

Will we be pleased to be only lazy traders? Or will we work to be active and competing traders in doing good deeds in order not live a life full of regret and sorrow when all these traders are going to be distinguished from each other in the Day in which presents and outcomes are distributed?! Thus, determination is an essential factor among the factors of principles towards reaching our aims, whatever great and important are. In this regard, a hadith says: "If an intention of one of you is hanged on to Pleiades, surely he will get it." A pleiades is a star in the highest point of the sky and is a metonymy to the farthest aim which man can imagine.

There is nothing impossible with a conscious and apprehensive will. How many times did such desires break the chains and penetrate the obstacles to make miracles and cause great essential movements in the life of people who really knew the value of what Allah gave them of great

powers by which they benefit their own lives and the life of humanity; of their achievements which are, always, remembered and thanked.

The Future Means Hard Work

Those people who were successful in their lives confirm an important fact, and that is, what they achieved of offerings and projects were only passing in their minds as dreams at the beginning. They never lived such dreams in the way certain lazy people do who indulge themselves in the hope of "I hope" and "perhaps". But, indeed, they transferred these dreams from imaginations, which were running through their minds, into plans written on paper and, then, into practical projects with which they actually live in i.e., they planned towards reaching the islands of their dreams in order to activate them with their continuous striving and efforts into real and live facts.

Indeed, it was through their strong will, patience, and having optimistic trust in Allah's victory and support, and, preparing themselves to face obstacles and challenges by accepting the results, whatever they may be, that they their ways and made their ships reach not only remote islands, but also, those remote and undiscovered continents.

Indeed, Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of the American Continent, challenged his envious to make an egg stand on its end. They tried hard, but they failed. When he pressed its end, it became flat. His competitors, altogether, shouted "We can do that!", he answered them, saying: "But you did not do it...and is not the discovery of America like this!?"

The aim, which seems to be far at the highest top or at the most distant horizon, needs a brave heart. A proverb, in this regard, says: "There is no impossible in front of a brave heart." Once you put your foot as a first step in a way, unless it is very far, will be passed successively. Thus, the distance of one thousand miles may be successively done in a first step if it is followed by endeavor, seriousness, hard work and striving, otherwise, it cannot be crossed automatically as we see it in some imaginary films which have nothing to do with reality.

Surely, great schemes are great dreams of those people who never stop at the threshold of imagination and wishes. Because a single desire is the capital of a bankrupt one who cannot drop a date from a date palm full of dates, nor bring a river near a thirsty mouth, nor uproot a thorn from the road, nor build other than palaces out of sand which may seem to be high in the air. However, they are leveled with the ground with the first flood and are turned to part of a sandy coast as bubbles which are quick both in swelling and exploding.

Undoubtedly, you have read and heard that inventors, authors, geniuses, and informers were not satisfied to criticize what is common of current ideas, opinions, and theses, but they worked hard with what they have been given of wisdom, experience, patience, and will change the present (reality) according to the view they bear for what is better and more safe. And if they were satisfied with negative criticism or expected from others to achieve for them the best picture, surely most ideas, means and deeds remained without change.

For example, if you want to reach Mecca, and desire to visit the sacred land from the depth of your heart, but you remain only wishing for many

years, without paving the way for it, nor preparing to have the necessary means to perform anything which makes you reach there, will you, then, reach?!

In such cases, you will remain moving in your place, while Mecca remains only a dream which cannot be achieved, and the distance between Mecca and you remains far.

Dream is required because it forms an effective motive towards the goal. It looks like an intention which moves the organs to work. Thus, future = hope + will + striving in the present time.

Future Concerns

In infancy, a doctor's child may wish to be a doctor, the son of an engineer may hope to be an engineer and, likewise, the daughter of a teacher may wish to be like her mother. But, childhood ambition may not be necessarily the future plan of that particular person; he may change with the development of his age. Because the more a child reaches the puberty stage, he will start to feel he is an independent personality, which is looking for anything that will make him a beneficial element in the society.

At this stage, a young boy or girl changes from a person, into a personality who is looking for a way that will find a new way and value to their personalities, like being an artist, a scientist, a leader and so on. In this stage, the youths will never hide themselves in the social circle, which might be the family circle or other social circles.

No doubt a young man or woman try their best to be in the best position they choose for themselves. These ambitions and hopes are what they are looking for and work in order to achieve them.

