

Fozia's Story



Fozia grew up in Germany. She came to England in 1997. She has two daughters, aged 15 and 12 and one boy aged 10 (when interviewed in June 2009).

She works as volunteer in the Mosque and as a community activist in Family Action.

How did you hear about the Nurturing Programme?

I have been involved in the activities of our local mosque for over five years. Last year Arifa came to our weekly Quran lesson in the mosque, and told us about the parenting course. I wanted to learn about parenting solutions and when I heard about this course, because I had been told it's with Islamic values, I decided to do it. She asked me to write down the names of the ladies who were interested. I had a waiting list of over 40 names within two hours. When the course started, each of the ten topics was so interesting that we had an attendance of 100% every week.

What kept you all coming back?

It was very convincing and each of the ten topics was very interesting, especially when it came along with the proof from the Quran and the Hadiths. Arifa and sister Zahida helped us to find the solutions for our parenting problems in the Quran and Hadith itself. This is practising Islam, it's not just reading the Quran, to learn to recite properly, no, the Quran is about how to bring the Quran to your practical life. For me as a practising Muslim it was like a stamp that we have to do it like this; there's no other way.

How did this bring you closer to the other mothers in the mosque?

We always just discussed the Quran, Ayat and Hadiths and that's all. And although we knew every parent, every mother had problems we didn't discuss them as it wasn't the right place. But in this course, we really got to know them and to know that this is Islam as well, to discuss our problems, to help each other and so came to know each other from a total different angle. Even now, we call each other and ask if everything is okay.

Each topic was very useful especially when it was linked with Quran and the Hadith (sayings of the Prophet). It made sense to me as a practising Muslim.

This course has helped me as a parent, as a wife and as a daughter, and I have developed my self-awareness to understand my own feelings and therefore have developed empathy for my own children.

By sharing with others I have become aware that deep down there was so many problems, especially the topics related to self-esteem and self-confidence. I learnt from that as a child I had not developed my self-esteem. I can now help my children to develop their self-esteem.

How did the Nurturing Programme help you?

This course changed my life as a mother, as a wife, as a woman and as a Muslim. When I did this parenting course, especially the topics how to boost your child's self-esteem and self-confidence, I learnt from it as a person for me as well, because I had a lack of self-confidence my whole childhood. I had had a lot of problems for a long time, but I never really thought about them; they were just in my unconsciousness. I spoke about them with my husband and my children, to my mother, my parents, to my sisters in Germany and we all learnt a lot from it.



Last year in summer when I had finished the parenting course, I went to Germany for the summer holidays. I took the Parenting Puzzle with me and I told my sisters and my mother about the ten topics we covered in the Parenting Programme. Every night we discussed one topic, they were so impressed, and they learnt so much about this. I opened up with my mother and my sisters about problems we never spoke about before, about showing feelings and other problems and they were so impressed. They learnt so much from the book.

A very important point I learnt from this course, was to take care of your own needs. Arifa told us in the course if a water bottle is empty, you can't get any water from it. It's the same too for a person who is distressed or tired or sick, you can't give anything to your children or your family. If you want to take care of your family, you have to be healthy and you have to take care of your needs.

Normally, in our religion Islam, Allah says that after Allah, we have to take care of ourselves. But in our culture we come normally at the end. First it's Allah, then husbands, then the children and at the end of the day, you're tired, you don't have any time for your interests for your health, or anything. If we want to be a good wife or mother we have to sacrifice ourselves, our needs, our interests, our hobbies, everything. I learnt that's wrong. A good mother has her own hobbies, she has her own times, otherwise she cannot be a good mother or a good wife for very long.



I have done many courses before and after this parenting course, but I must say these were the 10 lessons in which I enjoyed and learned the most about my life. Islam says whatever you want to do, gain knowledge and parenting is the most important thing in life, so I gained knowledge to help with that.