



وَلْيُحِبِّوا لِلدِّينِ ما قولا



ICNA

ISLAMIC CIRCLE
of NORTH AMERICA



Member's
Hand Book

ICNA SISTERS' WING
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Foreword:

All Praises are to Allah, the Lord of all that exists. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon His final messenger, Muhammad (S), his family and his Companions.

The purpose of this manual is to guide all of our members towards understanding the greater goal of the Islamic Circle of North America (Islamic movement) and to inform all of our members about how to effectively establish the deen of al Islam. This manual is the first draft; the latter version with more details will be coming out soon, Inshallah!

May Allah accept the efforts of all those who contributed to the making of this Handbook, especially the Tarbiyah and Dawah Departments.

May Allah help us to benefit from this manual, to move forward in establishing our deen, to worship and please Him in the best manner, and may He help us to tread on the path to Paradise.

Ameen.

Wasalaam,

Farah Siddiqui

(ICNA Sisters Wing President)

April 2010

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ICNA: An Islamic Jama'ah and Movement

Allah says in the Qur'an, "The same Deen (way of life) has He established for you as that which he enjoined on Noah which We have sent by inspiration to you (O Prophet Mohammad) and which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus; namely that you should establish the Deen and make no divisions therein"(42:13).

Allah is the Creator of the universe, and He is the Guide for everything he has created. He created mankind and sent us to the earth with the purpose of 'Ibadah, or the submission to Allah's commands. Then Allah, with His immense mercy, sent guidance for mankind through messengers as described in the above ayah of the Qur'an—the guidance or Deen where it was not established.

Let us now briefly understand the meaning and scope of the words "aqeemuddin" (to establish the Deen). These words include not only practicing the religion in individual and collective life and propagating its true teachings to others, but also striving to make this Deen a way of life for all. Propagation of the Deen is not the goal, but a means towards achieving the ultimate goal, i.e., establishing this way of life in every aspect of individual and collective life.

When we look at the lives of the prophets of Allah, we see that they struggled and strove to the same objective. Prophet Mohammad (s) in his 23 years of struggle as a messenger of Allah exemplified, with tireless, sincere efforts, the meaning of Iqamat-ad-Deen. With his preaching, practice, and struggle, he was able to establish a society and state based on true obedience of Allah.

The Muslim Ummah today has the same responsibility as was assigned to the prophets of Allah, since there are not going to be any more prophets sent by Allah after Mohammad (s). We are the trustees of Allah's Deen, and wherever we are, we must respond to this call, "Be helpers (in the cause) of Allah"(16:14). While living in North America, we as Muslims share the responsibility that was assigned to the prophets. We are to follow the footsteps of the prophets and share this message of truth with our fellow citizens.

We ought to understand our Deen through its sources, i.e. the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. We must share this understanding in our day-to-day life, in both individual and family life. Then we must share this truth through our words and actions. Our daily activities must shine the truth and the beauty of this divine guidance so that we may be able to light up the way for others. However, this monumental task cannot be carried out by individuals. There must be a collective effort launched to achieve these high objectives.

The Islamic Circle of North America is an Islamic Jama'ah, an organization struggling towards Iqamat-ad-Deen in this land. Since the early 1970's, it has been motivating Muslims to wake up to their obligations as described above and to not be lost in the land of plenty. On one hand, they are to protect their Islamic identities and that of their children, and on the other hand, they are to take the message of Allah to their fellow Americans and Canadians. They have the unique opportunity to achieve both these objectives through an organized struggle, a national Islamic movement like ICNA.

What is an Islamic Movement?

"Islamic movement" is the term used for that organized and collective effort waged to establish Al-Islam in its complete form in all aspects of life. Its ultimate objective is to achieve the pleasure of our Creator Allah and success in the hereafter through struggle for Iqamat-ad-Deen. Islamic movements are active in various parts of the world to achieve the same objectives. It is our obligation as Muslims to engage in the same noble cause here in North America.

Importance of Collective Work

Prophet SAWS emphasized upon collective or Jama'ah work.

- "Hold fast to al-Jama'ah and stay away from division." (Tirmizi)
- "I order you of five things: to be with *al-jama'ah*, to listen to the leaders, to obey the leader's orders, hijrah, and jihad." (Tirmizi)
- "Whosoever obeyed the leader, he obeyed me (i.e., the Prophet) and whosoever disobeyed the leader, he disobeyed me." (Muslim)
- "Whosoever goes away from *al-Jama'ah* for a short distance, then undoubtedly he removed the string of Islam from his neck (i.e. he left Islam)." (Mishkat)
- "Whosoever departed from the obedience (of the leader) and left *al-jama'ah*

and died, his death occurred in Jahiliyyah (i.e. out of Islam.)” (Muslim)

- “If one dies and there is no ring of bay’ah in his neck (i.e., pledge of obedience to the leader), he died in Jahiliyyah (i.e. out of Islam).” (Muslim)

Jama’ah and Al-Jama’ah

Al-Jama’ah is the term used in Hadith and is synonymous with the words Ummah and Hizb used in Quran. It implies the united Muslim Ummah in a united Islamic state, governed by an elected khalifah in accordance with the laws of shari’ah. As defined above, there can be only one al-jama’ah in a given time.

Differences between Al Jama’ah and Jama’ah or Movement

- There could be more than one Islamic Jama’ahs or movements at one time in order to reestablish the concept of Al Jama’ah.
- Jama’ah is not an alternative to *al-Jama’ah*. It is only a way to al-jama’ah.
- Leadership of al-Jama’ah (or an Islamic state) has the authority to enforce Sharia’s political, educational, criminal Justice System etc that is beyond the jurisdiction of a jama’ah.
- Being part of *al-jama’ah* (if one exists) is a basic condition of faith (or Iman). On the contrary, working with a jama’ah (or Islamic movement) is important but if one stays aloof, though he may be neglecting an important duty, it cannot be called apostasy.
- Jama’ah (or Islamic movement) will be recognized by its characteristics and the struggle to establish Al Islam and not just by its claim only.

Reasons for Great Emphasis on Islamic Jama’ah

The Prophet SAWs stated the reasons for staying together by saying, “Stay with al-Jama’ah, because the wolf devours the goat that runs away (from the herd).” (Abu Dawood)

“Satan is man’s wolf, just like there is goat’s wolf who hunts the goats that stay aloof, or run away or are separated (from the herd).” (Mishkat)

“Stay with al-Jama’ah and stay away from divisions. This is because Satan is with one individual, but stays away from two.” (Tirmizi)

All the above sayings of our Prophet SAWS mention a slow fall in the Satan’s trap if we all don’t stay together in order to strengthen each other.

It starts from:

- Inability to practice appropriately certain Islamic injunctions without Islamic Jama'ah ,e.g., Aqamah of Deen.
- Difficult to protect against negative effects of the Un-Islamic environment
- Feeling of great uneasiness and discomfort at the initial stage
- Getting used to the environment
- Compromise with the environment
- Changes of values

Jamah and other organizations

There are a host of groups organized with common religious and secular aims. Among the Muslims

- Organizations that provide essential services like establishing places for prayer, schools, cemeteries etc
- Organizations based on national origin to cater to the particular needs of their members and to support their national causes.
- Organizations of Muslim professionals
- Organizations that have selected only certain parts of Islam to emphasize in their methodology of Islamic dawah or tabligh.
- Political organizations
- Ethnic Groups

By the very nature of their objectives and methodologies, none of these organizations can be called an Islamic movement.

The relationship of an Islamic jama'ah with all these organizations is governed by this Quranic principle, "Cooperate on the basis of righteousness and piety and do not cooperate in the matters of disobedience." (Quran 5:2)

Jama'ah versus Sects

A sect is defined as a group of individuals who present themselves as a distinct entity due to one of the following reasons:

- Extraordinary emphasis on minor issues and in the details of Shari'ah when alternate opinions are also derived from Shari'ah.
- Declaring others as polytheists and out of Islam when it may only be a matter of misunderstanding
- Grouping around some personalities and forming personality cults
- Grouping based on ethnic, nationalistic, or other prejudicial grounds with a false sense of superiority

Characteristics of an Islamic Movement

The following are some characteristics of the Islamic movement as we learn about it from the model of the Prophet Mohammad (s).

1) This movement is based on the ideology of Islam. It considers humanity as one family based upon our common parents and common Creator. Therefore, it addresses all human beings, regardless of their race, color, national origin, language, culture, ethnicity or economic status. It wants everyone to succeed before Allah. Its message is, "Oh Mankind, submit to your Lord who created you" (2:21).

2) It considers disobedience to Allah as the root cause of all human problems. Moreover, it believes that obedience to Allah is the only solution for all human ills. Until the human being submits to Allah's Guidance, there can be no true peace in our lives.

3) It believes that human beings are overburdened under the obedience of other human beings and their oppressive systems. It is only the obedience of Allah that will set everyone free.

