



Who Might Need Neighbourliness The Most?

People who are not well off, the elderly, the disabled, the injured, the ill, those who may have had bereavement or a divorce, or are stuck at home with very young children can all feel lonely, so let us get in touch with our neighbours.

Even the smallest gesture, a greeting, a warm smile, or sincerely enquiring, "How are you?" can pave the way towards a better community and a more peaceful and harmonious society.



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Why Should I Care?



Creating Happy Neighbourhoods

Isn't it odd that we can be living in the same street for years and still be total strangers to each other- not even knowing who our neighbours are, let alone taking time to build a sustained relationship with them?

Sadly, sometimes we only find out who our neighbours are after an incident or tragedy occurs.



Some Practical Steps To Consider

It can be simple, small things, that we can all do, that can keep a neighbourhood happy and peaceful, such as helping with the shopping, or keeping a neighbour's parcel when they're out. It helps to walk to the local shops, or schools, rather than always taking the car, so we can meet and greet and see how our neighbours are along the way.

Some people go further and are part of a neighbourhood watch scheme to help reduce crime in their area and make their neighbourhood safer. Sharing food with each other, helping out with problems, baby sitting or pet sitting, or mowing the grass, can lead to invitations to sit and talk, while sharing a coffee or tea or even a meal.

This is how we can build a trusting, friendly and kind neighbourhood.



A 21st Century Phenomenon

There may be many reasons for this. Maybe we are too busy with family duties caring for the sick, the elderly and the young, or perhaps our work or study commitments don't allow us much spare time.

We might be unsure about the consequences of making contact and be shy. In many cases, getting to know our neighbours is just not a high enough priority.

Our hectic lifestyles full of work, family, studies, socialising, travelling, hobbies, and social media, can consume many hours of our daily lives, ironically distracting us and making us disconnected from those who live in close proximity to us.

In some neighbourhoods, people put up with living with annoyance or in fear of their badly behaving neighbours, whilst others have to resort to the police and the courts to resolve issues.

Can We Change This Bleak Picture?

We should start by caring about this issue because every successful society of the past ran smoothly through a system of inter-dependence of individuals. It had norms and values, which encouraged people to take responsibility and fulfil the rights of others in their neighbourhood, and achieve their own rights in return.

Without neighbourliness, communities do not fulfil the needs of people and they can become dysfunctional and fall apart.



What Islam Says About Neighbours

The Almighty God says in the Quran: "Worship God and associate nothing with Him, and do good to parents, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbour, the neighbour further away, the companion at your side, the traveller..." (chapter 4: verse 36).

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), said: "Angel Gabriel kept on recommending me to treat neighbours kindly and politely so that I thought that the neighbour might be included as one of the heirs."

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also said: "... and whoever believes in God and the Last Day should be good to his neighbour."

Being neighbourly is a two-way relationship which can only enhance our lives.

Indeed one of Prophet Muhammad's recommendations (peace be upon him) to one of his companions was: "Whenever you prepare a soup, put plenty of water in it, and give some of it to your neighbours".

“ One might say:
**“Why should I care?” or
 “It's none of my business”**

