

## **Module 4**

**Class Title:** Islam and Teamwork

**Aim of Lesson:** To appreciate the importance of working together for attaining a common goal

**Category:** Interpersonal Skills

**Lesson Format:** Activity with Power point Presentation & Discussion

### **Activity**

#### **Materials Needed:**

Peanut Butter (Or Jelly)

Two slices of bread

Knife

Blindfold

#### **Duration:**

Approximately 15 minutes

#### **Preparation:**

Hide in your classroom some peanut butter or jelly, two slices of bread, and a knife to spread it with.

#### **What you will do:**

Gather your group and blindfold one member. Challenge your group (and the blindfolded person) three times to make a peanut butter sandwich:

- **Round One**  
Simply tell the blindfolded person that their job is to make a peanut butter sandwich in 90 seconds. They will undoubtedly fail without help.
- **Round Two**  
Tell the group they can instruct the blindfolded individual, guide him toward the ingredients, etc. They cannot touch the blind person or the ingredients, but they can talk to them. They might (the chances are slim) meet the goal of 90 seconds.
- **Round Three**  
Tell the group they can do anything in their power to help (don't tell them, but this includes make the sandwich themselves). They are certain to succeed this time.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

Which one of these rounds was the hardest? Why?

Which round was the easiest? Why?

Is there any way that someone who was blindfolded could actually complete the goal without help?

## What you will say:

(Greeting to students) *Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*  
(*Ta'awwudh*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*  
(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*  
(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* (Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slide 1:

Alhamdulillah, you saw yourself what happened when one person tried doing a task blindfolded and when you worked as a team. Lets' have a look at teamwork.

Slides 2 & 3:

Allah (swt) has encouraged and enjoined teamwork for us. He (swt) says in the Qur'an:

...وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى...

..... and help one another in *bir* (virtue & righteousness) *taqwa* (piety) .....

(Surah Al-Maidah 5: Verse 2)

And in Surah Al Imran He (swt) says:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا...

"And hold fast all together by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves;

(Surah Al e Imran 3: verse103)

Slide 4:

And Rasool Allah (pbuh) said:

Faithful believers are to each other as the bricks of a wall, supporting and reinforcing each other. So saying, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) clasped his hands by interlocking his fingers.  
[Bukhari]

Slides 5 & 6:

In Islam, Allah (SWT) gives us the gift of brotherhood and sisterhood and encourages us to do things in a group setting or Team Work.

Examples where Islam encourages team spirit are congregation prayers and Hajj Pilgrimage.

In fact, if we fail to work effectively as a member of a team, we fail to understand the true meaning of "Ummah (collectively united Community)" in Islam.

Slide 7:

Teamwork is defined in Webster's New World Dictionary as: "a joint action by a group of people, in which each person subordinates his or her individual interests and opinions to the unity and efficiency of the group."

A team is a collection of people where each individual is a powerhouse of talent, knowledge, expertise, skill and above all the right attitude.

The team is effective and powerful when it delivers the quality and results. For this all individuals should merge into the team and add value. To add that value to the team, he / she should be a team player.

Slides 8 & 9:

A team player is one who has the right attitude and right direction to work in a team. On the contrary, a non-team player is one who does not share information, not being honest, not participative and above all are those who do not extend cooperation. They do not become one with the team. When team members do not come together with the team, the focus of the team is lost and the results are not achieved.

This does not mean that the individual is no longer important; however, it does mean that effective and efficient teamwork goes beyond individual accomplishments.

The most effective teamwork is produced when all the individuals involved harmonize their contributions and work towards a common goal.

As a team player we must remember to follow these guidelines.

- Adapting to change
- Not taking credit for the colleague's work
- Learning to appreciate and recognising other members presence
- Treating everyone with respect and dignity
- Not involving the issues that are not significant to team's values
- Meeting the targets or keeping the deadlines
- Being a good communicator (special reference to listening skills)
- Cooperating with others in the team
- Sharing the information and knowledge that benefits all in a team

Slide 10:

Lessons from Geese provide a perfect example of the importance of teamwork and how it can have a profound and powerful effect on our life.

Slides 11 - 14:

Scientists have found that Geese flying in formation can travel around 71% further in a session than Geese flying solo. Working together on the task of flying is beneficial in a number of ways:

Aerodynamic Formation - The V formation of Geese is a way that maximizes the energy expended by those flying as part of it.

The bird at the front of the flock breaks the air for those flying behind it and creates a slipstream for them to be dragged along in. The birds behind also help those in front as the upward motion of their wing also create an upward draft that propels them forward.

This push/pull relationship ensures all birds in the formation benefit from the work of others.

Outcome: When we have a sense of "*Ummah* (collectively united Community)" and focus, we create trust and can help each other to achieve our common goals.

Once a wise man said - Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor.

As the old saying goes, two heads are better than one.