4) The Islamic movement strives to enrich its workers with the knowledge of Islam and builds the Islamic character based on taqwah and the love of all human beings with compassion and mercy for all. It projects Prophet Mohammad's character and personality as the role model for all of its members. He was full of mercy for all and never had ill will for any one. He even forgave his bitterest enemies and was most generous in his attitude to all.

5) The Islamic movement wages its struggle strictly on the model of the Holy Prophet. It derives its guiding principles from the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah.

Levels of work by the Islamic Movement

1) Individual Level:

The Islamic movement believes that the work of reform should begin from the individual. Islamic workers must broaden the horizon of their knowledge. They must know their religion well. They must continue to study the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet. Moreover, they should have the knowledge of the example of the companions of the Prophet and should study Islamic Fiqh, history, laws, and the Arabic language.

Then, this knowledge must be translated into day-to-day life. One must also struggle to develop the beautiful traits we see in the model of the Prophet Mohammad (s).

2) Family Level:

One has the responsibility to impart Islamic knowledge and then to build Islamic character in his/her family members. This is the second level of Iqamat-ad-Deen. We are responsible in front of Allah for this task.

3) Societal Level:

This requires active taqwah work to non-Muslims through all lawful means at our disposal. Moreover, it includes social services and reform within our capacity. It may include helping the poor and needy, sick and disabled, old and down trodden, and disadvantaged in the society. The Prophet (s) helped everyone he could and was eager to relieve pain and anguish of anyone he could. The Islamic movement also addresses the issues of the society and offers solutions in the light of Allah's guidance.

4) State Level:

With this work of propagation of Islam, social reform, and the truth is introduced to a large part of the society. A good part of the society's thinking individuals join the movement. Then it may move to establish an Islamic society, obedient to Allah's commands.

5) Global Level:

Wherever the Islamic movement succeeds to establish true Islamic society, they will form coalition and alliances. This will lead to the unity of the Ummah and towards the establishment of the Khilafah.

Stages of Work

The following are the different stages of work that the movement tries to engage in:

I. Introduction and Propagation of Dawah (Tareef)

- a) Islam is a comprehensive way of life. It provides guidance in all aspects of our life.
- b) Islam is the only solution to all human problems. Different social, moral, family, economic, educational and personal problems faced by the society

are analyzed. Then a remedy is suggested in light of Islamic guidance.

c) Relations with other organizations are defined based on the Qur'anic principle: "Cooperate on the basis of righteousness and piety and do not cooperate in the matters of disobedience." (Quran 5;2)

d) Strategies and techniques are developed for effective dawah to non-Muslims. Those who accept the truth of Islam are provided with appropriate Islamic literature and given the opportunity to become a Muslim. They are made part of the Islamic Ummah as brothers and sisters.

2. Formation and Preparation of the Team of Islamic Worker (Takween)

a) Spiritual refinement and elevation. Study syllabi and programs are devised so that the Islamic workers achieve better spiritual enrichment and elevation. Its goal is to attain a close relationship with Allah and to depend upon Him for everything. Another goal is to develop the true realization of the hereafter and the fear of accountability.

b) Building knowledge of Deen and society. This is done by study and training sessions and special camps where scholars and teachers spend time to help the sager learners to enrich themselves with Ilm.

c) Neighbornet System. This is the grass root organizational unit established to achieve training of workers, development of brotherly relations, dawah to non-Muslims, welcoming new-Muslims and helping each other in need.

3. Implementation of the Islamic Guidance

In this stage, Islam is to be truly implemented in the society at all levels. This will require the strength of the organization and its leaders with substantial support of the people of the land.

ICNA Development and Progress

With the above mentioned objectives and principles in mind, ICNA was established in the early 70's. Two major stages occurred during its development:

1971- 1977:

Halaqa Ehbabe Islami. Workers of the Islamic movement from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh established this Jama'ah with limited objectives. They wanted to take its message in the Urdu language to the immigrants of that background. Work was limited to a few cities. Bylaws of the organization were not that explicit.

1977- Present:

Objectives of this movement were redefined. It was declared by the resolution of its members that this movement is to work to do Iqamat-ad-Deen in North America. A new, detailed constitution was published. English was adapted as the official medium of communication. ICNA established its own forums for dawah work at the local, regional, and national level. It established vital institutions at the national level for support of its dawah activities. Message Magazine was published on a regular monthly basis. ICNA also embarked on publishing Islamic literature for the need of the movement. Recognizing other movement-oriented groups in this land, ICNA continues to coordinate and combine its efforts with them. The work among the youth is organized in the form of its affiliated organization, YM, among young sisters and brothers. Sisters' Wing is making progress in dawah activities among Muslim sisters. They have their own publications and a network of grassroot level organizations. Its annual conventions are well-attended by Muslims of all backgrounds.

In spite of its shortcomings, ICNA is focused on its mission of Iqamat-ad-Deen, the establishment of the Deen. Its workers and leaders are struggling in their humble ways for the sake of Allah with the hope to achieve success in the hereafter.

ICNA Sisters Wing: A Brief Introduction

Established in July of 1978

The reason for the creation of the Sisters' Wing was to enable ourselves, the sisters, to work on the establishment of the Deen freely within our own circle.

The Muslim Ummah and its responsibilities:

"Let there arise among you a group of people, inviting all to that which is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong"(Quran 3:104).

ICNA Sisters' Wing

Keeping this responsibility of spreading the divine message in mind, six sisters established ICNA's Sisters' Wing on July 9, 1978.

Today

We are evaluating the activities in our 29th year so that we can plan better for the future, Inshallah.

Our Goal

"To seek the pleasure of Allah (SWT) through the struggle for establishing the Islamic system of life as spelled out in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammad (S)"

Methodology:

In order to achieve this goal, the ICNA Sisters' Wing has set a specific program as stated in the Charter and By-Laws of ICNA.

Our program:

Invitation

Inviting mankind to submit to the Creator by using all possible means of communication

Motivation

Motivating Muslims to perform their duty of being witnesses unto mankind by their words and deeds

Organization

Organization of those who agree to work for this cause under the discipline of ICNA

Training

Offering educational and training opportunities to increase Islamic knowledge and to enhance one's character

Departments:

Tarbiyah:

"We have sent among you a messenger from among you, reciting to you Our verses and purifying you, and teaching you the book and the Hikma and teaching you that which you do not know" (2:151).

This department is in charge of training members to work on their self betterment in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah and for success in the hereafter. This department is divided into two sub-departments: Usra-tul-Ayesha (for Urdu-speaking sisters) and Usra-tul-Maria (for English-speaking sisters). These will serve as a guide for the tarbiyah of its members. The ICNA movement provides the resources for individual and collective tarbiyah. For example, individual and collective resources are as follows:

Individual Resources

- The study of Qur'an and Hadith
- 'Ibaadah
- Syllabus
- Self Evaluation via the report system

Collective Resources:

- The buddy system
- Fehm-ul-Qur'an online classes
- Book club
- Members meetings
- Tarbiyah seminars

These two elements provide members with an effective means of tarbiyah.

Dawah

“Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah works righteousness and says ‘I am of those who bows in Islam’” (reference?)

The goal of this department is to work on both individual and collective methods of spreading the message of Islam. Just as the Tarbiyah Department relies on individual and collective resources, so does the Dawah department.

Individual Dawah:

- Public Contacts and building relationships
- Distributing Dawah Material (Islamic literature, flyers, handouts, etc.)
- Observing the basic six rights of a fellow Muslim
- Inviting people to join this Mission

Collective Dawah:

- Dawah conferences
- Dawah classes
- Qur’anic study Circles
- Conventions
- Active participation in the local mosques and schools

Why Islam

Why Islam is a subdivision of the Dawah Department. It works to promote Islam among non-Muslims and has a program for mentoring, guiding, and bonding with new Muslimahs.

Ansar Project

One of Why Islam's activities is the Ansar project, which provides Islamic education as well as support to new Muslim sisters. We assign buddies as mentors for new Muslims. Also, Why Islam provides training for these mentors to work with love, proper wisdom, and gradual development.

Shahadah Classes:

New Muslim sisters can learn the fundamental concepts of Islam at Why Islam's Shahadah classes.

Online Institute:

The goal of this institute is to offer members a chance to further develop the skills/knowledge and understanding that they have once they graduate from

our Tarbiyah Classes. These graduates can choose from the following courses, provided in both English and Urdu:

1. Uloom ul Qur'an
 2. Uloom ul Hadith
 3. Arabic Grammar
 4. Islamic Literature
 5. Islamic History
- Aqidah (Islamic Creed)

Publication:

This department is in charge of the collection and publication of various tarbiyah and dawah materials, such as circulars, booklets, etc.

Treasury (Baitul Maal)

All members and potential members give donations regularly to cover expenses of various activities held for tarbiyah and dawah purposes by the Sisters' wing.

Noor Magazine:

This is ICNA Sisters' Wing's magazine that was created as a source for not only Muslim women and their families but also as a source of dawah. Six magazines are published yearly--three in English and three in Urdu, Alhamdulillah.

Young Muslims: Sisters for Faith and Action (YM Sisters)

Serving the needs of the Muslim female youth between the ages of 13 and 28, YM Sisters is a division of ICNA that works to educate and train our younger sisters towards establishing the deen.

