

In the name of Allah,
The Stony Brook Minaret
the most Beneficent, the most Merciful.

The official newsletter of the Stony Brook Muslim Students' Association

The Minaret
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STATE OF THE MSA

Roman Patwary, MSA BROTHERS' REPRESENTATIVE

Assalamualaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

In the Quran, in Surah Ibrahim and again in Surah An-Nahl, Allah (swt) tells us, "And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them." If we stop for a bit and look around, we see this ayah come alive before us. Allah has given us the intellect and ability to pursue an education in a four year university in America, an opportunity the vast majority of the world can't even dream about. He has given us parents and families that support us, if not financially, then emotionally. He has given us brothers and sisters to turn to in times of need. And he has given us this MSA, through which he has facilitated for us to practice our deen and given us a place to meet fellow brothers and sisters from Islam from all walks of life. Sure, there are improvements to be made across the board, but once we look at the bigger picture, we realize we have very little to complain about. I was asked to write an article about the "State of the MSA," but that can be all summed up in one phrase: Alhamdulillah!

Another blessing that many of us may overlook is the blessing of youth. Generally speaking, all of us here are somewhere between 19-25 years old, ages that many would consider the "prime years" of our life. This is a blessing from Allah that will not last; the race against time is one no one can win. Allah says in Surah Ankabut "Every soul must taste death. Then to Us you will be returned." Before we know it we will grow old, and then we will meet the Angel of Death (for some of us it may even come sooner) and then the day will come when we will be standing in front of our Creator. This youth is just temporary.

What better use of this blessing is there than to use it to prepare for that crucial day? In our youth, we have more free time than any other time in our lives. Our minds are at a stage when they are ready to absorb any information we expose ourselves too. We have the physical ability and health to do many things that we may not be able to when we grow older.

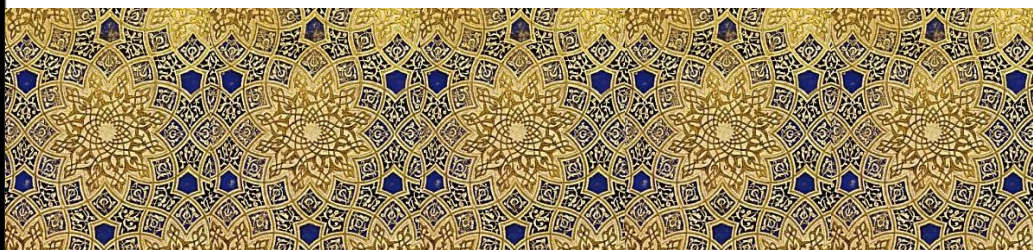
Let's use this free time to learn our deen, and excel in our respective careers, instead of wasting hours upon hours just "hanging out." Let's use this opportunity to learn the book of Allah, memorize it, and build our lives around it. Let's use our physical abilities to take care of our parents, or for those of us that can afford it, to make Hajj or Umrah.

Let's not wait for our old age to learn the deen of Allah. Let's not set ourselves up to regret our current actions when we are older, or worse yet on the Day of Judgement. Our youth will not last forever, and neither will our free time. We will always keep getting busier. If we don't find time now, we will never find it. May Allah swt continue to shower us with his blessings and give us the ability to use them in the way most beneficial to us.

"The Stony Brook Minaret" is dedicated to expressing the views, concerns, and ideas of Muslims living in America and especially in the Stony Brook community. It seeks to promote and achieve community empowerment and the global success of Muslims by instilling the Ummah with the spirit of Worship, the love of Allah (SWT) and the example of Muhammad (SAWS). It also serves to correct the mainstream media's misinformation about Islam and Muslims and to provide non-Muslims with accurate information about Islam.

The views expressed in letters, articles, cartoons, and advertisements do not necessarily reflect those of The Stony Brook Minaret staff, or the Muslim Students Association at Stony Brook University.

Note: We have decided to include Arabic du'as & the name of Allah in this issue of the Minaret, so please treat this newsletter with due respect.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR *Chaplain*

“Hold on to the rope of Allah and do not divide”

Recent events in the Middle East, such as the Egypt uprising, has be a reminder to the world that there is a dire need for freedom, liberty, and justice.

America-- the very foundation of these democratic values is our home in the land of the free, the country we live and love. It has drenched us with many great opportunities, kept us warm with safety and above all, shown us the beauty of God’s creations.

Yesterday, on March 10th 2011, for the first time in the United States a hearing was held on the Islamic radicalization of America. This hearing simply singled out the American Muslim community as one that promotes extremist ideologies, hatred and intolerance.

Many citizens were once again reminded of similar occurrences ranging from discrimination against the Germans after World War I, the Japanese during World War II and more recently the African American community during the 1950's and 60's.

Because the threat of terrorism is real, it takes all communities (non-Muslims and Muslims alike) to work together cohesively and peacefully to suffocate the air of that which breads such a hateful phenomena.