Slide 15 &16 :

When a goose leaves the formation, he feels the resistance of the air and the difficulties of flying alone. Then, he quickly comes back to the formation to take advantage of the flock's power in front of him.

Outcome: If we had as much sense as Geese we would stay in formation with those headed where we want to go.

We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

Sharing the same direction and working as a team, get us to the destination quicker and easier. By helping ourselves, the accomplishments are greater.

Where do **you** want to go? *Jannah*? Stick with the crowd wanting to go there!

Slide 17:

Rotating Leadership - Even with the pushing effect of those behind it - the front bird uses the most energy and becomes tired more quickly than others.

The Geese know that and instinctively rotate leadership of the flock - allowing tired birds who have used a lot of energy for the sake of the flock to take a rest and be dragged a long for a while until it is there next turn up front.

Outcome: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks. We should respect and protect each other's unique arrangement of skills, capabilities, talents and resources.

Slides 18 & 19:

Dropping out of the Flock - as a result of sickness or injury a bird will occasionally begin to fall away from the flock - unable to keep up. Instead of allowing this bird to fly on alone - at least two others will always drop out of the flock with it. This ensures that the injured bird will be defended and cared for until it is ready to resume flying - and that it will fly on with the benefit of flying in formation.

Outcome: If we have as much sense as Geese we will stand by each other. Let's stay beside each other no matter what the differences, especially in times of difficulty and great challenges.

If we bond together and support each other, if we make true the spirit of teamwork, regardless of our differences, we can rise to meet our challenge.

Slides 20 & 21:

Power of the Honk - From the ground the V formation of the Geese is a beautiful thing to watch - serenely gliding across the sky these birds look quite majestic and peaceful. However get up into the flock and you find it's quite a noisy affair with the Geese constantly honking at one another. There are numerous theories about this honking and it could be partly about letting each other know where they are so there is no midair collision. But many believe that this honking is actually about creating an environment of success and mutual encouragement.

Geese flying in formation 'Honk' to encourage those up front to keep up with their speed.

Outcome: We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups and teams where there is encouragement, production is much greater. 'Individual empowerment results from quality honking'.

As a result of some of these principles the Geese can fly amazing distances without stopping for rest - so much further than if they tried to do it alone. Humans, like Geese, were created to work together and to support one another. When we encourage each other and support each other we can accomplish amazing things, much more than trying to work alone.

Rasool Allah (pbuh) and his Companions (ra) are a textbook example of encouraging and supporting each other to do good and to carry on on the path of Allah (swt) even in the most difficult circumstances.

Slides 22 - 24:

Rasool Allah (swt) said: "Allah (swt)'s hand is over the group."  
[Tirmidhi]

Our *deen* stresses on teamwork – on realizing the importance of an *ummah* (Muslim community)

Rasool Allah (pbuh) said:

“The believers in their affection, compassion and love for one another is like one single body. If a part of it suffers from pain, the whole body will suffer in pain.” [Muslim]

Allah (swt) revealed:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

The believers are nothing else than brothers. So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy.

[Surah Al-Hujjurat, 49:Verse10]

So, if we think we can “mind our own business” and this teamwork-*ummah* thing is not for me. I can’t be bothered with worrying about or thinking about other Muslims or my community – then listen to this little story ....

Slides 25 – 29:

A little mouse living on a farm was looking through a crack in the wall one day and saw the farmer and his wife opening a package. The mouse was intrigued by what food the package may contain. He was aghast to discover that it was a mouse trap. The mouse ran to the farmyard warning everyone “there is a mouse trap in the house, there is a mouse trap in the house”.

The chicken raised his head and said “Mr. Mouse, I can tell you this trap is a grave concern to you, but it has no consequence to me and I cannot be bothered with it” The mouse turned to the goat. “I am so very sorry Mr. Mouse, but the trap is no concern of mine either”. The mouse then turned to the bull, “Sounds like you have a problem Mr. Mouse” the bull said, “but not one that concerns me” The mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected that no one would help him or was concerned about his dilemma. He knew he had to face the trap on his own.

That night the sound of the trap catching its prey was heard throughout the house. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness she could not see that it was a venomous snake who's tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife. The wife developed a bad fever and the farmer knew the best way to treat a fever was with chicken soup. He took his hatchet to the farmyard to get the soup's main ingredient. The wife got sicker and sicker and friends and neighbors came by to take turns sitting with her round the clock. The farmer knew he had to feed them so he butchered the goat.

The farmer's wife did not get better, however. In fact she died and so many friends and family came to her funeral that the farmer had to slaughter the bull to feed them all.

So – the next time one hears that one’s team mates are facing a problem and think it does not concern or affect one, then remember that "when anyone of your team is in trouble we are all at risk".

Slide 30:

Let’s learn to be team players – as part of the *ummah* of Rasool Allah (pbuh).

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*