Muslim Children of North America (MCNA)

This department has a complete syllabus for children ages 5-12. The children's magazine, titled Companion, will be published four times a year.

We invite you all to join us in our efforts to seek Allah's pleasure through establishing Islam both in our lives and in society.

"O you who believe, if you help the cause of Allah, He will help you and make firm your feet"(Qur'an 47:7).

How to setup a local ICNA unit

A Step by Step Overview

Striving to Please our Lord:

And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it, with the necessary effort due for it (i.e. do righteous deeds of Allah's Obedience) while he is a believer, then such are the ones whose striving shall be appreciated, thanked, and rewarded (by Allah) (Qur'an 17:19).

Allah has set infinite levels of reward for the efforts and struggles of the believers. The reward is directly proportional to the amount of effort invested in the good deed. It is in matters of such good deeds that the believer is advised and encouraged to race against other believers in order to do even more in the path of Allah.

Race one with another in hastening towards Forgiveness from your Lord (Allah), and towards Paradise, the width whereof is as the width of heaven and earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He pleases. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty (Qur'an 57:21).

Foremost in Establishing Good:

Those who lay the foundation for any good deed, are the first to respond to Allah's call, are willing to make sacrifices, overcome several obstacles, and move ahead have an even greater reward with Allah.

And those foremost (in performing righteous deeds) in the life of this world on the very first call for to embrace Islam,] will be foremost (in Paradise). These will be those nearest to Allah (Qur'an 56:10-11).

And the first to embrace Islam of the Muhajirun (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansar (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhajirun) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success (Qur'an 9:100).

Prophetic Mission:

Dear sister, let us join together and look for such an opportunity in this country as was the way of all the prophets (peace be upon them all). To make strides in this cause, we need effort, hard work, dedication, sincerity for mankind, and other such attributes in order to be successful. All the prophets from Adam and Nuh to Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them all) had the same mission in this world--to establish Allah's Deen in their respective nations. Each of their invitations was for the purification and training of the entire society.

Allah says in the Qur'an: "The same Deen (way of life) has HE established for you as that which HE enjoined on Noah which WE have sent by inspiration to you (O Prophet Mohammad) and that which WE enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus; namely that you should establish the Deen (Aqeedud Deen) and make no divisions therein" (Qur'an 42:13).

Spreading the Message in the People's own Language:

And WE sent not a Messenger except with the language of his people, in order that he might make (the Message) clear for them. Then Allah misleads whom He wills and guides whom He wills. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise (Qur'an 14:4).

The prophets used to deliver the message of their Lord in the language of the people to which they were sent. Not only did they see to it that the message clearly reached the people, but they exemplified how to live the religion by being excellent role models. They helped in purifying souls, homes, societies, and nations and while doing this, their sincerity, dedication, and love for humanity was at such a state that they called upon their people with words full of love – 'Ya qaumi' (O my nation/people). Allah SWT quoted their sincerity by 'Qaala akhoohum' (Their brother said unto them) – Surah Ash-Shuraa.

Leading the Nations towards Allah:

Integrating with their people was one of their leadership skills. They did not just become part of a melting pot where their belief in One God would be lost or hidden in any way. In contrast, they were focused on their mission and used to invite others to join them in their quest to stay on the Straight Path in obedience to Allah SWT.

Let us stop and think - how many souls around us are looking for a sense of direction? How many people are looking for the message that we hold? Wouldn't this be the work of the '*sabiqoon awaloon*' (the first and the foremost) if we establish the Islamic Movement in this country in their own language as did the prophets before us?

Organized effort for Dawah and Tarbiyah:

To achieve this, an annual conference or a few social events every year is not enough and neither is sporadic work here and there. Rather, organized effort for dawah (inviting towards Allah), and organized structure of tarbiyah, developing sound Islamic leadership, needs to be the focus complete with preparation and planning.

Scattered efforts are forgotten in mere days, if not sooner. An Islamic Movement in contrast is something much stronger and effective and can stay forever. Both kinds of work are included in good deeds; however, the effects of individual or scattered efforts are temporary, whereas the planned work in all directions as a whole are a form of reward forever – that is a good deed that will keep on giving long after you are gone.

Let us make a firm commitment to Allah SWT to become part of such an effort and invest our minds, time, and resources in it. Let us look at some of the ways that we can do this:

Plan and Assess in the Forum (Local Shura):

Regular review/further planning of the Tarbiyah Dept (Usratul Maria)'s work should be done within the Shura year round. Every monthly shura meeting should include 20-30 minutes of follow up on the previous tasks and planning for the next few months (and longer if there is a big event planned).

It is important to select a UM in-charge from the shura or at least keep her in Mashawarat (non-elected attendees) during all the developments and ask her to be available for input.

Every Unit should fax or scan the individual reports of all of its members to the center. This way, the National Team can monitor progress and make suggestions.

UM email: tarbiyahUM@gmail.com

efax: 201-609-9770

The First Step in Establishing a Sub-unit (Halaqah): Organized Dawah Program

Keeping the Bigger Picture in Mind When Planning:

To establish a local sub unit, keep in mind the points in the ICNA Program (ICNA Charter and By-Laws). The first thing that needs to be done is to establish dawah work on an individual and collective level. That includes planning and starting Dawah classes and halaqaqs open to everyone in your unit.

Compiling Necessary Resources:

The cities that already have dawah halaqaqs in English need to strengthen their planning to make it even more effective. In this regard, the national team will hold public speaking workshops in Tarbiyah Seminars, Qur'an classes, and Book Clubs. Along with public speaking and communication tips, the different scopes and dimensions of dawah work, and tips for those actively involved in dawah will be taught. Make sure the members in your city are utilizing and benefiting from all these learning opportunities provided within our tarbiyah system for them.

Please make a complete sketch of your unit's dawah program for its English halaqah in the beginning of the year.

You can choose any one of these syllabi for your dawah halaqah (You will find these syllabi and schedules in Dawah Dept's Manual and planning). To make your classes effective, it is important that you follow the syllabus closely. If the teacher prepares ahead for a better interactive discussion, the topic-based series can be very helpful also. However, if you opt for the tajweed/tafseer/literature class, then there will be a greater focus on learning; and interactivity will automatically follow.

Thorough Planning:

While making plans for an effective "dawah" program, it is essential to take into consideration all aspects of the fundamental idea:

- Who will take on the responsibility of obtaining all of the material on the syllabus? What will be the deadline?

- Who will fulfill the responsibilities of the teacher/co-teacher & monitor(s)?
- What will be the venue, timing, and day assigned to the class?
- From which date will the class begin?
- How will we advertise the class on the individual and community level?
- Who will be responsible for making the flyers? Where and how will these flyers be distributed?

Getting the Momentum Going:

Before the official inauguration of the class, a public Dawah Conference/Workshop, etc. with a large number of attendees should be organized. This proves to be a very effective way of advertisement and getting the momentum going. In this, you can publicize your classes and try to convince everyone to enroll in it.

It is usually a good idea to begin this public address by speaking on topics such as “Rights of the Qur’an” and “Celebrating the Biggest Blessing”, as these speak about our various responsibilities towards the Qur’an. After a short lecture on these aspects, a panel discussion, workshop or something similar can ensue, followed by a short introduction to your dawah class. At the end of the program, a registration sheet can be handed out and people who sign up should be motivated to keep up to their commitment.

Starting the Dawah Halaqah:

As you start your class, it is necessary to keep a few things in mind: Proper preparation for the class by the teacher and equal distribution of the work load among the teacher, co-teacher, monitor, and staff. Supervision, evaluation, and feedback on the class activities by the shura of the city. It is also imperative to enroll and actively involve all class staff (teachers/co-teachers and monitors) in tarbiyah classes, i.e. Qur’an classes and the book club.

Qur’an Study Sessions in Ramadan:

With the blessings of Allah, during the sacred months of the year, you may get an opportunity to guide souls towards Qur’an study sessions, with the translation and brief explanation of the Qur’an (or Daura Qur’an). According to our central planning, every city/region has to hold at least one “Daura Qur’an” in English.

All teachers are encouraged to prepare for this from the beginning of the

year. Regular attendance in tarbiyah classes as well as continuous revision of the Quran, Hadith, and Islamic literature will be very helpful to every teacher. Apart from this, a special workshop for these teachers will be scheduled few months before Ramadan.

Dear Sisters! If we are not fluent in the English language, we should still continue to try to spread Islam, lest we are accused of withholding the treasure of Islam from our neighbors and fellow citizens on the Day of Judgment.

Even in the Prophet (S)'s time, numerous sahabah (companions) left their homes and relocated to different countries, where they preached Islam in the native language. Though difficult at first, this job can be made easy by our faith, sincerity, preparation, and prayers.