The Muslims American youth of tomorrow (yourselves) will continue to move forward, and as I have witnessed from preceding generations of young Muslim men and women over the last 19 years, go on to becoming productive members of the larger American community. They contributie to institutions in many diverse professions such as engineers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, teachers, scientists and exist in many other professional domains.

So my beloved young Muslim American generation- move forward and strive to reach your highest potential for in your success, you will show the world that radicalization has no place within or amongst the larger American Muslim community.

Muslims need to look at what unites them and find a common ground between their different points of view; they need to begin to take an active part in the arena of social justice and let the world know that we- Muslims- on a daily basis, make continuous efforts that extremism will never find a home in our world. Our sole objection is to live productively, peacefully, and justly amongst all of our neighbors, as this is our Islam.

“Let there arise out of you, a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones to attain success.” [3:104]



Take Advantage of Five Before Five

A message from SBU Dawah Committee, *abridged from Sheikh Yasir Birjas*

In an authentic chain of narration, the Prophet (saws) said to a man while he was advising him:

"Take advantage of five matters before five other matters:

Your youth, before you become old;

and your health, before you fall sick;

and your richness, before you become poor;

and your free time before you become busy;

and your life, before your death."

#1: Take Advantage of Your Youth before Your Old Age:

Youthfulness is a time when a person is the most energetic, when he lays out the foundations for his future, and when he plans his life. So the Prophet (S) said to take advantage of this time before the time comes when you do not have that enthusiasm, when you do not have that zeal, or that outlook. The enthusiasm and energy that you have been blessed with will never again be given to you after this age. Therefore, the Prophet (S) said to seize the moment and take advantage of it. A person should exercise this energy for the sake of Allah by procuring knowledge of Allah, obtaining halal sustenance, and worshipping Allah through acts that he might not be able to do later on in life.

#2: Take Advantage of Your Health, Before You Fall Sick:

The fact that one lives a normal life and is not afflicted with diseases and plagues, represents a person's health. Take advantage of this before diseases and plagues come because everyone will fall sick. It is part of being human. Some of those times the sicknesses will be severe, and for certain people even more severe. So the Prophet (S) is reminding us that we do not know when we will have full possession of our faculties, of our strength, of our mental powers, before we will fall sick. Therefore, take advantage of it before that time comes.

Once a person came to Yunus ibn 'Ubayy, one of the scholars of the Salaf, and he complained of extreme poverty as he had not been blessed with much. Yunus ibn Ubayy asked him, "Would you be willing to give away your sight for a certain amount of money?" The man said, "No, of course not." Then he asked him, "Would you be willing to give your hands away?" He said, "No, of course not." He asked, "Your feet?" He said, "Of course not." When he finished he said "I see that you have hundreds of thousands of millions of blessings, yet you are complaining of poverty?" Do we not realize how sweet health is? When we are blessed with these bodies, why do we not use them in the worship of Allah?

The least we can do, brothers and sisters, is the faraa'id (obligatory actions) such as salah five times a day, fasting in Ramadan, and going for the Hajj. All of these require that we use our physical bodies. That is the least that we can do, the bare minimum. Of course, the more that one does, the better it is for him.

#3: Take Advantage of Your Richness before Poverty:

One day we might not have anything, and the next we might have much more than we need. One day, a person might have the best of job with a six figure salary, yet, the next day, something happens and he does not have that job anymore and loses his source of income. So the wise person uses his richness before he becomes poor. He invests for his future.

We should make sure we have enough money for our family and our children and ourselves, so we are not poor and we are not beggars. But while we are doing this, let us not forget that we also need to invest for the Akhirah or the next life. Shouldn't we be thinking about investing this money so we can pick it and pluck it in the Hereafter when we need it far more than we need it in this world? We need to invest for the real future, our real life after our death.

"Spend (in charity) out of the sustenance that We have bestowed on you before that time when death will come to someone, and he shall say: "O my Lord! If only you would grant me reprieve for a little while, then I would give in charity, and be among the righteous." - Quran, 63:10

Remember that feeding your family is an ibaadah if you are doing it for the sake of Allah. If you are doing it for the sake of Allah, you will be rewarded. The Prophet (S) said that, "A morsel of food in your wife's mouth, this will be a reward for you on the Day of Judgment."

#4: Take Advantage of Your Free Time before you become Busy:

This is yet another great treasure that every single one of us possesses. Every single one of us must use our free time before we be-

come busy. How much free time do we have and what do we waste it on? Think about it. Think about how much free time all of us have been blessed with. We have hours and hours every day and that just go by. Ask yourself, what do we waste it on? TV? Facebook? Texting? Gmail?

Spending time wisely does not necessarily mean purely religious deeds. But spending your time wisely and may even be something in this world. Learn a skill. Learn something that can benefit you in this world and that can benefit other people as well. Islam is a complete way of life, so don't forget that all of the acts a mu'min does can be transformed into acts of worship if, and only if, he does them for the sake of Allah alone.

