

## 245973 - How can the Muslim rid himself of a bad attitude and acquire a good attitude?

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### the question

I have a very bad attitude; I am disobedient and defiant towards my mother and I often make her angry. Sometimes my manners and attitude are good, but most of the time they are bad. How can I improve my attitude and my manners? What are the things that will help me to be kind to my parents and develop a good attitude? Will I be punished if my attitude and manners are bad? Or is having a good attitude something that is only good but is not essential? When my attitude is good, I feel that I am showing off, and I feel that I am committing minor shirk (by showing off). So how can I remain steadfast in having a good attitude and good manners, whilst being sincere to Allah in that regard?

### Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah

Firstly:

A good attitude is something that will weigh most heavily in the balance of deeds on the Day of Resurrection, and the best of people in attitude will be seated closest to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) on the Day of Resurrection.

It was narrated by at-Tirmidhi (2018) – who classed it as hasan – from Jaabir that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Among the dearest of you to me and those who will be seated closest to me on the Day of Resurrection are those of you who are best in attitude.”

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Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh at-Tirmidhi.

Al-Bukhaari (6035) and Muslim (2321) narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that he said: "The best of you are the best of you in attitude."

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This is encouragement to have a good attitude, and it highlights the virtue of such a person, for this is the character of the Prophets of Allah, may He be exalted, and His close friends (awliya').

Al-Hasan al-Basri said:

The definition of a good attitude is doing acts of kindness, refraining from causing harm, and having a cheerful countenance.

Al-Qaadi 'Iyaad said: It means mixing with people with a kind and cheerful attitude, and being friendly and compassionate towards them, putting up with them, showing forbearance and patience towards them at times of hardship, refraining from being arrogant towards them or mistreating them, and avoiding being harsh and angry with them or being critical towards them.

Secondly:

Defiance and disobedience towards parents is a major sin, and the one who is defiantly disobedient towards his parents will not prosper in this world or in the hereafter.

What the Muslim, man or woman, must do is treat his parents very kindly and strive to treat them well in every way possible, and to avoid angering them or going against their wishes and defiantly disobeying them.

See questions no. [35533](#) and [104768](#).

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Thirdly:

It is possible to improve one's attitude and refine it, by doing the following:

- Knowing the virtues of having a good attitude and the reward that will result from it in this world and the hereafter.
- Knowing the bad consequences of having a bad attitude, and what will result from it of requital and negative consequences.
- Studying the biographies of the earlier generations (salaf) and the lives of the righteous.
- Avoiding getting angry, striving to attain patience, and training oneself to be deliberate and not hasty.
- Sitting with people of good attitude, and avoiding sitting with people of bad attitude.
- Training oneself to develop a good attitude and trying to make oneself become accustomed to that ("fake it until you make it"), and being patient when striving to do that.

Finally: you should call upon Allah, may He be exalted, and ask Him to make your attitude good and help you to attain that. One of the supplications of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was: "O Allah, You have made my outward appearance good, so make my attitude good." Narrated by Ahmad (24392); classed as saheeh by the commentators on al-Musnad. Also classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami' (1307).

If a Muslim slips and behaves badly in some situation, he should hasten to apologise and set things straight, and he should resolve to improve his attitude.

When the Muslim strives to improve his attitude, doing that in obedience to the command of Allah, may He be exalted, seeking His pleasure and following the example of the Messenger of Allah

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(blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), this is like any other act of worship (that is, he should be sincere in his intention and so on). So he should not try to improve his attitude in order that people might praise him, because this will cancel out the reward and he will be deserving of punishment for that showing off.

Just as the Muslim should strive to make all his worship sincerely for Allah alone, so too he should strive to do the same when trying to improve his attitude. He should always bear in mind the command of Allah, the reckoning, the balance, and paradise and hell, and he should remember that people will never benefit him or harm him at all. Remembering the hereafter is one of the most important means that will help the Muslim to be sincere to Allah, may He be exalted.

Fourthly:

Things that will help one to treat parents kindly include the following:

- Knowing the rights and virtues of parents, and how they brought up their children and put up with hardship in order to give their children a life of ease and joy.
- Knowing the Islamic texts that encourage showing kindness to parents, and the texts that warn against defiantly disobeying them, and understanding the effect that that may have and the punishment for it in this world and the hereafter.
- Knowing that showing kindness to parents is one of the greatest means of ensuring that the one who shows kindness to his parents will have children who will show kindness to him, and that defiantly disobeying parents is one of the greatest means of ensuring that the one who defiantly disobeys his parents will have children who will be defiantly disobedient towards him.
- Studying the biographies of the earlier generations (the salaf) and learning how they used to honour their fathers and mothers.

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- Reading books and essays that speak about showing kindness to parents or defiantly disobeying them, and also listening to Islamic lessons that speak about these topics.
- Gifts, kind words, a cheerful countenance, offering a great deal of supplication and speaking well are all among the greatest means that help one to show kindness to parents.

For more information, please see the answer to question no. [101023](#).

And Allah knows best.