TIPS:

The Qur'an Study Session should be held in place of the regular dawah classes before and during the blessed month of Ramadan instead of arranging another venue and time for these classes. These sessions are obviously more frequent, like 4-6 days a week, instead of regular weekly classes, during this one and half month in order to be able to scan through all of the commandments of Allah in the Qur'an in such a short period of time. (This is derived from the Sunnah of the Prophet SAWS of doing the Daura of Qur'an with the Angel Jibrael as mentioned in Bukhari.)

Before the "Daura Tafseer" begins, an Open Dawah Session with the topic 'Welcome Ramadan" should be held.

Instead of one person, a two to three person team can start off these sessions even if all of them are not as fluent in English. Allah Ta'ala will surely appreciate this effort.

During the Sessions encourage the listeners to realize the purpose of their lives and redirect their pathway to eternal success in such a way that each individual starts to analyze her life and focus on ways to make it more meaningful in the light of Quran.

The complete and comprehensive understanding of Islam, differentiating between Primary and tertiary aspects of our Deen, placing every aspect correctly in the complete Picture of our Deen, Focus of Prophetic Mission

should be explained clearly.

Discuss the responsibility of our Ummah of "Witnessing unto Mankind", along with the accountability it entails. How can we fulfill these obligations through our words and actions?

The importance of good Companionship, Islamic Jama'ah should be explained in the light of the Quranic verses, during the session.

During Ramadan, the mission of ICNA and its Goal and Program should be touched on briefly.

At the end, make the best of the righteous atmosphere created hold and Eid gatherings, plan to make people commit their time and efforts in this mission.

After Ramadan, publicize and continue your regular classes with in a week or so, at the usual time and place, so that people do not lose contact with the Jama'ah.

The Second Step of the Subunit- Organization and Tarbiyah:

Importance of Organizing your Efforts:

All this ground work on Dawah level can easily be lost and dispersed if we don't organize the sisters who understood the purpose of their lives, feel the responsibility of being a Witness of this Deen unto Mankind and feel the need for some Good companionship and a support system for themselves. Organizing them and providing them with a solid Tarbiyah System is the backbone of Iqamat ad Deen. Without this our dawah efforts can not be long lasting in that locality.

From the start of their preaching sessions, every Prophet (May peace be upon them all) followed this methodology and focused on the uniting and organizing their followers. They took solemn oaths (just like filling out a form in the contemporary setting), asking for commitments and bonding them with the brotherly love (Ukhuwah or the Buddy System) to train and purify their souls. The System of Ibadah in Islam, our main pillars are set up as a strong foundation of this Tarbiyah and Tazkiyah Process.

Getting Assembled: Member's Meetings

If there are at least 3 sisters (committed members) in your Local Unit who are managing the Dawah efforts in English, their Member's Meetings should be held parallel with the Local Unit's Members meeting or on a separate date and time.

Member's Meeting (for Usratul Maria) will be held twice for the year 2009 at National level, A regular monthly members meeting should be held in each unit/region.

Consult the National Tarbiyah Dept(UM) in charge or her committee members when planning your Members Meeting in Eng and ask for suggestions.

An Effective Members Meeting's Agenda

The agenda of Members meeting should be according to the Tarbiyah Syllabus and it should be planned on Local Shura Level every month.

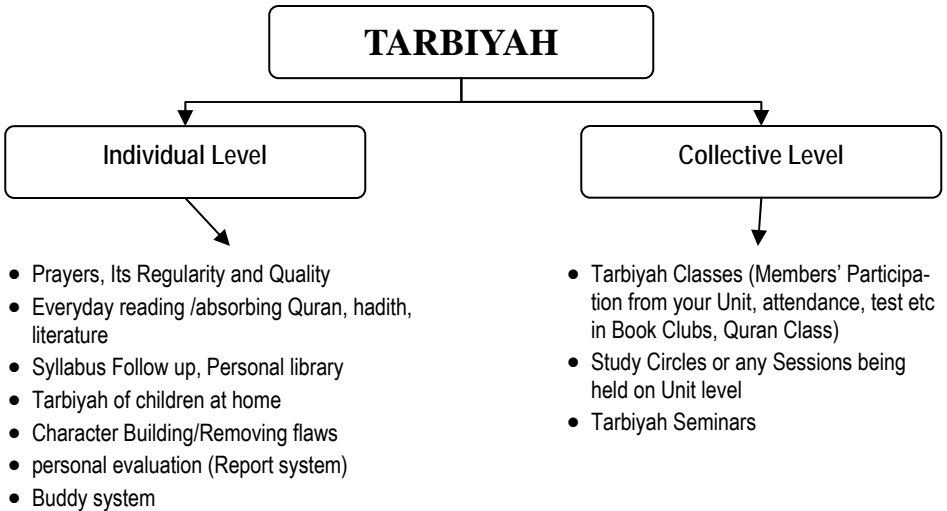
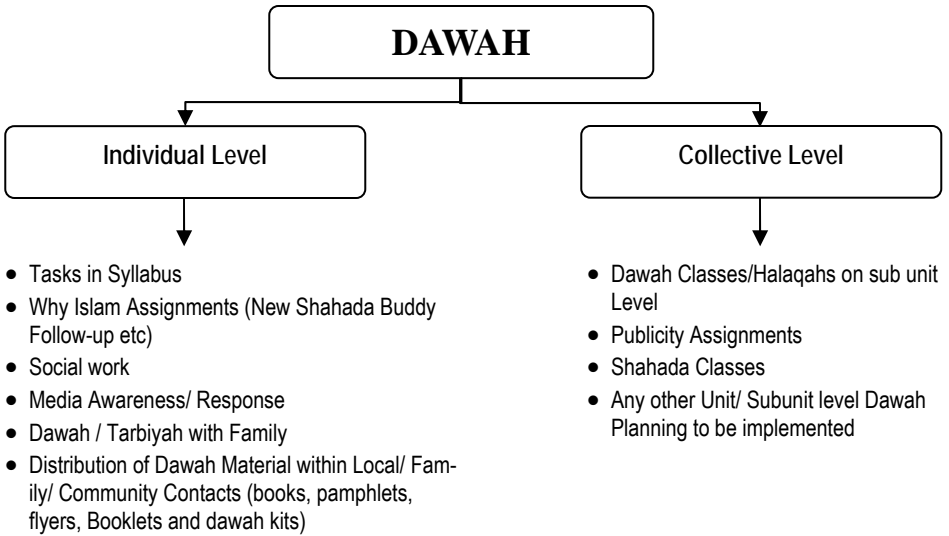
Before making the agenda, Tarbiyah UM in charge, Local Unit In charge and Shura should go over Quarterly Syllabus make sure all points are followed well. Also analyze your Units Dawah and Tarbiyah Efforts on the whole and make the next few months sketch of tasks to do.

Half the time of the meeting (around 45 minutes) should be spent discussing Tarbiyah Discussions/ Study Circle etc related to the Syllabus/ following up on the last meeting agenda. The next 45 minutes can be spent on Organizational Stuff like Evaluation/ Planning/ collective assessment (Muhasiba) and delegation of tasks to all members for the next month.

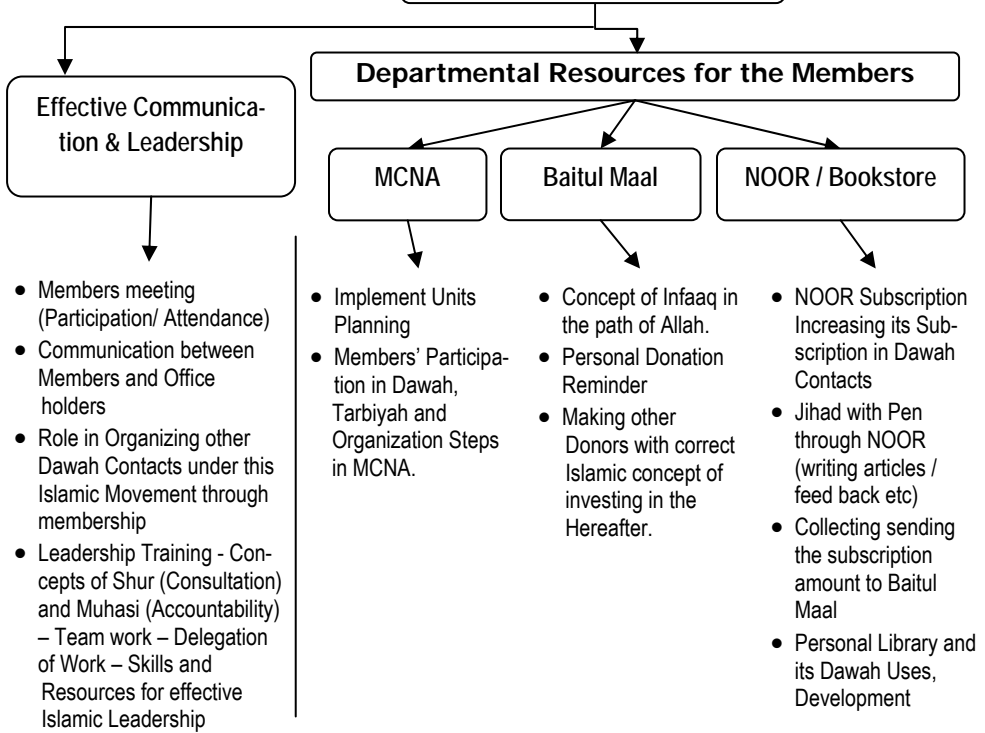
In the evaluation of the previous month's work, every member and coordinator should give an account for her responsibilities and duties. Follow up is essential on all the assignments in order evaluate progress and figure out draw backs. Planning for the next month should be balanced in all aspects.