When you have some free time, take advantage of it. The greatest thing that we can do in this free time is to worship Allah. Every one of us should recite the Quran every day, even if it's only for five or ten minutes. You should have some relationship with the Quran. Every one of us should pray some extra prayers as well, a few sunnahs or the nafls. One of the greatest acts of worship is to seek knowledge. Take a book out to read, or listen to some CD's. Do whatever you can do to increase your 'ilm. Attend some classes or even visit one another for the sake of Allah. Visit your Muslim brother with the proper Islamic etiquette. This is an act you can do that will pass your time away, and be worthwhile.

...continued on pg. 10

All in One Packet: Purity-Shield-Dhikr

By Sister Sam

Sitting around at 3am in the dark while the wind is howling and banging at doors, windows, and walls, it gets a little scary – yeah it's a pretty flimsy building too. Natural disasters like tornados, tsunamis, floods, earthquakes, and snow storms can blow apart any solid structure without Allah's Mercy. On this earth we have no control over anything, let alone thinking we control even the flow of our daily activities. Sometimes, in my reflective state – or what punks call emo – things become even scarier when I imagine demons and leering evil spirits all around grabbing at me. You don't? – a little odd, but effective enough for my tongue and mind to start dhikr and make duas. In the dark with everything else disappearing from view and evil lurking around, reality hits the conscience hard like a fly on a windshield. It may be our *fitra*, our natural instinct, which kicks in to remind us of our contract with the Majestic Creator.

Absence of light isn't really the biggest concern; it's the lack of *Nur*- Divine illumination – *that's* the scariest. Without Allah's Guidance we are lost on whatever path we attempt to strive in. Away from home we can fall in with the wrong crowd, develop nasty habits, have withdrawals for curry, or even abandon doing our duties as Muslims. It may seem difficult to always do prayers on time, to read Qur'an every day, or even to stay away from the haram. I know, because it's like a war with myself. So sometimes, when my roommate's not around, I silently shout to myself: *jihad it is, fool!* However,

there's an extremely simple and easy way to protect oneself in this war with our nafs, the soul. It is maintaining purity as well as shielding the hearts from *waswasa*, whispers of *as-shayateen*, through **wudu**.

The *Awliya*, the pious or friends of Allah *Azzawajal*, considered wudu to be an act of worship in itself. It wasn't just a means to do salah. Of course it's hard: taking off socks, shoes, hijabs, and rolling up sleeves to do wudu while on campus – *say whaa?* Even bearing with the minute it takes to dry ourselves in the cold makes one cringe thinking about it. Oh, and let us not forget the constant need to break wudu: ate two-day-old nachos con burritos or either drank too much. However, our beloved Rasul (may peace and blessings be upon him), lists doing wudu *despite unpleasant circumstances* to be one of the three great acts of worship.

Al-Suhrawardi, a sufi scholar, wrote that the first etiquette [in the sufi etiquettes] regarding ablution is presence of heart. Adding to that he heard one of the righteous saying, if the heart is present in the ablution it will be present in the prayer, and if heedlessness enters into it then misgivings (*waswasa*) enter into the prayer. He mentions also that the ablution is the *silah* - **weapon or armor** - of the believer and that as long as the believer is in the protective sphere of the ablution the devil is hard pressed to get to him. He relates from Anas ibn Malik that if one dies on ablution one is granted martyrdom.* One can never know when the angel of death will come to collect and we never know

whether we'll always do the right things. However, we can always try to shield ourselves from impurities and *waswasa* that constantly attack our Iman. In maintaining purity we're working threefold: cleansing, protecting, and remembering all for the sake of our Beloved Azzawajal.

Ever heard of carbon nanotubes? They are microscopically thin and stretch miles only to snap off at a small distance. On the other hand, if enough of them are spun together like rope, they're said to be the strongest material in the world. Well, wudu is like that! Although we constantly commit sins and become impure while shaytan is nagging in our hearts, through wudu we become closer to perfection. Since it keeps away shaytan's whispers, it's easier for us to do our 'ibada, or worship. It can protect us from looking at the opposite gender inappropriately, speaking without thought, or even wasting time, and more. Insha'Allah, with a pure intention and wudu, we can almost be untouchable by evil. If we call ourselves Muslims, then we are in essence the soldiers of Allah, the Sovereign King. Shouldn't we also take measures to protect ourselves against our enemies?

~ * via *SunniPath*: Sheikh Sohail Hanif : Q/A. Please don't quote me, I do not market any particular online academies or school of thought. On the next issue: the importance of referencing chains of transmission: does it really matter who we're quoting or what the words are exactly?

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An Abandonment of Self

By Krystal DeJesus

“Do I really want a life that is fixed on every next achievement or destination?”

We all too often lose touch with our own self and as a result we not only hurt ourselves and others, but we become distant from God.

I find this with most people who rush through life or have a severe case of impatience. When we rush we are only focused on the goal or task that we are trying to accomplish and we often forget about the world around us. We may or may not achieve that goal or task but it doesn't matter to us in the heat of the moment. We physically and mentally get caught up in the rush.

