



NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE

WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY? WILL THEY APPROVE OF IT? WILL THEY LAUGH AT IT? WILL I FIT IN?

These are some of the challenges we face daily, more so the youth. How do we go along with facing such

challenges?

A peer is a person like you in age or grade. Acting a certain way or doing certain things under the influence of peers to feel like a part of them is peer pressure. We experience peer pressure when our moral values clash with the actions, practices, or behaviour of our peers. We all want to be liked and feel like a part of a particular social group. These are some of the reasons why we may easily give in to peer pressure. Curiosity is another reason why, youth in particular, easily give in to peer pressure.

Peers influence your life in some way or the other. There are several things we may be pressured about daily like: Smoking, drugs, relationships with the opposite

Nabi ﷺ to eat the food, but in reality, he was not a Muslim. In response, Ubayy told Uqba that he will not believe the latter until he spits on Nabi ﷺ. So Uqba went and spat at the Mubaarak face. Allah Ta'ala then revealed the following verses of Surah Furqaan:

“And the day the wrongdoer will bite his hands saying; would that I had taken the path of the messenger! Woe to me! Would that I had not taken so-and-so as my friend! Indeed he led me astray from the advice after it had come to me. And the Shaitaan is man’s betrayer”

We see from this incident that in order to maintain the friendship with Ubayy, Uqba went ahead and performed this most wretched act. Allah, thus disgraced them in this world and he will make them face disgrace in the hereafter, too. These verses were especially for this occasion, but its implication is universal. It applies to each one of us. When you hang out with the right crew, you can motivate and encourage each other to do the best. So let’s choose our friends wisely, as our beloved Nabi ﷺ has said:

“A man follows the religion of his friend, so each one should be careful of whom he makes his friend.”

[Abu Dawud]

When choosing a friend, Taqwa should be your priority. Choose as a friend a person who helps and encourages you to do what is good, has good character, enjoins what is right, forbids what is wrong and observes the rights of friendship equally in your presence and absence.

Recite the following Duaa of Ibrahim (AS):

Rabbi habli hukmaww wa alhiqni bissaaliheen-

O my Lord! Bestow wisdom on me and join me with the righteous (Quraan 26:83)

Choosing the right friends is the first step you can take in managing peer pressure. If you are already being pressured and influenced by peers, you need to realise that it is never too late to back out. In such a case, speaking to an elder like a parent or teacher can always prove to be helpful. You need to accept the constructive criticism they may give and always be willing to wholeheartedly accept their advice.

Thereafter, continuously recite the following Duaas:

• **Rabbi inni thalamtu nafsi faghfirli-**

My Lord! Indeed I have wronged myself, so forgive me

(Quraan 28:16)

- Rabbi bimaa anámta alayya falan akoona thaheeral lil mujrimeen-

My Lord, for the favour you bestowed upon me, I will never be an assistant to the criminals

(Quraan 28:17).

Building a bond with Allah will also help greatly in dealing with peer pressure.

This enables one to attain a sense of inner peace and acts as a shield against negativity and filth. Moreover, it is essential to seek knowledge of Deen, as it helps in differentiating the right from wrong.

Explore your potential, find your strengths, focus on them and keep yourself occupied.

In conclusion, let us ask ourselves, is it worth giving in? Are we ready to lose our core moral values just for our so-called friends? Let us remind ourselves that just stepping back from such actions will earn us immense rewards. The Ashaab-e-Kahf moved away from the people and community that were involved in vice and Allah bestowed them with the honour of mentioning their incident in the noble Quraan.

Do not despair and be not afraid to walk alone, as the saying goes: IT IS BETTER TO WALK ALONE THAN WITH A CROWD GOING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION!

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