Please look at the following Sketch of our Subunit level work and gradually implement everything in your Unit. Follow up each months Priority in your Members Meeting.

A brief Sketch of Sub Unit in our Islamic Movement:



Organization



You can prioritize all above mentioned Tasks and categories in this way:

1st priority: Establishment of Dawah Halaqahs + individual Tarbiyah

In the beginning only focus on these with the members so they are not overwhelmed.

2nd priority: Collective level Tarbiyah Efforts, Participation in the whole Tarbiyah System. This should be done while developing Dawah Halaqahs. Members Participation in all aspects of Tarbiyah System will automatically result in more professional and prepared dawah efforts as they increase their knowledge and understand the basis of an Islamic Movement.

3rd priority: Establishing Departments MCNA, Baitulmaal, then others. This will further polish your unit and provide necessary resources and flow as you strengthen.

The Tarbiyah Process: Purification of the Souls and the Society

Tarbiyah & Tazkiyah:

Tazkiyah means Purification and in Quranic terminology it refers to the cleansing of the human self from all that is undesirable. It also includes nurturing (Tarbiyah) and strengthening of all the qualities that are essential for self development.

Success and Happiness in this world and the Hereafter depends on the purification and nurturing of our personality. Allah SWT says *“By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; Truly he succeeds that purifies it, And he fails that corrupts it!”*(Shams : 6-10)

Also the Purpose of the Prophethood of Muhammad SAW mentioned in the Quran was the same i.e. *Inviting Mankind to God (Dawah) **Motivating them to commit to Allah, taking Shahada whole-heartedly (Organizing) ** and then Tazkiyah and Tarbiyah of those who are ready for the Commitment.

It is He Who has sent amongst the Unlettered an apostle from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom, - although they had been, before, in manifest error. (Jumua: 2).

From the above ICNA has deduced its Program/Methodology:

ICNA's Program:

To invite mankind to submit to the Creator by using all means of communications.

To motivate Muslims to perform their duty of being witnesses unto mankind by their words and deeds.

To organize those who agree to work for this cause in the discipline of ICNA.

To (do Tazkiyah and Tarbiyah) offer educational and training opportunities to increase Islamic knowledge, to enhance character, and to develop skills for all those who are associated with ICNA.

To oppose immorality and oppression in all forms, and support efforts for civil liberties and socio-economic justice in the society.

To strengthen the bond of humanity by serving all those in need anywhere in the world, with special focus on our neighborhood across North America.

To cooperate with other organizations for the implementation of this program and unity in the ummah.

The Most Comprehensive Goal:

“ The most comprehensive goal for a Muslim is the single-minded desire to attain Paradise. This desire to seek Paradise is a life-long process which can be sparked in a moment- and this desire will provide the means and the momentum to reach the goal.

Your model for self-development is that of the Prophet Muhammad. In your quest for Paradise, you must personally take charge of your responsibilities, develop the willpower to perform and make a genuine effort to fulfill your obligations, ensure that you make the best use of your time and adopt a balanced approach to life.

Remember that every effort that is legitimate and is aimed at attaining Paradise is also an integral part of the process of tazkiya and that every sin can be effaced through forgiveness - and that forgiveness is the sure way to Paradise. “*And as for the one who fears to stand before his Lord and who restrains himself from base desires, the Garden is surely the abode*”. [Quran 79: 40-41]

May Allah enable us to be among those who purify themselves for “*it is God Who causes whomever He wills to grow in purity; and none shall be wronged by as much as a hair's breath*”. [Quran 4: 49]. “*Were it not for God's favor upon you and His grace, not one of you would ever have remained pure. For it is God who causes whomever He wills to grow in purity: for God is all-Hearing all-Knowing* [Quran 24: 21.]” (Khurram Murad; *Excerpt from his book “In the Early Hours..”*)

Individual Tarbiyah tools and Practices:

The most important responsibility of Local Unit In charge and Shura is to help, assist and motivate their members through the Tarbiyah Process.

Prayers and other Pillars:

The most important aspect for the Muslims, especially the members of an Islamic Movement, is to improve their prayers and become exceptionally regular. That is why prayer is always included in the accountability sheet. Prayer is the pillar that helps strengthen the bond between us and Our Creator. Prayer has been referred to as the foundation of Islam. We are instructed to ‘establish’ prayer just like bricks in a strong building. If our foundation is rock-solid, our building (religion) will not be shaky either. Similarly,

zakat , fasting and hajj are also to be given the first priority.

Daily study of Quran ,Hadith, and Islamic literature:

Just like we eat and drink everyday; the study of Quran and Hadith should also become part of the daily routine of every member of the Islamic Movement. It is one of the rights of the Quran that we read it day and night. We should ponder and deliberate on the message of the Quran and try to apply it in our lives. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said that it is permissible to envy the person who recites the Quran in the hours of the day and the night (agreed upon).

Studying Hadith: There should be a daily study of at least one hadith. This way we will be able to obey Allah`s command of holding fast to the Quran and the sunnah together.

Islamic literature: These books gather all the information from the Quran and Sunnah on a particular subject and paint a picture in a way that is easy for us to absorb and apply. This literature talks about how to apply the fundamentals of the Quran and Sunnah; it does not present some new religion. However, it is important to note which books you are considering as authentic Islamic literature.

To make the selection of authentic literature easier, ICNA's Tarbiyah Department has compiled a reading list of recommended books on different topics which are also given in the syllabus and are part of the book club.

Efforts to improve Character, etiquettes and parenting skills:

Sincere efforts should be made by all members to promote Islamic etiquette and love at home in the form of teaching children dua, manners and other social skills so that 'Sibghat Allah' (color of Allah) is reflected in everything from our words to our hearts and all aspects of our life. In order to achieve this goal, we need to put in extra effort daily and different ideas can be imparted to members in this regard so that they have tips for the entire month.

To implant the idea and importance of collectiveness and organization in our children for dawah and tarbiyah purposes, the establishment and successful maintenance of MCNA units is equally important.

Personal evaluation:

In the Quran it is said that each person should see or evaluate what he or she is collecting for tomorrow (Surah al Hashr). Hadrat Omar (may Allah be pleased with him) said "evaluate yourself before you are evaluated". With this purpose in mind, our members are required to fill out the personal evaluation form to make their everyday prayers punctual and effective, daily reading and such matters. Discuss each column of the evaluation form with your Buddy and other members in order to be able to benefit from it fully. Members need to submit these forms to their Unit In charge so she can give her sincere advice (nasiha) for improvement in these basic aspects..

Personal library:

To inculcate good reading habits and to propagate Allah's message, members are encouraged to establish a personal library. The first step is to collect English Tafaseer (translations with Commentary) of the Quran as well as other recommended books from Tarbiyah Dept's Reading List. In addition to this, other small books and pamphlets that can be helpful for teaching and passing on to others should also be added to this library collection.

Collective Tarbiyah Resources

Buddy system :

All our efforts are directed towards following the way of the Prophet SAWS and we hope to form amongst our members the Buddy System (Brotherly relations) like that of 'Bunyaan-e-marsoos' (A steel-reinforced, strong wall). This way we can help strengthen each other's Iman (faith). To take full advantage of this system, we need to complete the plan and cooperate with each other in UM as well as other such activities.

If there are more than three workers, they can be subdivided into smaller groups as it is difficult to maintain a large buddy group.

Tarbiyah Classes:

Reaping Maximum benefits from collective organizational training

Tarbiyah classes are the best way to gain an understanding of the Quran and Sunnah. Just like at the time of the companions of the prophet (pbuh), these classes help in dawah training and organizational skills. Two classes are being held at the central level

1. Quran Tafseer Classes

Enrolling for both these classes is essential for developing an Islamic thought process amongst our members. Quran classes are held on Wednesdays from 11:30 to 1: 30 EST and a replay of the recorded class is played on Monday evenings.

2. Book Club

The book club meets every Monday between 12 and 1 pm EST for the year 2009. For those sisters who work outside the home, the book club will also be held on Sundays from May onwards.

The in charge of every city/region should encourage all the UM sisters to enroll in the classes, attend regularly and appear for tests.

Tarbiyah Seminars:

National and local Tarbiyah Seminars allow our members to participate and learn on a practical and intellectual level. In addition to this, these seminars also allow for social interaction and proper Islamic environment for learning and development. Being able to impart guidance and being witnesses to the truth (shahadat-e-haq) in a gracious manner has to have a lot of wisdom behind it. Tarbiyah Seminars are the ideal place to learn such skills.