How many of us are running late for an appointment and will feel the need to speed in our cars, weaving in and out of traffic and just making it under the light before it turns red only to get caught at the next one, subhan'Allah, and then the person you just cut off two lights ago pulls up next to you at the very same light? We often feel like fools when this happens but I always thank God because it puts me back in check and makes me realize it's not worth the rush.

I often remind myself, “Do I really want a life that is fixed on every

next achievement or destination?”

There is only one destination we should be focused on in life and that's Paradise. To rush makes you vulnerable to the Shaytaan and this can only lead to sin. When we rush we lose touch with who we really are - we don't stop to say hello to those we pass in our journey, we put our bodies under stress, and, most importantly, we don't reflect on what we are doing and this is the scariest consequence of all, because when we abandon self, anything is possible.

When we rush, we lose our humanity. I suggest that one day you take the time to sit down in a place where people are rushing all the time. You will notice they don't smile or greet each other, they are rude and often short-tempered, and don't seem to care much for the others around them. Is this how we really want to spend our lives? Is this how you want someone to remember you?

Sometimes we do have to rush, but often we choose to rush because we want to abandon our own selves. When we are moving fast and filling our time with menial tasks all day, we don't have to

think about life or the afterlife; we don't have to think about our actions because our minds are consumed with other things. But when life is at a normal pace and we are not moving from one hot spot to the next we have time to reflect and think. We have time to give each other our time.

We must all slow down in life and stop abandoning ourselves. We cannot escape our “self” but we can abandon it for a while, and this only leads to even more inner struggle. So the next time you find yourself “oh so busy” and not having enough time, force yourself to stop for a minute and evaluate your priorities. Don't make yourself your own enemy because you will never win that battle, and remember that Allah subhana wa ta'ala should always be our first priority.

May we all try to slow down and become better to each other and not let the rush of this world get the better of us. May we be the ones to slow the world down.

This article was originally published on www.breakthebox.tumblr.com.



Poetry

By Farooq Zafar



Unorthodox

you know your orthodoxy is unorthodox
 when it festers and boils over like a pox
 infecting and rusting the keys to the locks
 of your heart that's a cold, empty ice box
 so heed these words before wiping over your socks
 for every tick and tock of the prayer room clocks
 you built up your castles with mirages of blocks
 that blocked out brethren so what good are those rocks
 that you cast on sinners when you've lost your stocks
 in the *adab* of *adab*, your way even shocks
 that impolite Reaper who seldom ever knocks

Merci O Mercy

I will not be swayed by those who prayed
 but left off their greetings
 their words decayed, their deeds delayed
 bereft of your meeting
 delight of my eyes, the peace of my heart
 in you have I believed
 the sight in my eyes, to cease or to start
 no fear upon me nor shall I grieve

 the greatest master, the greatest slave
 saved us from disaster, always you gave

Merciful Knowledge

By Steven Tallia

The college environment is one of great potential, where the mixing of individual backgrounds breeds a diversity of knowledge. As Muslims, we should be eager to share in this exchange in order to benefit by sharing what we know and asking of what we do not. We must be careful in this pursuit, because the road to knowledge is one that calls to our egos and potentially blinds us from our effects upon others.

It is our duty to share what we know with our brothers and sisters. A common epithet of the Qur'an is to command or enjoin what is good or just, and forbid what is evil or unjust (examples include 3:104, 3:110, 7:157, and 9:71). This command is often included as part of a list along with the pillars of Islam, giving it obvious significance. Amongst the hadith regarding the spread of knowledge is the following:

The Prophet (saw) said, "Do you know who is most generous? God is the Most Generous, then I am most generous to mankind, and the most generous people after me will be those who will acquire knowledge and then disseminate it. (They will come on the Day of Resurrection singly, like a ruler." [Jami' Al-Tirmidhi]

The benefits of sharing what we know should be clear. However, we must hold ourselves accountable for what we share and how we share it.

Far too often, we view the Shariah as a monolithic entity. It is a common misunderstanding that contrary opinions imply that one is "right" and one is "wrong." While one ruling may be correct and another may be mistaken, both opinions are still valid if they are formed from an interpretation of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. This is supported by the Prophet's (saw) saying that the scholar will get two rewards if he is correct and one reward if he makes a mistake [Sunan Abu Dawood]. If one were to lead another into some evil, would he really be rewarded for it? Realize that the different schools of thought,

though they may disagree, are still accepting of each other. Nothing exemplifies this better than Imam Abu Hanifa (ra), whose opinion of his contemporary Imam Malik (ra) was so high, that he suggested people follow Imam Malik rather than himself.

Many also view the Shariah as a body that *must* be followed to perfection. This uncompromising view of Islam is irresponsible. Given the choice of "all or nothing," many people become overwhelmed. While it is our responsibility as Muslims to embody our laws as best we can, we must be patient and have understanding for our brothers and sisters. Each person has a different set of circumstances

"Share your knowledge, but do not let go of your mercy."

unique to his or her existence. As human beings, we are unable to account for these nuances, and as such, it is neither our place nor our duty to judge. Share your knowledge, but do not let go of your mercy.

