

MODULE 2

Class Title: Girls just wanna have fun.

Aim of Lesson: To understand the importance of having good “clean” fun

Category: Popular Culture

Lesson Format: Power point presentation with narration. Discussion

Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(*Taooz*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli*

(Slides 1 – 2)

So you guys like having fun? Today I wanna know what you mean when you say “I want to have fun.”

Student: eat good food.

Teacher: YES. Woman after my heart! What is this fun? You have heard, ‘girls just wanna have fun.’ So what is this fun that girls want to have?

Student: having a good time.

Teacher: Define that. “Having a good time”, means what?

Student: I mean do something retarded.

Teacher: explain it to me, do something retarded like what?

Student: crank calling.

Teacher: what do you mean by that? Describe that.

Student: calling someone and pretending to be someone else.

Teacher: are you serious? Ok.

Student: to enjoy yourself.

Teacher: I need to know specific things; like she just said making crank calls to make somebody else annoyed is her idea of fun. Anybody else? Yes.

Student: jumping over roofs.

Teacher: have you actually done that? So how do you jump over roofs?

Student: houses are interconnected so you jump from one roof to the other.

Teacher: ok, takes all kinds! Anyone else?

Student: shopping.

Student: talking.

Student: playing with water.

Student: Going out with friends.

Teacher: Where?

Student: to the mall.

Student: to restaurants.

Student: window shopping.

Student: just meeting up with friends.

Student: going abroad for a holiday.

Student: going to the beach.

Student: watching movies.

Student: sleeping!

Teacher: sleeping. Oh yes, dead fun.

Student: sports: swimming, badminton...

Teacher: ok. All right. So, fun is basically what? I mean what do you get out of doing all of these things?

Student: pleasure.

Student: it gives peace to the heart and mind.

Teacher: it gives peace to the heart and the mind. I see. Ok. Anybody else?

Student: something that pleases us.

Student: you feel happy.

Student: you enjoy yourself.

(Slide 3)

Teacher: If you look at the definition of fun in the dictionary, you are going to find out that fun is something which is a source of enjoyment, amusement or pleasure. It's usually a playful and often noisy activity. You actually have to **do** something,

generally. I don't know if sleeping falls in that category ... it's very close to my heart, believe me but fun? I dunno.

(Slides 4 - 5)

So we have defined fun right here. Etymology basically means the source of a word. Fun is most possibly from fon - old English and it means fool. If you think of old English movies, they used to have these fools wearing this hat with three kinds of things hanging from it. You call him the jester, but he was called the fool actually. The jester is a very civilized way of addressing him but the word used for him was fon or fool. He was a trickster - just playing pranks around a court. That's where this word comes from and like you just said, enjoyment, pleasure, amusement, joy and entertainment, all of that.

(Slides 6 - 7)

Opposite of that would be...boring...yes, absolutely your favourite words, 'I am getting bored, oh God it's so boring!' How many times a day do you say, 'it's so boring?'

Student: millions of times

Teacher: I can see that some of you are thinking that right now. Yes the opposite of fun is boring and fun is very closely related to this sensation which we call pleasure because something that gives us pleasure is something that we will enjoy generally speaking.

(Slide 8)

Now, pleasure can be of two types; Harmless; that which is not harmful for you or for someone else. Or harmful; that which could be harmful for you or for someone else. Like this young lady here said earlier that she likes to make crank calls to annoy people; what kind of pleasure do you think that is, harmful or harmless?

Students: harmful

Teacher: Who is it harmful for? **She** is getting a kick out of it. How cute is that? She is getting a kick out of annoying somebody else basically; that is the adrenaline rush that she gets if somebody else gets upset.

Some people take it to the extreme; there are people who are called sadists, who get pleasure out of torturing somebody. Have you heard about that? It's a fact. Isn't it so?

(Slide 9)

Fun is something we define for ourselves; I can't define fun for you and you can't define it for me. It is a very individual thing. When I asked you to "define" fun, all of you gave different definitions. All of you have your own way of "having fun." There are infinite ways of feeling pleasure and to have fun, depends on what you are looking for.

(Slides 10 – 13)

Look at these kids, they are all having “fun” but in different ways. It also depends on what resources and/or opportunities you have available to you. We live in a world where money, technology & sensual pleasure rule. When these factors combine, people are given an infinite number of choices on how to spend time and be entertained.

(Slides 14 - 15)

The movie *Gladiator* entertained many people with its special effects and, at the same time, reminded its viewers of the powerful Roman Empire and the barbaric ways in which people entertained themselves almost 2000 years ago.

Yet, the truth is, people have not changed much since then. Many today, actively seek to have their senses stimulated by things that are outrageous and bizarre. One of the main differences today is that movie and TV screens are our "coliseum." As in the past, people today don't seem to worry if the price of "having fun" is dangerous, painful, unhealthy or even lethal. When it comes to the pursuit of entertainment, it seems that little matters but the experience of pleasure and excitement itself.