Another objective of Tarbiyah Seminars is to review the past years performance with all members and instill the coming years Action Plan. Unit In-charges and at least some shura members should try to attend along with all English speaking members who are interested in joining the dawah classes, Quran Study Sessions in Ramadan, and other such programs. These Seminars help them a great deal in all their future dawah endeavors.

Developing Departments at Sub Unit Level:

Gradually, try to establish all departments in your New Unit/ halaqaahs. First and foremost, bait ul maal (treasury) and MCNA should be introduced. Then NOOR magazine and the book store can also help the members greatly in their dawah efforts.

Dear sister, all this effort and hard work will be impossible without our deep Love for Allah, firm commitment in the path of earning His pleasure and the sense of accountability as a witness of the Eternal Truth unto mankind.

Adopting the qualities of ahsaan (the best Deeds, goodness), being amongst the *sabiqoon awaloon* (first and foremost) is not easy but the actual contentment in the Eternal Life can only be achieved by such struggle.

Tarbiyah Seminars: Importance and Guidelines

As a part of an overall tarbiyah (training and development) program, it is crucial to have regular “booster dozes” for better understanding of the goals and better performance as a team. In any organized effort, ongoing training and development plays pivotal role in motivating members and equipping them with the tools and skills they need to achieve their goal. Allah Swt instructs in the Quran:

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَآفَّةً فَلَوْ لَأَنَّ كَآفَّةَ قُلُوبِنَا لَفَرَّ مَنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ
طَآئِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ

“.. why did not some people from every habitation leave their homes in order to understand the Way of Islam and to warn their people when they returned to them, so that they should refrain from un-Islamic conduct? (Quran 9:122)”

The As’hab us-Suffah are the prominent examples of the core group trained by the Prophet SAWs through rigorous effort and great sacrifice. They spent their days in deep reflection and would always aspire to find new ways to expand their knowledge and serve the Holy Prophet (saw). From amongst them we discover some of the most prominent companions in the field of knowledge. Hadhrat Abu Huraira(ra), who was generally accepted as the most prominent of the As’hab us-Suffah, was renowned for having an exquisite memory.

Regarding the learning that took place at the Suffah, we find an enlightening narration of Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (ra) who said, “*You people say that Abu Huraira tells many narrations from Allah’s Apostle and you also wonder why the emigrants and Ansar do not narrate from Allah’s Apostle as Abu Huraira does. My emigrant brothers were busy in the market while I used to stick to*

Allah's Apostle content with what fills my stomach; so I used to be present when they were absent and I used to remember when they used to forget, and my Ansari brothers used to be busy with their properties and I was one of the poor men of Suffa. I used to remember the narrations when they used to forget. No doubt, Allah's Apostle once said, "Whoever spreads his garment till I have finished my present speech and then gathers it to himself, will remember whatever I will say." So, I spread my colored garment which I was wearing till Allah's Apostle had finished his saying, and then I gathered it to my chest. So, I did not forget any of their narrations" (Bukhari)

His absolute resoluteness to always be close to the Holy Prophet (saw) is indicative of many of the As'hab us-Suffah. Hadhrat Bilal ibn Rabah (ra) was a close companion of the Holy Prophet (saw) and indeed the muezzin of the Holy Prophet (saw). Another member of the As'hab us-Suffah was Hadhrat Salman al-Farsi (ra) who was an expert in the Christian and the Zoroastrian faith. He is known as the first person to translate parts of the Qur'an into a different language translating it into Persian. Both Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ud (ra) and Hadhrat Saalim (ra) were two of the four companions from whom the Holy Prophet (saw) said it is permissible to take the Qur'an from. Their services to Islam were not limited to the Suffah and whenever the call for Jihad was made they were ever ready to sacrifice their lives on the battlefield despite being hungry, without proper provisions and with insufficient armor.

At ICNA Sisterswing, Tarbiyah Seminars are held annually, along with all the other year-round programs like quran classes, Book clubs, buddy groups, evaluation forms, syllabi, and Leadership development programs. All of these serve as a complete system of constant training and development for the members. Here we will go into the details of our Tarbiyah Seminars.

Tarbiyah Seminars focus on intellectual and practical development of the members and self-improvement in all aspects of life.

No organization can work effectively if all the members are not fulfilling their responsibilities in a diligent manner. Thus, in training the development of a person, tarbiyah sessions help to give them a clear vision about their role and responsibilities in the organization. These include local and national level seminars which focus on training of the member in tarbiyah, dawah

and organizational aspects. The environment of these seminars is completely in accordance with the Islamic regulations. Members from different cities meet together at one place and strengthen their mutual understanding and knowledge, as well as learn from each other.

Abu Hurairah and Abu Sa`id al khudri (may Allah be pleased with them) reports that Prophet Muhammad (saws) said, “ when a group of people assemble for the remembrance of Allah, the angels surround them (with their wings, Allah`s mercy envelopes them, Sakinah or tranquility descends upon them and Allah makes a mention of them before those who are near Him.” (Muslim)

In such seminars, in a short period of time, members can gain valuable information from people working in the organization at different positions. In this, they can gather vital information which can help them to re-evaluate their goals, make improvements in their actions, guide them through their problems and give them a better and thorough understanding to work effectively in the organization.

Ibn Masud (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: I heard the Prophet (saws) saying “May Allah freshen the affairs of a person who hears something from us and communicates it to others as he has heard it (i.e. both the meanings and the words). Many recipients of knowledge understand it better than the one who has heard it.” (At Tirmidhi)

Guidelines for holding effective Tarbiyah Seminars:

There are two different aspects of Tarbiyah seminars that are assigned to different, but collaborated committees.

The Program and the Environment Coordinating the Event (the physical needs, logistics and coordination of

For effective program quality

- Select a program committee with a Program Director, her assistant and some team members
- This Program Committee first discusses the needs of the members in the light of shura`s analysis of progress and discusses what the theme should be
- It discusses then compiles a list of topics to be covered in the Tarbiyah seminar
- If the Tarbiyah Department has already issued recommended lists of top-

ics it discusses them and any more that are needed

- Chalks out more details, the titles, the format and the points covered in each program
- Next the committee compiles a list of speakers, backup speakers, panelists, and moderators and assigns them the programs
- Gets Shura's approval at several different occasions
- Then sends the letters to the speakers with details of their program the timings, the duration, the points, the resources, the deadlines etc etc.
- Sets the deadlines for handouts / ppt presentations for the speakers and collects all of these before the date
- Discusses with the keynote speakers all the points and makes sure they understand what the committee and the shura wants to be conveyed
- Trains Moderators to do the best to build a positive, learning, God-conscious environment in the seminar
- Suggests Shura, the local unit incharges and other local responsible sisters all the things they can do, like having good one – one informal conferences with the members, etc. to make the seminar successful
- The Program Director Keeps in constant touch with the Seminar coordinator who is arranging for the venue so she knows what sorts of program you are offering and she can arrange for such. Like the morning group discussion need different kind of seating arrangements then a panel discussion later on. Or a speech from one of the brothers might need a mike setup outside of the main hall so the brother can address from outside the Hall and sisters can ask questions at the end through messaging back and forth using two laptops etc.
- During the Program, plays their role in keeping the program on track and beneficial, notes their reviews and other points for evaluation
Sits at the end to evaluate and give final suggestions to encourage the members and unit incharges to help each other practice what has been learned in the seminar

For the Organization of the Event:

- First, select Seminar Coordinator and her assistant.
- With the suggestion of the shura, the Coordinator and her assistant should assign responsibilities to different committees.
- Make a team for each committee with a Supervisor.
- The Coordinator should have a list of all the committees and its team members so that if any problem arises, she is able to contact the related

person.

- They should have at least two meetings with the committee Supervisors; One meeting to define all the duties and division of work with deadlines, and the second meeting after the deadline date to overview all the arrangements, and if there is any thing left out, it should be dealt with. For example, the posters, banners, handouts or folders should be checked.

On the day of the event all the shura members and committee supervisors should be at the venue at least two hours before the program to make sure the setup and arrangements are complete.

A list of different relevant committees with their responsibilities is as follows:

Transportation committee:

Arrangement should be made to pick up and drop the visitors from the airport. Different people should be assigned to this duty.

Decoration and Signage committee:

A team should be made to complete these different tasks;

- Stage preparation and seating arrangements.
- Themed banners
- Posters with duas and hadiths related to the theme
- Instructions regarding seminar
- Posters with timeline and program details.
Badges and Name Tags preparation.

Discipline Committee:

This team maintains discipline during the program and breaks and gets people ready for Salah or food in an orderly manner.

Welcome Committee:

- Greets people upon arrival and directs them to the registration table

Registration committee:

- Maintains a list of attendees
- Gives them badges and folders
- Takes care of their luggage
Directs them to their appropriate halls

Food Committee:

- Makes menus
- Places food orders at least 2 weeks ahead of time
- Purchases food items and paper products in substantial quantities and also snacks/fruits for kids.
- Makes teams to serve food at different times
- Cleans up the food area
- Makes poster with instructions and hadith about food etiquettes

Cleaning Committee:

- Poster about cleanliness with hadiths
- Purchase of bathroom tissues, cleaning supplies, garbage bags, and sanitary products
- Make teams to perform this duty at different times especially after Salah and breaks.