There are some things that are essential to practicing as a Muslim. It is important to approach situations like these with care. Upon seeing a man who was performing wudu' incorrectly, Imam Ali (ra) chose a wise way to fix the situation. Rather than tell the man he was wrong, he had the man watch him make wudu' and asked the man to correct anything he did incorrectly. Upon watching, the man realized that he had been making a mistake. This way, the man was able to hide his error.

Unfortunately, it is hard for us to live up to this example. The intelligence and wisdom involved in Imam Ali's thinking is at a level above us all. However, we can still vastly improve our interactions with each other by keeping our manners in check. Firstly, we should be sure not to scold. Although you may think reprimanding someone for a mistake is necessary to

bring them to the Sunnah, it often pushes people away. If you do need to make a verbal correction, you should try to do it in private. Being lectured in front of others is an embarrassment, and the least of courtesy is to not embarrass your brothers and sisters. Be especially gentle with your words.

Perhaps most importantly is the recognition that not all things are essential to being a Muslim. Many great jurists withheld rulings from their followers, as a mercy to reduce the burden of practicing. Though it is important to share knowledge, we should avoid being pedantic. Constantly wanting to correct people is a sign of arrogance, a quality we all need to escape. We are here to remind, but we are not here to nitpick. It is not of the Sunnah. A hadith from Anas (ra) should suffice as proof:

Anas Ibn Malik said, "I served the Prophet (saw) for ten years. He never rebuked me during that period. He did not even say as much as 'uf'. After I finished an assignment, he never asked me about the way I accomplished it and never suggested a better way than the way I did it. Sometimes I did not execute an assignment and he would not ask me to give reasons for the failure." [Various versions in Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, and Tirmidhi] The Prophet (saw) went ten years without correcting his brother. How then are we tricked into thinking it best to scold one another every ten minutes?

All of us are students of knowledge. None of us are experts, though we may think it. It is our duty to help each other, and our responsibility to be smart about it. Be merciful when deciding it is your place to correct someone. If you think that you must step in, be gentle. Choose your words wisely. Remember that knowledge and wisdom go hand in hand. One without the other is like speech without sound, an empty exhaled breath. If that is your case, keep your words to yourself – nobody wants you breathing on them.



The Story of Yusuf

Part Two

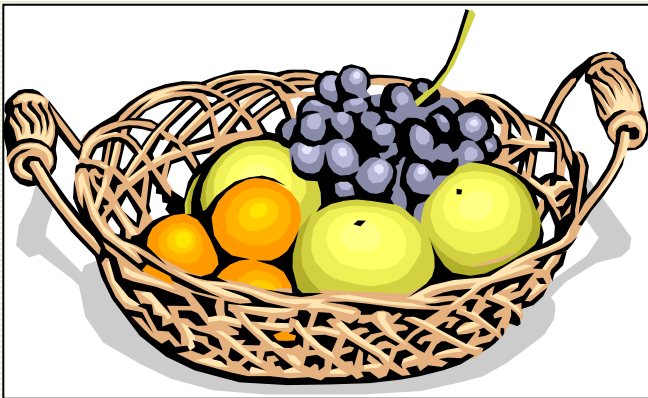
Missed Part One? Read it online at <http://www.stonybrookmsa.org/minaret/>

The Wife's Revenge!

When the details of what happened reached other people, the women of the city began to gossip, "The wife of the great minister was trying to seduce her own slave. He must have inspired her with passionate love. She's clearly going out of her mind!" (30)

Soon the wife heard of their malicious talk. She decided to invite the gossiping women to visit her and prepared a banquet for them. She had a fruit knife placed at each of their seats, and while they were cutting their food she called out to Yusuf, "Come here before us."

When the ladies saw him, they were amazed by his handsome features. In their amazement, they cut right through their fruit and sliced their hands. They exclaimed, "Allah save us! He is no mortal! This is none other than a noble angel!"

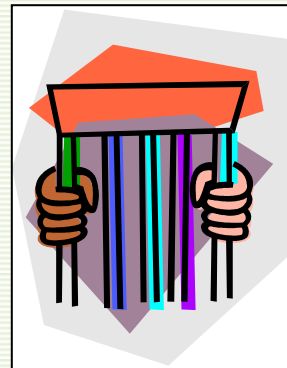


The Wife announced triumphantly, "There before you, is the man you teased me about! I tried to seduce him from his nature, but he got away from me and is still innocent! But now if he doesn't do what I say he will be thrown into prison with the worst criminals!" (31-32)

"My Lord!" He cried out. "Prison is better than what they are calling me towards. Unless you turn their trap away from me, I might become attracted to them and act like an ignorant fool."