It is a great mistake for us to regard our social position as a predetermined fate, which we cannot change, as if it is a strong building that cannot be destroyed or a firm tree that can never be uprooted. This is because our future is in our hands. There are many who stay in their position, without any movement to take themselves out from such a position or stance. Having a glance at our own environment, we will see how the son of a laborer becomes a doctor, or the son of an ordinary worker becomes a lawyer, or the son of a grocer becomes a renowned engineer, or maybe a son of an illiterate man becoming a well-known writer and so on.

At school time, the youths are anxious about their future, even though they have already set their path by choosing the course of studies or their social status, or it was chosen for them from his examination results, but with all these he will continue to live in such a state. A serious student doesn't regard his university studies at the station of his life. Many a time, university graduates continue their studies and get higher certificates. How many times have graduates from a particular course, continued their studies to the extent that they past those who were before them?

Being the fact that we cannot get all of what is hoped for or achieved, it is possible that some of us will not be opportuned to finish our studies due to either family conditions or financial or political problems. But, from all that we have seen there are some who were able to find their way in life and surpass some of their mates.

Therefore, study is among the important things in the future, and it the basis and root from which the youths will start practicing their professionalism. Indeed, the time has passed in which a student regards the time he receives his university certificate with high credits as the fruits of his effort, thereby, he is inclined to it for the rest of his life.

Today, we are faced with a developed life that will never accept what was accepted at the time of our forefathers, because the university degree of today may be like a certificate of preparation of yesteryears, and a master's degree as a preparatory stage of a doctorate degree. Even those who attained doctorate degree are continuing their studies.

No doubt, if my mate or neighbor or a friend is able to achieve such a higher stage of knowledge, I can - under the same conditions - reach where he reached, because the future doesn't favor anyone above others...the doors are opened for all. Those who enter through wide doors, are those who turn their future concern into a determination and a will; it is said, "Whoever puts much effort, achieves what he wants and whoever plants, harvests." The next thing, which disturbs the minds of the youths, is 'work'. It is possible that a young fellow may finish his university without getting a suitable job or a place where he can practice what he learned. The condition may force him to change what he has learned or work in another field.

It is either that he fights in order to work in the field he likes and had hoped to work in or he will not be able to achieve that which he strived for, therefore, not fulfilling what he wanted to fulfill.

But, if you achieve what you hope to achieve, then, it is necessary for you not to be dull and lazy in your work, rather try to be perfect. Be an inventor in your work, a competitor in increasing your knowledge and experience, and do not regard the stage you are in as the end of the road. But, if a difficult condition separated you and the work you wanted to achieve, then you ought to remember that you might have missed a chance, but there are many chances that you can achieve your personality and your ambition.

Because the favor and capabilities granted to you by the Almighty Allah were not confined to a particular field. Many a time, we have seen young men and women who achieved something in life, even far away from their own field due to some reasons, because they didn't surrender to the condition, that is not on their side.

The third thing is 'money'. Today's needs are many and it may be possible that what a youth achieved cannot satisfy those needs, therefore, we must arrange our needs according to our earnings. Because, the list of our needs can never finish when left unquenched, thus, we must feel that 'money is for our service and we must not be at the service of money'.

But there is no harm in seeking; rather it is among the hopes of a person who opposes vacillating. Because accepting little is much better than getting much as a grant, which is regarded as failure. The Almighty Allah says:

"...traverse then its broad sides, and eat of His provision; and unto to Him (alone) is the return." Holy Qur'an (67:15)

Even though, financial problems disturb the youths much, and force some of them to work in more than one place or migrate to other countries where there is more work, but what we wanted to draw attention to is that developing abilities and professionalism in more than one field and depending on Allah, are among the ways of getting rid of such problems.

Whatever the case may be, money is important but it must not be our prime goal, because it is not only food that makes man live.

There is also the importance of 'marriage' as a future plan. Most of the time a young man or woman thinks about this social and blessed phenomenon, and he even gives much time and importance to it. They want to build an Islamic family living under the shade of Allah's favor to both of them: "And of His signs is that He created for you mates that you may dwell

(inclined) with them, and caused between you love and compassion..." Holy Qur'an (30: 21)

The family life partnership is an important future plan, which requires making a better choice on the part of both parties. The Almighty Allah has predestined for a believing man to marry his suited believing woman, because they have suited each other both mentally and spiritually and in their goals. By choosing a nice partner, we will be sure of raising a pious family that is capable of developing a pious society.

