

Lets' face it, we **Love** all there is to do with love. And why not?

## **LOVE** makes the world go round!

It is a beautiful and pure emotion; Fresh & crisp like daisies in sunshine, deep & strong like the ocean. It is a need, a desire, a want, a fancy "**created**" by **Allah**

*And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in peace and tranquility with them, and He has put **love** and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are signs for those who reflect" (Surah Ar-Rum, 30: Verse, 21)*

ALAS!

Come **14<sup>th</sup> February**, love is hijacked & sold, like cheap candy that leaves a bad taste in the mouth - But, wrapped in very fancy paper! And they call it **VALENTINE'S DAY**.

Special red roses, specially designed cards, "extra special" discounts on that oh so special dinner, supported by special TV shows, specially crooned songs to get you in that special mood - the stage is set for one special marketing genius day! You think, like millions of others, this is all specially for me? **Why have we allowed love to become a commodity?**

And have we considered what "brand" of love Valentine's day is promoting? Same as the media does ... "virtual love" ... images of tall, dark & handsome, petite yet voluptuous, sacrifice through rebellion, passion as reckless, and "love" as pleasurable sin. Everything is so dramatic, so momentary and yet so alluring ... **Do we really know the difference between real love and virtual love? Or have we all started living in "La La Land."**

We have imported a phenomenon that thinking people in the west are rejecting - cigarette companies found a new "market" in us when anti-smoking campaigns took hold in the west. **They need to sell, we need NOT BUY.**

**Stop and think.** Does a card with some one else's pre printed paid emotions spell out "romance" for us? Do we want to find "love" by following a pagan festival?

**Celebrations have roots in religious beliefs:** Valentine's Day traces its roots to raucous annual Roman festivals where men stripped naked, grabbed goat- or dog-skin whips & spanked young maidens in hopes of increasing their fertility. This pagan celebration, called **Lupercalia**, was held every year on February 15 & remained wildly popular well into the fifth century A.D.—at least 150 years after Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. Highlight of the festival was a lottery to distribute women for entertainment.

The church pegged the festival to the legend of St. Valentine.

According to the story, in the third century A.D. Roman Emperor Claudius II, seeking to bolster his army, forbade young men to marry. Valentine, it is said, flouted the ban, performing marriages in secret. For his defiance, Valentine was executed in A.D. 270—on February 14, the story goes.

While it's not known whether the legend is true, it may be a convenient explanation for a Christian version of what happened at Lupercalia.

**WE HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE** ... Realistic, constructive and fulfilling.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: **NIKAH** is my sunnah ... (Bukhari & Muslim)

*Islam offers real love, real romance and real flirting!  
Yes. Flirting...*

Who says we can't flirt with our husbands/wives or be passionate or go out on dates? It is all there and **worth waiting for** ...

Allah protects us from the short lived glamour of "virtual love" and has blessed us with the finest and purest relationship between a boy and a girl - marriage.

The Prophet (PBUH) enjoyed an especially meaningful married life. By modern standards he was a liberal and open-minded man. He had no problem declaring in public that his **wives** were the **dearest and fondest to him**.

*Do you really want to fall prey to  
what the media has dictated  
love to be?*

A few decades down, we will hear "Valentine's day is part of our cultural tradition"! Today we hear, "What is the harm in expressing love on 14<sup>th</sup> February?"

Are we still going to press the ball gowns and tuxedos? Select a partner and set the scene for Valentine's day? Grab the tickets and tables before they are sold out? Hook up with a friend to cover up our absence at home ... just in case we miss out? ... miss out on what?

**YOU DECIDE.**

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