So his Lord heard (his prayer) and turned their trap away from him. Certainly, He hears and knows (all things). Then it occurred to the husbands of the women, after they heard what their wives wanted Yusuf for, that it would be best to put him in prison for a while. (33-35)

The Prisoners' Dreams



Along with Yusuf in prison were two other men. The first one said, "I see myself (in a dream) pressing wine."

The second one said, "I see myself (in a dream) carrying bread on my head with a swarm of birds eating from it."

So they asked Yusuf, "Tell us the meaning of these (strange dreams) because we can tell that you are a good person." (36)

Yusuf answered, "Before your next meal comes, I will reveal to you the meaning of (your dreams) prior to the events actually happening."

*Adapted from "What Islam is All About" by Yahiya Emerick and Sahih International Translation of the Quran

This is part of what my Lord has taught me. I've given up the ways of (these Hyksos) people who disbelieve in Allah and who even deny the next life. I follow the ways of my fathers: Ibrahim, Ishaq, and Yaqub. We never made any partners with Allah. This comes from the grace of Allah upon us and to other people, though most people are not thankful." (37-38)

Then he said, "My two fellow companions of prison! I ask you, are many gods arguing among themselves better or Allah the One, Supreme? If you don't serve Him, then you serve nothing but names which you and your fathers made up. Allah gave no permission for anyone to do that. The right to command is for none but Allah. And He has commanded that you serve nothing but Him. That is the straight way of life but most people don't understand." (39-40)



"My two fellow companions of the prison!" He continued, "As for the first one of you, he will again pour out the wine for his master to drink. As for the other, he will be hung from a stake and the birds will eat off his head. The matter you two asked me about has been decided."

Yusuf quietly whispered to the one he knew was going to be released, "Mention me to your master." But Shaytan made the man forget about it. So Yusuf lingered in prison a few more years. (41-42)

The King of Egypt

One day the king of Egypt called to his ministers, "I saw (in a dream) seven fat cows being eaten by seven skinny ones, and seven green ears of corn and seven others withered. Ministers! Tell me what my vision means if you can understand dreams."*

They replied, "It's a confused bunch of symbols. We are not skilled in figuring out the meaning of dreams."

But the king's wine-pourer, who had been released (from prison) and who now remembered (Yusuf) after so long said, "I will tell you what it means. Send me (to the one who can solve this riddle.)" (43-45)

When the man arrived at the prison, he went to Yusuf's cell and said, "Yusuf! Man of truth! Tell us the meaning of seven fat cows being eaten by seven skinny ones and seven green ears of corn followed by seven withered ones. Tell me, so I can return to the people and they will understand."

Yusuf answered, "For seven years you will diligently grow crops like you always do, but when you harvest them, leave all the grains in the stalk except the little that you must eat. Then, after this will come seven dreadful years (of bad harvests) in which you will live off what you stored in advance, saving only small, guarded supplies. Then, after that period, a year will come in which the people will have abundant water and they will press (juice and oil.)" (46-49)

Is Yusuf ever released from Prison?

FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IN THE STORY OF YUSUF NEXT ISSUE!

One Miracle Of the Quran!

*The ruler of Egypt during this story is always called a king (Malik) and not Pharaoh. But in the story of Prophet Musa, the ruler of Egypt is called a Pharaoh (Firoun) and not a king. This is because during Yusuf's stay in Egypt, the northern half of the country was being ruled by foreign invaders from the Middle East called Hyksos, who were there between 1652 BC to 1544 BC. They were able to overpower Egyptian armies due to their superior weapons and tactics. Their chieftains were kings who at first rejected the worship of most of the Egyptian idols and required tribute from real Egyptian Pharaohs, who were confined to the remote south of the country. When the native Egyptians, led by Prince Kamose of Thebes, finally threw the Hyksos out, they started their native, Pharaoh-based system again and at the same time made the Jews slaves. Thus, when Prophet Musa was there, many hundreds of years later, the ruler will be called a Pharaoh. Indeed Allah's book is accurate even to the smallest details!

Diary of a Mad Man Senior

By Farooq Zafar

Tuesday, March 1st, 2011

Dear Diary,

Not gonna lie, it's been a while since I felt creative while writing. From my own musings and the feedback of readers, I get the feeling that my first diary-entry-hyper-hyphenated-rant last fall—where did the time go?!—was something of a *magnus opus*, my very own Mona Lisa, the literary equivalent of Justin Bieber's debut album, in sales and not quality, strictly speaking. I don't know what it is exactly, if it's the waning days of winter and the promise of the coming spring, groundhogs be damned, but I feel content and creative. There's also been a lot on my mind lately. Applying for graduation does that to a person, or so I'm told (by the way, I'm told this by Omar Shareef, so take that advice with a grain of salt and immediate and utter dismissal).

Here's what happens: you take the bus from West alongside a thousand chatty Korean exchange students to the SAC, hop off (no pun intended) and saunter down the Academic Mall, which always seemed like a funny name since there's no stores but plenty of 'exotic herb dealers' and street pharmacists, pass the fountain and continue on to the Administration building. There, you wait on a line

of anxious seniors and when your turn is called, realize you never switched your major from freshman year. So you get that taken care of. Then you go to Academic Advising in the library and go over your DECs. As a rush of relief overcomes you when you hear that you have met all your requirements, you walk out with head held high, beaming smile, sun shining, birds chirping, and then it hits you. You're graduating college in just eight weeks.

