

Breaking the News to Family (part 1 of 2)

Description: A two-part lesson containing practical advice for new comers to Islam facing the challenge of breaking the news of their new faith to friends and family. Part 1: This lesson aims to dispel anxiety and develop confidence in dealing with loved ones.

By NewMuslims.com

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Category: Lessons > [Social Interaction](#) > [The Muslim community](#)

Objectives

- To remove anxiety caused by the fear of announcing one's conversion and to develop confidence when dealing with loved ones.
- To enable one to identify a suitable strategy for breaking the news of one's conversion to friends and family.
- To equip the new convert with various invocations to seek help from Allah in making the task easier.

One of the tasks which is often most challenging for newcomers to Islam is breaking the news of their new faith to friends and family. Although one many be overjoyed in embarking on their new quest, starting a new, enriched spiritual life, they may find this task extremely difficult, fearing negative results and rejections from loved ones. One must be sure that they undertake this task with utmost care, as not doing so may damage cherished relationships, and one may not gain anything but hurt feelings.

This lesson contains some practical advice and some reminders that will perhaps allay your anxiety and help you deal with your loved ones with confidence.

First, congratulations for accepting Islam. It is the right decision and you should rest assured of that. Also, the fact that you have been guided to Islam is a proof that God loves you and will provide you the help you long for, for the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

oeFor whoever Allah desires good, He gives them understanding of the religion."(al-Bukhari)

Second, read the following set of advice and apply from them what is relevant to your personal situation.

Assess the Situation

Sometimes a new Muslim may feel that they want to let everyone know that they have accepted Islam, starting from their family. Some may feel that they are able to cope with

any type of response, while others feel that their family will not mind, and may be even encourage the decision they took. The reality may be much different. Although some family members may not be religious, the fact that their loved one has chosen a path other than theirs, or simply because they fear for them due to all the bad impressions they have about Islam, they may react other than expected. This may be detrimental to a person's progress after accepting Islam, and thus, one should think coolly and slowly and assess the situation well. After accepting Islam, one should concentrate on learning the basics of belief and worship and publicizing one's conversion too soon, may make this very hard. Instead of the first stage being one filled with joy and inspiration, it may become one filled with argumentation and ill-feelings.

Announcing one's acceptance of Islam is not a condition for being a Muslim, and if one feels that they would prefer to delay doing this until they are stronger in faith and knowledge or until they are independent, then this is fine. On the other hand, if one feels that their family will be accepting of their new faith then it is better to announce it as this will make it easier for them to practice the teachings of Islam.

And example of this is the great Companion of the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon him, Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, who became Muslim and hid his conversion from his parents. His parents were very bold against Islam, and after thinking it out, and understanding the consequences of what his actions may lead to, he decided not to announce and publicly declare that he had become Muslim; instead, he chose to delay and announce his Islam at the right moment. This moment came when the Prophet conquered Mecca. Muawiyah and his father along with others went to meet the Prophet and declared their Islam before him.

When you do decide to announce it, keep the following guidelines in mind.

Seek Help in Patience and Prayer

Do not panic. Seek Allah's help through prayer and contemplation. Let Him guide you through these moments. You have two 'gifts' from God: patience and prayer to give you strength. Allah says:

oeAnd seek help in patience and prayer..." (Quran 2:45)

Any hardship you may face is only a test through which you will increase in faith and trust in Allah. You will learn to rely upon and seek aid from Him. Whatever the result, know that in the end, it will be good for you. How beautiful is the saying of the Prophet:

oeHow amazing is the affair of the believer! All his affairs are good, and this [merit] is for none other than the believer. If something good happens to him, he thanks and praises God, and that is good for him. If he is afflicted with some hardship, he is patient, and that is good for him." (Muslim)

Ask Allah to ease your affairs and give you strength. Ask Him to make your parents accept your news comfortably. Ask Him to keep you firm upon the religion. Ask Him to make you a means of guidance for them. The following are some special prayers

prescribed by the Prophet with which you may supplicate to strengthen yourself and religion.

Prayer 1

oeO Allah, it is Your mercy that I hope for, so do not leave me in charge of my affairs even for a blink of an eye and rectify for me all of my affairs. None has the right to be worshipped except You." (*Abu Dawood*)

Prayer 2

oeNone has the right to be worshipped except Allah, the All-Knowing, the Forbearing. None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, Lord of the magnificent throne. None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, Lord of the heavens, Lord of the Earth and Lord of the noble throne." (*al-Bukhari*)

Prayer 3

The Prophet told us:

oeThe hearts of the children of Adam are as one between the fingers of the Most Merciful, and He directs them as He wills." (*Ahmed*)

Pray with the frequent supplication of Messenger of Allah:

oeO Changer of the hearts, make my heart firm upon Your religion." (*Al-Tirmidhi*)

Prayer 4

If you doubt your faith at any point:

- Seek refuge in Allah.
- Remind yourself you are on the religion of Jesus, Moses, and the rest of the prophets by saying, *'I have believed in Allah and His Messengers.'* [\[1\]](#)

Self-Assurance

Do not fear disapproval from loved ones or strangers. Some people suffer severe demoralization when criticized; others manage to gain new strength out of it. Islam brings a new demeanor, a new social life with renewed confidence, self-assurance, and social comfort. Islam indeed has the ability to alter personality for the good. As soon as faith enters the depths of your heart, you will realize that the whole world cannot be equal to living for one moment with this great blessing of Islam. Be forgiving and patient!

Talk to Someone You Trust

Talk to a Muslim friend you trust, preferably someone who has knowledge and wisdom.

Find a good friend in whose life you will see the best of Islam in practice. The support of a loving friend will go a long way. Remember, heart heals the heart! Do not let your emotions build-up. Talk about it; there is no substitute for human love and caring.

Ways to Inform Loved Ones

All parents are not equal. Some are close to their children, others are distant. Dysfunctional families are also quite common. Some parents are supportive of whatever religion or lifestyle their child chooses, and others may vehemently oppose. In any case, it may be a good idea to let them know first that you have been reading about Islam, perhaps sharing some of what you learn with them before breaking the news, as that may come as a big shock. Take things gradually. In the end, it's your call, as you know best the nature of your family. Most importantly, study the situation well before making any move, and don't make and hasty decisions.

As mentioned earlier, if the situation calls for it, you may choose not to inform them of your decision for the time being. If you live with your parents, you can pray when they do not see you. You can tell them if you feel they will be supportive.

If you live on your own, this may be much easier. You can meet your parents face to face, give them a call, send an email, or write a letter. The best way, generally speaking, is face to face, as other means of communications may lead one to misunderstand the other party. If you are concerned for the social awkwardness that may result from embracing a religion different from theirs and feel intimidated talking to them about your religion, you may consider it a better option to write a general letter first. It will allow you to put your thoughts together, give them time to recuperate, and perhaps save both of you an embarrassing encounter.

Either way, you will have to meet them face to face at some point, and this will be the discussion of the following article.

Endnotes:

[1] Saheeh Muslim.

The web address of this article:

<http://www.newmuslims.com/lessons/16>

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