There is a saying of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) which says: "Decide where your sperm will go, because the veins are inter woven." This, then, is clear that marriage is not just for fulfilling ones urges. The believing men have the right of choice, likewise, the believing women, "If someone whom you have no doubt in his religion and morals comes to you, then marry him."

Another subject is seeking position and fame. We, young men and women, must not hurry in seeking it, because it will come if we do good in our work and be patient till the time comes. We must work and the Almighty Allah will pour it forth, but on the condition that it was done for His sake. Working in order to show power, capability and favor is legal, but work for showing and seeking people's consent destroys the good face of our work. If we make our intention pure and for the sake of Allah, the Almighty, and be firm on His path and pay our services to people on the path of "the best of men is he who benefits men", causing them to be happy because of it, then by these we will get Allah's consent.

"(Saying): 'We feed you only for Allah's sake, we ask not of you any recompense, nor (even) thanks (thereof)!' " Holy Qur'an (77:9)

No doubt Allah will make us famous and cause us to have a position in the heart of the people. Therefore, we must work for the betterment of the people seeking Allah's pleasure and consent, and we will get a nice position in the sight of the people. It is reported in some Du'as that: "How many good features, which I didn't possess, but You spread them..." Therefore, do your best and the outcome will appear.

Difficulties on the Way

The path toward the future is not a path full of flowers; there are many obstacles and difficulties on it. Maybe it is the sweetness of the goal that makes someone forget the bitterness of the difficulties, otherwise, whoever seeks a good future in a simple and easy way will never get anything but a small portion of it that can never fulfill his ambition and hopes.

Thus, whoever seeks a shiny future must endure obstacles and difficulties on the way. He must be like the water whose road was blocked by rocks, he must fight in order to find a way to pass.

Some problems can be solved or can be reduced through patience, wisdom and hard work, but it is difficult to pass some this way, because solving or reducing them is in the hand of the young boy or girl. Here, we must seek the assistance of those whose experience is above ours like our parents, neighbors, sincere friends, teachers and so on, on how to solve the problems and difficulties. It is narrated in one of the prophetic sayings, "in experience there is beneficial knowledge."

The obstacle may be a family one, in which one of the parents or both of them stand on the way of their future by refusing to give them (their children) the right to choose a particular course of study or to continue their studies or to work in a particular city that doesn't have the field he or she studied, or they interfere in choosing the partner of their children, and so on.

In such a situation, wisdom in relation, power of conviction and kindness are factors that can help in reducing the difficulties, thereby leaving the issue of the future as the outcome of discussion. If not, then it is the right of the youth that can never be deprived by anyone. It is necessary for the parent to look into the future of their children, and that their success is their (the parents) success also, they must not do something that can destroy the future of their children.

There is also a social obstacle for a society that lives with cultures and morals that cannot give chance to even behaviors, which are not against the habits of the parent. Even though it is an obstacle that requires enough time in order to overcome and change it, an ambitious youth is against a dull and stagnant ruler. It may be possible that the risk- without care - may be a suitable treatment for this kind of conditions. This is because among the ways of changing a backward society is the method of 'shock and hit', if not, then there will be no inventions or great and firm achievements.

There may be more obstacles, but the most important thing is that a youth should not allow it to block his way of concentration and hard work. It is said a proverb: "the worst water is the stagnant water." This stagnant water that cannot flow, in view of this, is smelly and not good for drinking; rather it may harm someone's life.

We ought to remember that the obstacles may be big, but the will of man is greater than it; "a body can never be weak if the intention in it is firm." Failure in studies - for instance - is never a source of blocking the way of the great scholars: Anichtain, Adeson, Sikaki, and others, who affected and benefited humanity with their great inventions in spite of their being unsuccessful in their studies.

One of the famous revolutionaries, who freed his country from the hegemony of America, wrote a book titled "My Dreams do not know Limits". In this book he mentioned his memo while he was a young fellow: "I wanted to cross the Argentinean Sahara - it is a Sahara full of dust, which is 300 kilometers long and 100 kilometers wide- alone on a motorcycle; with me only a half liter of water. I wanted to feel the hotness of the sun in such a place full of sand.