You start seeing everything on campus with those tinted, Clark Kent glasses of nostalgia. You remember the first time you took the bus. You remember the first slice of triangle brick they call Kelly Quad pizza. You remember your first all-nighter, your first midterm, your first GPA. You remember the first time you forgot your clicker for lecture or goggles for lab in your dorm. You remember the first time you went to the balcony, the first time you went to the prayer room. You remember your first Friday prayer, your first khutbah, your first general body/board meeting. You remember the names and faces that have passed through your undergraduate life and exhale.

So what advice can I offer you? Please cherish it. Not just college, not only Stony Brook. Cherish your life! My grandfather once told me "love every minute of

life." The time we have been given by our Creator is all we have, so be someone who can say "I really lived my life." Don't stand idly and watch college pass you by as a spectator. Don't go through the motions. That brings me to my next point: be bold, daring and novel. Do something different. Change yourself for the better by taking the path less traveled. Did you know our university offers more than 65 different majors, not including tracks and concentrations, and 75 minors? I bet you didn't, because the sad reality is that we only see a handful in our community, and they're usually all science-based, and I'm guilty of this myself (word to the wise: neuroscience is for masochists). The modern American Muslim community doesn't need any more engineers or doctors, it needs artists, activists and adaptive aquatics majors, truth be told. So don't follow the mold or others' footsteps, pave your own across campus and across life. Don't cave in to culture or constructs. College taught me that success lies in the pursuit as well as the passion. So let your passions guide you. Diesel Brand advertising taught me that 'smart has the plans, stupid has the stories.' At this point, I'd rather have stories to share.

See you at cap and gown fitting,
Farooq "Baccalaureate" Zafar

Five Before Five: continued from pg 4...

#5: Take Advantage of Your *Life* before your *Death*:

This one phrase summarizes it all: "take advantage of your life before your death." Every one of us has a life. That is why we are here right now. Every one of us without a doubt will die. Allah says:

"Every Soul Shall Taste Death." - Quran, 29:57

How are we going to use this life before death comes? As for the non-Muslim, they will totally waste it because he will make this life his goal. He will live only to appease and satisfy every desire of his. Then on the Day of Judgment, he will beg Allah to send him back to this life.

To put it briefly:

This hadith deals with responsibility, wisdom, foresight, long-term planning, and good strategy. Every one of us has been blessed with these five blessings. There is no one amongst us who has not been blessed with these five things. So how do we utilize them? What do we utilize them for? Why do we utilize them? The wise person is the one who strives to achieve the pleasure of Allah and then expects the best from Allah. The wise one is one who tries to arrive at the goal and then has trust in Allah.

We ask that Allah subhaanahu wa ta 'aala makes us amongst those who can who can seize these five things, who can take advantage of them before the five will come.

Editor's Note

By Khushbakht Chaudhary

Our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) once said, "Those who are patient in adversity and forgive wrongs are the doers of excellence."

Adversity and misfortune constantly hitting you from left field? That left field really isn't "left" anymore, is it? It's an everyday event that becomes a part of your daily routine and totally messes with your flow and style. That's a bit drab and pessimistic, dear. "Wow, will it ever go away?" You're wasting your time dwelling in a deep ditch that you've only created yourself. Sure, the words and actions of others can initiate the beginnings of a depressive episode or feelings of anxiety and negativity towards a particular situation, but when push comes to shove, you dictate the way in which it's received and handled. Manipulation doesn't always have a positive connotation. Here, it can.

We're always wronged one time or another – or maybe we just feel that we've been wronged. Maybe I've just become more attentive to the issues surrounding many individuals that I find myself interacting with, but at the end of every, "... and that's what happened," I don't always emote the sympathetic expectation that most have. "There, there. All will be well!" The fact of the matter is, it *will* be well and things will fall back into their natural course of action. I'm not saying that we should belittle our anxieties and problems, but rather embrace them headstrong and improve our own characters and ways in which we help those around us by understanding the nature of our issues.

Our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) once said, "Those who are patient in adversity and forgive wrongs are the doers of excellence." SubhanAllah, always make an attempt to remove yourself from your inner cynic and give others the benefit of the doubt. You don't always know what's going on at the other end of the spectrum. Don't level off your own problems with those of others, but do make a mental note of rationalizing that you really don't know what the other person may be going through and so put on a smile and reach out even if they've pushed you off to a remote corner.

I see time and time again the disconnect that becomes a greater gap by the second amongst our fellow brothers and sisters, and sure, it's inevitable. We tell ourselves that we aren't growing apart but rather just growing up – evolving into adults. Make a habit of thinking situations through and the dispositions of others a part of your transition into complete adulthood. The separation created amongst one another because of small misunderstandings and life situations which make us turn a complete 180 from time to time can lead to unwanted alterations in your relationships with others, which can then lead to unwanted changes in your relationship with your Deen.

