

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً

**O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women.**

**Ahl** – immediate family, wife, husband, children

**Usrah** – close family, parents, siblings, close relatives and kin

**Dhurriyah** – extended family, past and future generations

The family is the most essential nucleus in human life. From the very beginning Adam and Hawa lived together in Jannah, and they were together when they descended to earth. Likewise, the Islamic call in Makkah did not commence until after the family was established.

The family plays an essential role ensuring, peace, stability, and holistic success of civilization. The family structure is based on tranquillity, love, and mercy.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً

Marriage is one of the most important acts of worship in Islam. Marriage completes half of the religion. Through marriage a person is protected from shameless, immoral sins and is more able to control their desires.

**Islam & Dating?** We live in a society where dating is the norm, however that doesn't mean it is justified or permissible in Islam. It was the norm to bury daughters in Jahiliyya, but that doesn't mean you do it?! We follow the Rules of Allah & path of His Rasool. Arranged marriages may not be feasible, but that doesn't mean dating is the only option.

**Exclusive Dating** - This option is prohibited for a number of reasons. The Prophet said: **“Whenever a man is alone with a woman the Devil makes a third.”** 68% of young girls raped knew their rapist either as a boyfriend, friend or casual acquaintance 60% of rapes of young women occur in their own home or a friend or relative's home – not in a dark alley.

As dating has become more widespread in a society, so has unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

Allah did not just tell us: **“Do not commit Zina.”** He says **“Do not come close to zina for it is a shameful and an evil, opening the road”**

You don't leave your child near a fire or alone on the road.

Some argue that it is needed in order to find a spouse. The irony in this is that dating does not increase marital success.

**50%** of first marriages, **67%** of second and **74%** of third marriages end in divorce. According to a study by the National Bureau of Economic Research, couples who lived together before marrying have nearly an **80%** higher divorce rate than those who did not.

So if dating is putting you at a higher risk of **sexual abuse, sexually transmitted disease, and unwanted pregnancy**, and it makes you no more likely to find a successful marriage partner – but in fact *less* likely – what logical person would chose this option, even if it were not prohibited by Islam?

**Arranged Marriage** – Parents, relatives & friends can introduce and arrange a marriage, but do not go blindly. **“Go and look at her for it is more likely to engender love between the two of you.” (Ahmad)**

**Islamic Courting & Du’a** - If there is a person you like, you should approach their *Mahram*, to get to know them better, without having to be in seclusion or engaging in physical contact. Do Du’a, ask Allah for guidance, involve your parents/elders who can gather more information. Protect yourself & society by remaining within the boundaries of Shariah.