

10 Principles of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the most successful man in entire human history. Being the Final Prophet (peace be upon him), he not only established timeless principles to achieve success but demonstrated these by his selfless example. By studying his life and patterning ourselves on his immaculate conduct we can derive untold benefits in this world and the Hereafter. Here are 10 successful principles taught by the Messenger ;

1. To begin from the possible

The Prophet's wife Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) has explained this principle through a Hadith (prophetic tradition) in which she said: **"Whenever the Prophet had to choose between two options, he always opted for the easier one"** (Al-Bukhari). To choose the easiest option means to begin from the possible, and one who begins from the possible will surely reach his goal.

2. To see advantage in disadvantage

In the early days of Makkah, there were many problems and difficulties, but a verse in the Qur'an inspired Muslims. **"Certainly with every hardship there is ease, certainly with every hardship there is ease,"** (94:5-6). They learned from the verse that if there are some problems, there are also opportunities at the same time. Success is to ignore the problems and avail the opportunities.

3. Changing the place of action

Derived from the Hijrah. It was not just a migration from Makkah to Madinah but a strategic move by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to find a more suitable place for Islamic work.

4. Make a friend out of an enemy

The Prophet (peace be upon him) learned from the Qur'an, which enjoined upon him the return of good for evil. Such conduct has the potential of them converting you of your avowed enemy **"as if he were a bosom friend."** (41:34). It meant that a good deed in return for a bad deed had a conquering effect over enemies.

5. Wring success out of failure

After the Battle of Badr, about 70 of the unbelievers were taken as prisoners of war and many of them were educated people. The Prophet (peace be upon him) announced that if any one of them would teach 10 Muslim children how to read and write he would be freed. This was the first school in the history of Islam in which all the students were Muslims and all the teachers were from the enemy rank.

6. The power of peace is stronger than the power of violence

When Makkah was conquered, all of the Prophet's direct opponents were brought before him. They were war criminals in every sense of the word yet the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not order them to be killed. He simply said: **"Go, you are free."** The result of this kind behaviour was miraculous. Most of them embraced Islam.

7. Lateral thinking was another principle of the Prophet

In the famous Muta battle, Khaled bin Waleed decided to withdraw Muslim forces from the battlefield because he discovered that they were disproportionately outnumbered. When the Muslim forces reached Madinah, some people criticised them by saying **"O Furrar"** (O deserters). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said **"No. They are Kurar"** (men of advancement). Those who wrongly criticised them were unable to think laterally. For them the choice was to either fight to the end or desert the battlefield. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **"No, there is also a third option, and that is to avoid war and find a time to strengthen yourself to make a powerful comeback."** History tells us that the Muslims, after three years of preparation, advanced towards Rome and won a resounding victory.

8. To bring the battle in one's own favourable field

Before the Hudaibiyya Treaty the unbelievers were determined to engage Muslims in fighting as they held the advantage. But the Prophet (peace be upon him), by accepting their conditions unilaterally entered into a pact. It was a 10-year peace treaty. Until then, the meeting ground between Muslims and non-Muslims had been on the battlefield. Now the area of conflict became that of ideological debate. Within two years, Islam emerged as victorious because of the simple reason of its ideological superiority.

9. Gradualism Instead of radicalism

Well-established by a Hadith and reported by Al-Bukhari, Ayesha (RA) says that the first verses of the Qur'an were related mostly to Heaven and Hell. And then after a long time when the people's hearts had softened, the specific commands to desist from adultery and drinking were revealed in the Qur'an. This is a clear proof that for social changes, Islam advocates the evolutionary rather than the revolutionary methods.

10. To be pragmatic in controversial matters

During the writing of the Hudaibiyya Treaty, the Prophet (peace be upon him) dictated these words: **"This is from Muhammad, the Messenger of God."** The Quraysh raised their objections over these words. The Prophet (peace be upon him) promptly changed the word and ordered to write simply Muhammad son of Abdullah. This pragmatic approach adopted by the Prophet brought peace and prosperity for Muslims and accelerated the propagation of Islam.

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