Whoever I talked to, concerning my trip, would say that crossing such a Sahara with only a half liter of water is impossible, but the water will be enough for me on my trip, believe me, oh people"!! He was able to do so...and he who said there is nothing impossible if there is will, was right

Signs on the Way

In order to remove the blocks and obstacles on your future:

1- Break the condition of fear and doubt in you, because most of the anxieties are illusions, and most of the doubts and wavering are not based on a firm foundation, "If you decide to do something, then, do it, because too much fear is greater than that which you are fearing". Anxiety - many a time - is like the moss and algae that grow on trees and hinders their growth. Experience has proved that fear and abstention prevents man from inventing important things. And, likewise, bravery and determination helps in creating great projects and development that cannot be achieved if not because of the bravery of those people and convincing the mind that it should be patient in order to see a positive outcome.

A psychologist said: "Man's will can never achieve perfection unless it becomes morally wise and turns toward good". Thus, will - in all human beings - works as a moving power in a motorcar, if it is a good will, it will take its possessor to a great and high perfection, which a person with a weak and unstable will can never reach.

2- Hope is a torch you hold in order to reach a final destination. A future path may be full of darkness, thus, it is necessary to light it with a shining light...this light of hope that makes our young generation and our surroundings shine. However, we don't need an outside or foreign lamp in such a great and honorable stage. Rather, to an internal light, which lit our way in order to achieve our goal. This is the light of faith and beliefs, which spread the light of hope from its lamp. It is said in one of the proverbs, "In the kingdom of hope, misery doesn't have a place."

3- Youths create their own future. Always remember this, it is in this stage of our life that we can make nice decisions for achieving our ambitions, no matter what difficulties are there. We are in a stage of affirming our being, and in the path of achieving it we must do all that we can in order to achieve our goal and wide ambitions. We should keep it in mind, though, that zeal is not everything, because when you want to reach a particular place, you need the means of transportation suitable for the journey and provisions that will help you reach your destination.

Reaching your future is more closer to this example, if your zeal is as the intention or the fuels which move will, then, it is the will that can light and help you in getting the means of achieving your goal, which will ease your way, however much difficulty there is in it. It is said, "A good will makes two feet as two wings". There is no will that deserves such description than your will, oh you young man or you young girl who are looking forward to a bright future.

4- Look for someone who will help you in building your future and reaching it, and whatever our will is strong and our hope is sold and our confidence in ourselves is high, nevertheless, we should not prevent ourselves from benefiting from the experiences of others, their advices and guidance. It is reported in one Prophetic narration, "Whoever seeks peoples' advice is as if he shares them in their mind". Therefore, we must look for a sincere counselor who will add confidence to our confidence and hope to our hope and caution to the danger that we may forget and a sound

instruction on how to walk toward the right path that can shorten our way to the future.

No doubt, those who enter a forest before us, and know what is in it from trees, paths and animals, can guide us to its map and safe ways, which can give us the opportunity to escape from danger and difficulties.

5- Do not be in haste to reach your destination, because each way has its own distance, and each food has its own period of cooking on the fire; if we add more fire it will burn and if less it delays the cooking. Therefore, "The best issues are the middle ones." For us to reach our destination safely, we must move slowly with caution because "there is safety in moving slowly with caution and there is regret in haste". And it is said, "mistakes increase with haste."

The most important thing is to continue our journey toward the point we choose as a goal and we must not give away or turn round; the outcome will be on our side, God willing. For instance, when you pluck fruits before they are ripe, can you eat them? The case is the same thing with the fruits of the future; you are in need of hard work and determination and a particular duration of time before it is ripe and suitable for eating.

6- Sometimes, we will not be able to get what we want, nor we get our dreams but for only a small portion of them. The gap of hopes and loss is great, but - in all conditions- we must not lose confidence in Allah and in ourselves. We must take a lesson from Prophet Jacob (Ya'akub) (a.s), upon all the signs that became clear to him that his two sons Joseph (Yusuf) (a.s) and Benjamin (Binyamin) would not come back, but he addressed his other sons, saying:

"O my sons! Go and inquire about Joseph and his Brother, and despair not God's mercy; verily no one despairs nor of God's mercy but the disbelieving people." Holy Qur'an (12: 87)

The light around him is off, but the hope inside him is not. It is said, "despair is the suicide of the heart". If the heart is killed with the dagger of despair and hopelessness, the body would fall and the will would be affected with a total paralysis. We should also take a lesson from Prophet Yunus (a.s). He was swallowed by a whale, and lived in a total darkness that affected his sight and was facing death, but with all these, he didn't give up hope that he would escape.