Book store Committee:

- Sets-up and arranges for a place for the bookstore.
- Marks prices clearly on the books.
- One or two members of this team are always present at the book store.
- Makes and displays appropriate posters regarding the importance of knowledge.

Recording Committee:

- This team is responsible for recording all the important programs. These recordings help us publish these speeches in books and magazines.
- The team should be well aware of how to use the recording equipment. All the equipment should be checked and tested before it is used.

Sleeping committee:

- Collects bedding before the event with clearly marked names
- Places and puts away the bedding on assigned times.
- Returns the bedding to the owners after the event.

Some other suggestions:

- Luggage of people coming from different cities should be placed in one place with clear markings.
- A separate room should be reserved in case of special meetings of Cen-

tral shura or Local Coordinators.

- All the required paper products / supplies should be set-up in the kitchen a day ahead.
- Deadlines for submission of handouts should be strictly observed.
- All tasks should be completed happily with mutual understanding and sisterhood.
- If there is any food restriction or special requests from anyone, it should be known prior to the event so arrangements could be made
- The attendees from all other cities should confirm their arrival at least 1 one week ahead (air & car travel)
- A team of volunteers should be made so that they could be sent wherever the need arises.

The organizers and teams as well as the attendees should try to utilize the breaks assigned for bonding with the sisters in faith and understanding.

Reading List for Members

Quran:

Tajweed, learn rules and practice daily, read at least 1 ruku (or 10 Ayahs) daily

Tafseer:

Juzv 30, Surah An-Nabaa – An-Naas

From> Towards Understanding Quran, Ibn Katheer, In the Shade of the Quran

Memorization:

Last half of Juzv Amma (30th Chapter)

Supplication:

Morning and Evening Prayer

Hadith:

Forty Hadiths by Imam Nawawi

Sunnah:

- Etiquettes of Life in Islam by Mohammad Yusuf Islahi
- Muslim's Character by Mohammad Al-Ghazali

Fiqh:

Fiqh-us-Sunnah by Usul-ul-Fiqh

Seerah:

The Biographies of the Prophet Lessons and Moralities by Dr. Sibai

Eman & Faith:

- Four Basic Quranic Terms by Syed Abul-Ala Maududi
- Al-Aqaaid by Hassan-ul-Banna
- Towards Understanding Islam by Syed Abul-Ala Maududi
- General Introduction to Islam by Ali Al-Tantawi
- Fundamentals of Tauheed By Bilal Philips
- Book of Iman by Ibn-e-Taymiyah

Pillars of Islam:

Let Us be Muslims by Syed Abul-Ala Maududi

Islam As a Way of Life:

Islam in Focus by Dr. Hammudah Abdalati

Islam as Our Goal and Movement:

- Witness Unto Mankind by Syed Abul-Ala Maududi
- To Be a Muslim by Fathi Yakan
- Commitment by Shameem Siddiqui
- Guidelines for Workers by Syed Abul-Ala Maududi

Reading List for MGAs

(Read at least 2 books from each topic before becoming an MGA)

Quran:

- Towards understanding the Quran (translation by Zulfiqar Ishaq Ansari)
- In the shade of the Quran (complete 30 Juz)
- Tafseer Ibn Katheer (summarized)

Hadith:

Commentary Ryadh-us-Saleheen (2 Volumes)

Seerah:

Fiqh-us-Seerah by Mohammad-al-Ghazali

Sunnah and Fiqh:

- The evolution of Fiqh by Bilal Philips
- The authority of Sunnah by Mohammad Usmani
- Fiqh-us-Sunnah,
- Shariah the Islamic law
by Doi, Principles Islamic Jurisprudence by Kamoli.

Iman (Faith):

- Book of Iman by Mohammad Yaseen,
- Fundamental Principles of Tauheed by Bilal Philips

Ulum-ul-Quran and Quranic Studies:

- Introduction to Sciences of Quran by Qadhi
- Ulum-ul-Quran by Ahmad Vandriff
- Way to Quran by Khurram Murad

Tazkiyah:

- Revitalization of Islamic Sciences, translated by Ahmad Zidan
- Self purification and development by Ameen Ahsan Islahi
- Inner Dimensions by Imam Ghazali
- Manual of Tazkiyah by ICNA

Diseases of hearts and its cure:

- Riya the hidden Shirk-Dar-us-salam,
- Astaghfar-Repentance-Dar-us-salam,
- Duties of brotherhood in Islam by Imam Al-Ghazali
- Sacrifice-The making of the Muslim by Khurram Murad

Dawah:

- How to tell others about Islam by Yahya Emrick
- Dawah program by Shameem Siddiqui
- Dawah and its objective by Shameem Siddiqui
- Methodology of Dawah by Shameem Siddiqui
- Manual of Dawah by Shameem Siddiqui
- Dawah according to Quran and Sunnah by Dar-us Salam
- Dawah among non-Muslims by Khurram Murad
- Muslim youth in the West by Khurram Murad

Charter and Bylaws by ICNA:

Principals and practice of Islamic Jama'ah by Dr. Yunus

Muslim Leadership:

- Leadership in an Islamic Perspective Badwi and Rafiq J Benson
- The methodology of educating according to Muslim brotherhood by Mohammad Ali Abdul Hamud

Islamic Movement:

- Islamic Movement, Dynamics of Power and change by S. Maududi
- Selected Writings by Hasan-al-Banna
- Passages of Truth by Hasan-al-Banna and others

- Priorities of Islamic Movement by Yusuf Al Qardhawi

Role Models:

- Islamic Women Warriors by Asad Niwaz Busaad,
- Companions of the prophet by Abdul Hamid Wahid,
- Men around the Messenger by Khaalid Muhammad Khaalid/
Sheikh Muhammad Gemeiah
- Return of the Pharaoh by Zainab Ghazali

Sisterhood:

Road to friendship, Surah Al-Hujrat

Status of women:

- Status of women in Islam by Aysha Lemu and Fatima Narrem,
- Women in Islamic Shariah by Doi,
- Gender Equity in Islam by Jamal Badawi

Supplications:

Supplication by Jamal Badwi,

Arabic Grammar:

- The new Arabic of the language by Henry Wood,
- Access to Quranic Arabic by Abdul Wahid Hamid

Tajweed:

Easy Tajweed by Syed Abdullah Husaini

Dawah Guidelines

“And who is better in speech than he who says : “My Lord is Allah,” and then stands firm and invites men to Allah and does righteous deeds, and says : “ I am one of the Muslims”(Surah fussilat)

The magnificence of the Word of Allah, the importance of the sayings of the Prophet of Islam, Mohammed (Saws) can be known fully only if one attains an in depth understanding of these NOBLE WORDS, an understanding that will lead him/her to tread on the path of knowledge and thereby provides the moral courage and power to produce a living model of Quran –Islam in Motion.

With the above objective these course details are designed for ICNA’s Local Units (Halaqahs) to develop the basic understanding of the most important SOURCES OF ISLAM –QURAN & SUNNAH OF THE PROPHET (pbuh), adjoining them with useful and authentic Islamic literature and supplications to make a complete and comprehensive guide for any student of Islam.

Practical Tips On Starting Dawah Work:

Looking for like-minded sisters. You could possibly try at places like :

- Masajid (Mosques)
- Social gatherings/Community groups
- Work
- Schools

The next step would be to establish cordial relationship with the sisters. It is crucial to be a role model for others in order to make Dawah effective. Motivate each other and others among your acquaintances to read Quran and Hadith on a regular basis.

Work collectively always and remind each other the benefits of staying united and holding firmly the rope that Allah stretches out to us.

And hold fast altogether, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourself. Q,3:103

It is important to provide the sisters with proper “tarbiyah” System. Encourage them to correct their flaws and educate them about the importance of time and consistency.

Inculcate the values of sacrifice, honesty, truthfulness and hard work in your group.

Introduce them to ICNA sisters' wing. Let them know how it helps to develop the character and increase the knowledge when you become part of an organization.

Some resources that you could use:
Khurram Murad 's "Way to the Quran"
www.icnasisterswing.net

6 Steps on Developing A Quality Lesson Plan:

This guide is not meant to be the one and only way to develop a lesson plan. It is a general overview that highlights the key points of creating a lesson plan. Below is a list of the steps involved in developing a lesson plan as well as a description of what each component should be. You may also find this new [Lesson Plan Template](#) to be useful for creating your lesson plans!

