

# SEEKING COUNSEL

## Objectives >>>

### Students should:

- Understand that we should always ask for advice from elders, especially our parents and teachers
- Understand that we should only ask for advice from elders whom we know



SOCIAL ISLAM

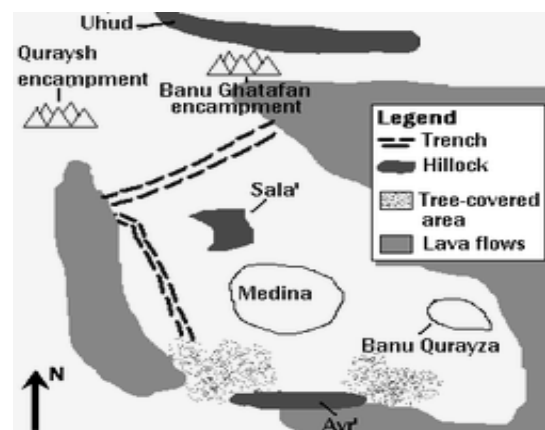
LEVEL 1

## Seeking Advice

Islam teaches us that it very important to talk to people and ask the advice of others about the questions and ideas we have. This gives us a chance to learn from others and keep our minds open.

### ADVICE GIVEN DURING THE BATTLE OF KHANDAQ

One of the first battles fought for Islam was known as the battle of Khandaq. Medina was being attacked by 10,000 men with 600 horses and there were only 3000 men in Medina to defend the city. During the battle, Prophet Muḥammad (saw) asked the advice of his companions on how to protect the city of Medina. Salmān, one of the closest companions of the Prophet (saw) suggested the idea of digging a deep trench around the city to protect it from the attack. This was an idea he had learned from his homeland. The Muslims eventually won this battle because of this idea. This shows how important it is to ask for advice and get ideas from those around us. This often helps us and makes our life a lot easier.



## LISTENING TO ADVICE

Sometimes, we are given advice by people without asking for it. Someone might tell us what we said was wrong, or that for example there was a small mistake in our prayer. A good Muslim always listens to the advice they have been given and does not reject it. We should never get upset or annoyed when someone gives us advice. Advice is like a gift that a friend, parent or teacher is giving us. We should thank them for it, and think about it seriously.

## WHO SHOULD WE ASK FOR ADVICE?



Below are a few questions to help us understand who to ask advice from. As a class, answer the questions below and discuss who and why we approach different people for different advice:

1. Zahrā' and her brother Ja'far were playing tag in their backyard. Ja'far decided to climb a tree so Zahrā' would not catch him but he slipped and fell and hurt his arm really badly! His mother and his aunt Maryam who was a doctor came running out to see what was wrong. His neighbour, Mr Smith, a teacher at a nearby school also heard the noise and came out.

Who did Ja'far's mother ask advice from about her son's arm? Aunty Maryam who is a doctor, or Mr Smith the teacher?

2. Maryam went on a field trip to an aquarium and made a new friend named Alice who was in grade one just like her! Their teachers decided to have both classes eat lunch together so that the children could chat.



Alice wanted to share her snack with Maryam but Maryam did not know if it was ḥalāl

Should she ask Ms. Scott who was closer and was Alice's teacher or should she ask Sister Āsia who was her teacher and a Muslim but was sitting all the way across the room?

We have learned from the above questions that it is important to choose the right person to ask and seek advice from. They should be people we know and trust (teachers, parents and elders), who have knowledge in the area we are asking about.

When asking for advice, we should go to a person who is an expert – someone who knows a lot about what we want to ask about. This is the main condition. The following narration from Imam Al-Ṣādiq (as) confirms what we have learnt so far:

“Seeking advice from others is a virtue. If you do not do it, you will face a great loss. However, there are conditions. The first is that the person you seek advice from should have intellect (i.e. be an expert) ....

## **Class Activity: The Advice Game**

Three children will be chosen to be 'Advice Givers' and will sit on one side of the table or go to the front of the class. The teacher should select the title of each advice giver (Teacher, Sheikh, friend etc...) The remainder of the class will ask a question, if they ask the right question to the correct person they get a point!

## **Review Questions**

**Q1. It is important to ask advice from our parents because:**

- a) They often have more experience than us and give us better ideas
- b) They want the best for us
- c) Both a & b

**Q2. When we want to ask someone for advice, we should:**

- a) Ask a person who knows about what we want to ask
- b) Ask the closest person