(Slides 16 – 18)

Even today people have dog fights, cock fights and bear fights, even bull fights in Spain. What is a bull fight? It's a form of amusement where these people actually kill a bull and it's a very painful experience for whom?

Student: for the bull

Teacher: For the bull and a lot of times the matadors get hurt too. But, it is a source of pleasure for some people to watch, isn't it? Yes or no?

Student: yes.

Teacher: Do some people get excitement and thrill out of that? They obviously do, that is why they do it.

Student: Some people have a mongoose and snake fight, where the mongoose kills the snake or vice versa and they have this show kinda thing at the beach usually.

(Slide 19)

Teacher: some people find that fun. That's how they define fun. Right. There are people who watch pornography and abuse little children. They think that it is fun. Why do they do it? Because they get pleasure out of it. Don't they? What is pornography all about? People get pleasure out of it.

There is a huge industry out there, and why does it exist? Because there are some people who get pleasure out of it. True or not? For them that activity is fun.

(Slide 20)

The whole purpose of this discussion is this: **anything** we do in our lives even if it is for the sake of “having fun”, if devoid of guidance and devoid of parameters or limits – it leads to extremism and disaster.

(Slide 21)

Limits are meant to keep things from going out of control. Human beings can be extremely barbaric and vicious. One example is of the gladiators; human beings used to do that to other human beings just for fun. There is a whole crowd of people sitting and watching, for what? They are getting thrills out of it. Just like there are crowds of people in a school or college, who may watch the bullying of one child; people bullying one boy or one girl and the rest of the people are just getting pleasure out of it. That’s like a fun activity for them.

Without any parameters, anything that the heart desires becomes fun, yes or no?

We ask Allah (swt) in our prayer:

“Ihdinas sirat al mustaqeem...” “Guide us to the correct path.”
(Surat ul Fatihah 1: verse 6)

So what guidance are we asking for? Guidance in what? Guidance is just how to do our *salah*? Is Guidance only that?

We ask for Guidance in each and everything that we do in our life. Each and everything. That includes the time of leisure and the time of pleasure. Who will define what pleasure **is** and what it **isn’t**? We just talked about it that there are some people who kill bulls for pleasure. Some people fight snakes and mongoose or whatever. Some people might find torturing somebody fun; some people might find making fun of other people fun.

(Slides 22 - 23)

Allah (swt) says in the Qur’an:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

Verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter, We have made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so they wander about blindly (Surah An Naml 27: verse 4)

... وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ

... and Shaytan has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allah’s) way, so they have no guidance. (Surah An Naml 27: verse 24)

Remember the definition of pleasure; pleasure is harmful and pleasure is harmless. Harmful pleasure is something which is either harmful for yourself, or for another person. Harmless pleasure is totally cool for everybody.

(Slide 24)

There has to be a definitive definition for this, doesn't it? Otherwise I might say 'no this activity is not harmful for me, so I am just gonna go ahead with it.' Just think of little children, anybody has little brothers and sisters? Think of little children. Do your parents allow them to play with knives? Or scissors? They would love to do that. Wouldn't they? They would find pleasure in doing that, but why is it that they are stopped from doing that?

Student: it's harmful for them.

(Slide 25)

Teacher: Exactly, because it's harmful for them. If I am a parent and who has a little child and I allow her to play with a knife simply because she really enjoys it, would I be a responsible parent? Children love playing with matches, by the way. I am sure when you guys were little, your parents must have been hiding sharp things and matches and all such things from you. Even plastic bags are very dangerous for children to play with because they tend to put it on their heads and they could suffocate and die. Should we be like 'oh the baby looks so cute, he is enjoying himself so much, give him the plastic bag.' We don't do that, do we? No reasonable human being does that to their own child, unless they happen to be mentally ill. Generally even toys come with a warning in writing, "not suitable for 0-3 years" or "sharp edges."

(Slide 26)

You guys are over that stage, but all of you have been through it. I am sure your parents allowed you to do certain things and not do certain things. Even now if you go to these amusement parks, they have height restrictions, don't they? If you are this high they don't allow you on a certain ride. Why? For safety reasons; otherwise it could be a lot of fun but it could be dangerous for somebody who is shorter than that particular height limit. Happens or not?

So there are simple rules that parents and responsible adults follow, for the protection of their children so that they don't get hurt; although the activity may be great fun for them.

(Slides 27 – 29)

As you grow older, the types of fun, the types of amusement that you want for yourself changes. You don't necessarily want to play with a ball anymore. You might want something else. You might want to be entertained at a different level. So should you be allowed to do whatever, just cause you find "pleasure" in it?

(Slide 30)

Who then should define what pleasure is harmless and what is harmful? Should there even be a definition at all?

Student: Perhaps.