"And (remember) Jonah (Zannun i.e., Yunus) when left he in anger, and imagined he that never would We straiten him; then he cried out from the darkness: 'There is no god but You (O my Lord!), Glory be to You, verily I was of the unjust ones!' "Then responded We unto him and delivered him from the grief, thus do We deliver the believers." Holy Qur'an (21: 87-88)

Failure, mistake and the feeling of despair and hopelessness in reaching a particular goal is a natural phenomenon. Most of the famous and big men in history had faced such conditions. Their life was not always connected to success, but they knew how to utilize their failure and change it - with determination- into a tool that could help them in achieving success in the future. It is said, "Greatness is not in falling down, rather greatness is being able to stand up again after falling down". Also, a proverb says, "Don't

suffice with knowing how to ride a horse, rather you ought to know (what to do) when you fall off it."

Always remember, that failure once or twice or even more than that doesn't mean intellectual failure. Keep in mind that if you are not successful in this stage, maybe you will be in the following. Try to find out where the mistake is and correct it, even if you don't succeed, at least you have known something.

In all circumstances, come to terms with yourself on how to endure failure so as it not becoming a disaster to you.

A poet, in this regard, says: "Man should strive according to his ability, but it is not for him to become successful."

No doubt determination - in this situation - is a beneficial treatment, for instance, say: "I will start from the beginning", and know that time heals all wounds, and falling down is admissible, but standing up is necessary. 7- We should agree with our mistakes and shortcomings. These paths are very important in moving toward the future, because "we cannot move over the planet if there are pebbles in our shoes".

It is a mistake to hold others responsible for our failure and forget ourselves. Some youths are fond of holding their parents responsible for their failure without looking at their responsibility and role in this failure, whose cause may not be necessarily what he is thinking. Maybe there are some reasons behind the failure, which may continue to be present till the end of life.

Let us stand in front of the mirror of ourselves, and with all bravery say: Here we made a mistake, we are not suppose to do this here, this is bad, this is our point of weakness, this is a mistake we must correct it, this is weakness that is not suppose to be with us...and so on. In this way, we prepare our self and give it the possibility of passing difficulties, be triumph in hard times and clinch the cup of future success.

8- We must not be thinking of big plans that are above our capability. It is said, "The greatest obstacle in reaching success is our waiting for big success and happiness", and there is no such success in life. There is no harm in making ambition, but it is not necessary to draw a plan that is above our capacity, "May Allah have mercy on a person who understands the value of his self". We must remember while we are achieving a small success here and a bigger one there, because a "small item brings about a bigger list."

9- Prepare for hard work lest you spend your time and effort lavishly in different endeavors...give all your concern and interest in the work you like in order to be able to succeed, but giving concern to different work spoils or decreases the chances of invention. The more you give all your concern to a particular work, the more you will have success in it. It is said, "If you want to get water dig a well in one place."

Do not forget - the young boy that you are or the young girl - we are in a world of specialty and knowledge and there is no limit or end to it. Always be in complete preparedness to give a great and better service and inventions. But the range of your ambition must be in range of your ability...gaze from a far, cut your circle round by round. You can never

achieve this except by giving all your time, thinking at the time and your total love to the work you are doing.

10- Maybe a young girl in our Muslim countries is facing an unfortunate situation and views that a woman cannot do anything or she fails in doing certain works and endeavors. This view may cause backwardness in the determination in a young girl who is looking forward to a better future. But this social problem must not deprive you from understanding that you (as a woman) are a possessor of a sound mind and intellect, better than some men, as well as will and determination. It is said that Bilqis (as a woman) was the best Qur'anic example for management and planning.

Choose your own way with caution; continue your own way to achieve your goal. Many great women in history have faced rejection, distress, humiliation and disgrace, but they - without any distinction - knew that a great goal and ambition needs physical sacrifice, thus, they achieved many things that many men were not able to achieve.

Move forward towards the path of your future...be cautious and do not stop much on the blocks that are in your way, this may waste your time. Give others a chance to give you their own advice and views.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

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