Islam also dictates the need for mutual understanding and forgiveness amongst one another. Do not hesitate to bend down on your knees and cater to the issues and needs of someone who has wronged you, but rather trust in Allah and their own judgment and character to better themselves and any severed ties between you two. We hear it all the time – everything happens for a reason. You don't have to aid others with the intention of making things okay between you and them. But helping them with the intention that you are pleasing Allah and placing a kind hand on a troubled heart that your brother or sister may have could lead to rewards and an ease unto your own heart. You are doing your part as a Muslim in our community and with that, perhaps Allah will plant a seed of realization and love that will nurture and grow a thought of, "I want things to be good between us," in the heart of the brother or sister you helped.

Ameen.

Upcoming Sisters' Hikes!!!

Assalamu alykum,

So as some of you may know throughout each semester I lead a few sisters' only hikes through the parks and wooded areas near campus. It's a great time to develop a close bond with our sisters and explore the great beauty Allah subhana wa ta'ala has bestowed upon this Earth. So please find the time to come and join us.

"The creation of the heavens and earth is greater than the creation of mankind, but most of the people do not know." (40:57)

For more info email, dejesus.krystal@gmail.com

Wa alykum as salaam,

Krystal

Upcoming Dates:

Friday, March 18 – Avalon Park & Preserve

Friday, April 1 – Nissequogue Nature Preserve

Friday, April 15 – Avalon Park & Preserve

*** Insha'Allah for each event we will meet in the Court View Lounge in the Union at 3pm.**

Prayer Times

Day	March	Hijri	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Asr (H)	Maghrib	Isha
Tue	1	26	5:11	6:27	12:05	3:14	4:00	5:44	6:59
Wed	2	27	5:10	6:25	12:05	3:15	4:01	5:45	7:01
Thu	3	28	5:08	6:23	12:05	3:15	4:02	5:46	7:02
Fri	4	29	5:07	6:22	12:05	3:16	4:03	5:47	7:03
Sat	5	30	5:05	6:20	12:05	3:17	4:04	5:48	7:04
Sun	6	1	5:04	6:19	12:04	3:17	4:05	5:49	7:05
Mon	7	2	5:04	6:19	12:04	3:17	4:05	5:49	7:05
Tue	8	3	5:02	6:17	12:04	3:18	4:06	5:51	7:06
Wed	9	4	4:59	6:14	12:04	3:19	4:08	5:53	7:08
Thu	10	5	4:57	6:12	12:03	3:20	4:09	5:54	7:10
Fri	11	6	4:55	6:11	12:03	3:21	4:10	5:55	7:11
Sat	12	7	4:54	6:09	12:03	3:21	4:11	5:56	7:12
Sun	13	8	5:52	7:07	1:03	4:22	5:12	6:57	8:13
Mon	14	9	5:50	7:06	1:02	4:23	5:12	6:58	8:14
Tue	15	10	5:49	7:04	1:02	4:23	5:13	6:59	8:15
Wed	16	11	5:47	7:03	1:02	4:24	5:14	7:01	8:16
Thu	17	12	5:45	7:01	1:01	4:24	5:15	7:02	8:17
Fri	18	13	5:44	6:59	1:01	4:25	5:16	7:03	8:19
Sat	19	14	5:42	6:58	1:01	4:25	5:17	7:04	8:20
Sun	20	15	5:40	6:56	1:01	4:26	5:17	7:05	8:21
Mon	21	16	5:38	6:54	1:00	4:27	5:18	7:06	8:22
Tue	22	17	5:37	6:53	1:00	4:27	5:19	7:07	8:23
Wed	23	18	5:35	6:51	1:00	4:28	5:20	7:08	8:24
Thu	24	19	5:33	6:49	12:59	4:28	5:21	7:09	8:26
Fri	25	20	5:31	6:48	12:59	4:29	5:21	7:10	8:27
Sat	26	21	5:29	6:46	12:59	4:29	5:22	7:11	8:28
Sun	27	22	5:28	6:44	12:58	4:29	5:23	7:12	8:29
Mon	28	23	5:26	6:43	12:58	4:30	5:24	7:13	8:30
Tue	29	24	5:24	6:41	12:58	4:30	5:24	7:14	8:32
Wed	30	25	5:22	6:39	12:58	4:31	5:25	7:15	8:33
Thu	31	26	5:20	6:38	12:57	4:31	5:26	7:17	8:34

First 'Asr Time: *In the standard method (which is used by Imams Shaafii, Hanbali, and Maliki) the Asr prayer time starts when the shadow of an object is equivalent to its height .*

Second 'Asr Time: *This is used by Imam Abu Hanifa, where the Asr prayer time starts when the shadow of an object is twice its height.*

Interested in Writing for the Minaret?

Email Submissions to minaret@gmail.com

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- Khush =]