Teacher: Hmm. Ok. So if there is no “definition” and we say anything that anyone feels like doing because **they** think it is fun, its cool, Ok let them do it. What would happen is pure anarchy. “Anything goes” hedonism simply does not work and is most certainly totally harmful for a majority of people in a civilized society.

(Slides 31 - 32)

Allah (swt) defines for us what is harmful and what is harmless. Why? Because He is our creator. He says in Surah Al Mulk:

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ

Should not He Who has created know? And He is the Most Kind and Courteous (to His slaves), All Aware (of everything) (Surah Al Mulk 67: Verse 14)

(Slides 33 – 35)

Sometimes we feel that Islam has got nothing to do with fun at all; we are supposed to just sit in a corner and read the Qur’an and do nothing else. Sometimes we feel that, don’t we? We feel that the parameters of Islam are so narrow. The reason for feeling like that is that what is going on around us is extreme.

The idea of “fun” being sold to us is totally hedonistic, totally socially irresponsible and totally at odds with what Allah (swt) and His Messenger (pbuh) are telling us. So, we end up thinking; hey – there is no fun for me cause I am a Muslim.

Wrong. As long as the activities that you are involved in give you pleasure, and are within the parameters of Shariah, that is what Allah (swt) has allowed, then everything goes.

(Slides 36 – 38)

What Shaitan does is that he says, “pleasure is in the forbidden pleasure only!” What did he do to Adam (as) and Bibi Hawa?

Student: He made them eat the forbidden fruit.

Teacher: Yes, he has been doing that for generations. All the good things were available to them in Jannah, but he tempted them saying that the forbidden one is really good. There are so many beverages in this world but people say that if you don’t drink alcohol, then that’s really boring! There are so many things to eat; but

they say if you haven't eaten pork chops with that apple sauce then you have not eaten anything!

(**note to teacher:** please refer to the verses of the Qur'an in slides 37 & 38)

(Slide 39)

Ice cream is exquisite, such a pity that it is not illegal! So it's no fun because it's an activity which is perfectly fine.

What Shaitan does is that he tempts you towards the few things that Allah (swt) has forbidden; what he does is, he says that these are the only things that are **actually** fun. Maybe he is saying to you right now - What are you doing sitting over here listening to this boring lecture? It is not fun, there were so many other things that you could have been doing at this time.

Sometimes the harm in something is very apparent. For example drugs, that's very apparent isn't it? If you take heroin you can kill yourself; if you smoke cigarettes you can kill yourself. The whole world agrees with that. But Shaitan still makes it very attractive for people, so there are still people who use heroin; there are still people who smoke cigarettes.

(Slides 40 – 41)

Islam **allows** us to have fun. It's not as if all kinds of pleasurable activities are banned in Islam; that is the thing to understand.

Rasul Allah (pbuh) and his companions were like the coolest people ever. They used to relax and yes, have fun.

Ali (ra) said that: "minds get tired as do bodies. So treat them with humour and refresh your minds from time to time, for a tired mind becomes blind."

(Slide 42)

Rasul Allah (pbuh) raced with Aisha (ra). When she was younger, she won the race. Years later - she had forgotten about it and had put on a little bit of weight, she was a little bit older too, he raced her again and won and said this is for the last time!

Sometimes we think of those people as if they were sitting in a corner doing *astaghfirullah astaghfirullah* all the time. It wasn't like that at all.

When the companions used to be sitting with each other, just chilling, they would throw watermelon peels at each other. Just for fun. Imagine, Umar (ra) and Abu Bakr (ra) and Uthman (ra) and Ali (ra).

(Slide 43 – 44)

We must learn how to feel pleasure in a positive way—without crossing limits set by Allah (swt) and without harming ourselves or those around us.

But do remember - Pleasure, by definition, cannot be long-lasting. It must switch off so that we can move on to the next task.

Relax, get involved in recreational activities, horse around no problem, but “having fun” must not be the purpose of our lives. Eternal fun is for the eternal life only ... *insha'allah*.

Looking for fun within the parameters of *Shariah* is very do-able. It is only Shaitan that takes us away from that and says ‘oh no, no, if you don’t listen to music, if you don’t do *bhangra* (Punjabi dance), if you don’t go to such and such place – there is no “fun” in your life, that is the only place where fun is.’

(Note to teacher: Have a discussion with students on permissible “fun” activities they can do. Encourage them to think outside the box and come up with funky solutions. You must have a list of solutions in case students are lost. For e.g.

- get involved in sports
- have girls only parties where you can do each others make-up & nails
- have a theme party – e.g. carnival with games
- get together with friends and shoot an amateur video with your cell phone
- explore outdoor activities in your area – beach, lake, hiking

Bring home the point that possibilities are endless – IF we are innovative and learn to have good, clean fun)

(Du’a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati ‘amma yasifun wa salamun ‘alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil ‘alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

Reference for Teacher

Having Fun the Halal Way: Entertainment in Islam by Abu Muawiyah Ismail Kamdar,

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