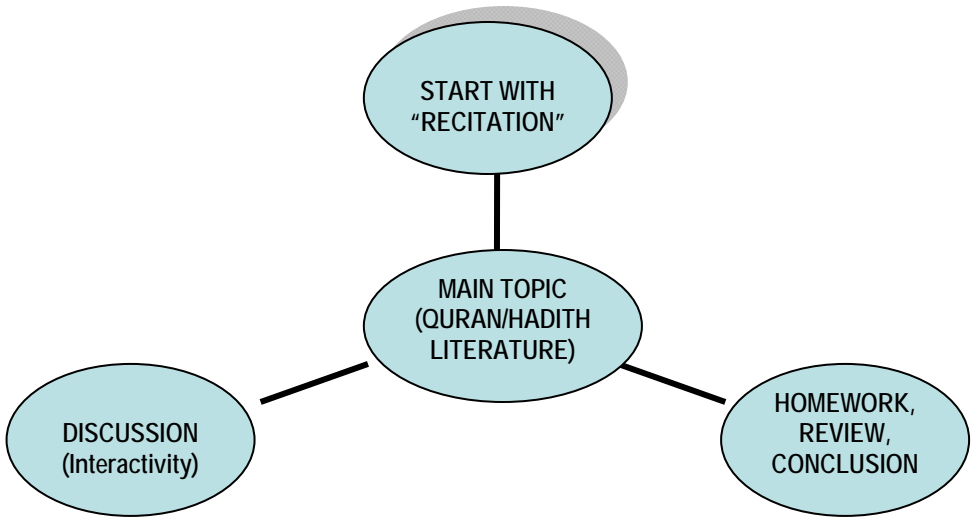
Topic-Preparation should be in accordance with the time allotted for the program / lecture

Anticipatory set- Introduction of the lesson *in question* in beautiful words. Explaining the necessity and need to have that topic, relating it with the lives of people and current news, if any. Quoting examples from Qur'an, Sirah and Islamic history during the session.

Objectives-1)Long-term goals (ex: Motivation participants enough that they adopt this Deen as a mission of their lives, ask for joining us for Dawah and Tarbiyah) 2)Short term goals (perfect administration of every aspect during or after the class, discipline regularities etc.,

Instruction Materials- Provide the students with the SYLLABUS BOOKS before proceeding with any course (making sure students come with all needed stationary to the class, including the books).

Flow of events (or) topics :



- Start with recitation of Holy Quran
- Take on the main topic, put forth your Information in proper sequence.
- Group discussions, reinforcing activities, inputs from the students (assessing the ability of the student based on the input provided)
- Feedback, review of the topic, analysis of the students interest in the topic and their level of understanding
- Homework- Give homework for the next class and check the homework for previous class{encourage those who are up to date and ABSTAIN from publicly scolding or discouraging those who lag behind (instill the zeal to learn).

Analysis of Our Teaching Methods and Strategies:

- Preplan and prepare your lesson thoroughly every time using all the relevant sources.
- Have a written note of objectives of the course and the “message” that should be imparted to the students.
- Do not jump from one topic to other irrelevant issues.
- Layout a “Plan of Action” for the students from what has been learned in the class. Or have them deduce these at the end of the lecture.
- Maintain communication with other teachers conducting the same halaqahs elsewhere. (Exchange Lesson Plans, question papers, ideas with them.)
- Use more “dialogue” pattern of the talk instead of “monologue”. Encourage discussion or interactivity through question and answers (Questions

should have more than mere “yes” or “no” answers).

- Do your best to start and end the class “ON TIME”.
- Be particular about attendance and disciplinary regulations during the class.
- Do not direct your full attention to a particular individual or group (maintain eye contact with everyone, speaking with confidence and softness of tone and words, illustrated explanation can be done to make the speech attractive).
- Regular contact with the Dawah department /Local dawah/Local office for issues, help or material.
- Try to be in a state of ablution, perform 2 Raka’ of Voluntary Salat and beseeching Allah (SWT) for help. Supplicate for purity of intention, seek refuge with Allah from Satan the dejected.
- Respect the elderly attendants and be compassionate with the younger ones.
- A grain’s worth of arrogance could make all the effort go to waste. Beware of this and fight your utmost with your Nafs to repel the feeling of “I am learned/ I am better/ I am privileged” anytime during or after the session.

Recommended Syllabi and Schedules for Local Halaqahs:

You can obtain recommended syllabi and Schedules for local units from Dawah Dept. Our Dawah Department sends several new recommendations to choose from every year with our annual planning in booklet or circular form. Discuss with Dawah Representative as to which one might be best for your specific situation.

Email address: dawahsisters@yahoo.com

All the books are available on following sites:

www.witness-pioneer.org

www.youngmuslims.ca/

www.dawahinamericas.com

www.java-man.com/Pages/Books/alhisba.html book by Ibn Taimiya

Concluding your Efforts:

After completing these courses, try to hold a meeting with all the sisters who are serious and might be interested in further Tarbiyah, and discuss the following books with them:

- Witness unto Mankind
- Commitment By Shamim Siddiqui
- What is required of a Member(4 points for membership)
- Introduction of Islamic Circle of North America-Sisters' Wing
- Clarifying any doubts or misconceptions

Leadership and the Election Process

Concept of Leadership Accountability:

Like in everything else, the accountability on the Day of Judgment holds the core of the concept of leadership in Islam. If it is possible to offer one statement that epitomizes the concept of leadership in Islam, it must be one made by Abu Bakar, the first person to lead the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). In his first address as *Khilafah* – or head of the Islamic state – he told his audience “I have been chosen to rule over you, though I am not the best among you. Help me if I am right; correct me if I am wrong. The weak among you will be strong until I have attained for him his due... and the strong among you will be weak until I have made him give what he owes... Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His prophet; if I do not obey them, you owe me no obedience”.

This is a remarkable statement for any leader to make. With it Abu Bakar defines a social contract with his citizens. He sets out the basis and the limits of his authority as well as the duties of his citizens.

Our beloved Prophet SAWS said *"Surely! Everyone of you is a guardian and is held responsible for his charges: The Imam (ruler) of the people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects; A man is the guardian of his family (household) and is responsible for his subjects; A woman is the guardian of her husband's home and of his children and is responsible for them; And the slave of a man is a guardian of his master's property and is responsible for it. Surely, everyone of you is a guardian and answerable for his charges."* (Bukhari: Narrated by Ibn Umar)

The word used in this hadith is “Raa’in” which means guardian, person in charge, shepherd watching over his flock etc. This includes any responsibility assigned to us formally or informally, any office that we hold, all social duties to our parents, our kids, our relatives, our neighbors, community and society in general.

Seeking the Office:

Though there are many unavoidable responsibilities that are incumbent on us in our society in general, we have been ordered by our Prophet SAWs not to seek formal offices.

Narrated 'Abdur-Rahman bin Samura: The Prophet said, "O 'Abdur-Rahman! Do not seek to be a ruler, for if you are given authority on your demand then you will be held responsible for it, but if you are given it without asking (for it), then you will be helped (by Allah) in it." (Bukhari)

Narrated Abu Musa: Two men from my tribe and I entered upon the Prophet. One of the two men said to the Prophet, "O Allah's Apostle! Appoint me as a governor," and so did the second. The Prophet said, "We do not assign the authority of ruling to those who ask for it, nor to those who are keen to have it." (Bukhari)

Qualities of Islamic Leadership:

Allah the Exalted said: *Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow...*(Qur'an 33:21). Also "*And you O Muhammad! Stand an exalted standard of character.* (Qur'an, 68:4)

In him we see all the qualities we aspire as Muslims. Regarding his leadership skills at Uhud, Allah SWT says *It was by the mercy of Allah that you were lenient with them, for if you had been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So forgive them and seek mercy for them and consult with them in the conduct of affairs. And when you have taken a decision (on an issue), then put your trust in Allah. Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.*" [Qur'an 3:159]

There are many qualities derived from the Seerah of the Prophet SAWS these can be grouped into the following:

- Faith and belief.
- Knowledge and Wisdom.
- Modeling the way, being a role model
- Courage and determination.
- Mutual consultation (Through consultation forums, feedback, informal communication etc)
- Morality and Piety. (Honesty and trust.)
- Superior communication. (Being able to motivate and inspire)
- Justice and compassion.
- Patience and Endurance.
- Commitment and Sacrifice (putting others interest above one's own)

- Lifelong Endeavour.
- Gratitude and Prayers.

For more details on these qualities and more, please read “LEADERSHIP: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE” by Dr. Jamal Badawi and Dr. Rafik Beekun.

Obedience of the Leadership under the obedience of Allah and His Messenger SAWS:

There is no existence of leadership without there being people that follow them. *Leaders do not accomplish anything by themselves; they work through a team of followers.* (Dyadic research; team-building). Also, *Good leaders are good followers.* (Kouzes and Posner)

Allah SWT says in the Quran:

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey His Messenger and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger if you do believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the best [for you] and best in the end. [Qur'an 4:59]

It is narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (s), said:

Those who obey me obey Allah, the Almighty. Those who disobey me disobey Allah, the Almighty. Those who obey my leader obey me and those who disobey my leader disobey me.(Bukhari)

Bukhari related a hadith from Anas ibn Malik in which Anas said that the Prophet (s), said: *“Listen and obey even though your leader is a slave from Ethiopia.”*

Bukhari also has recorded a hadith from Ibn Abbas that the Prophet (s), said: *“Those who dislike something their leader does, must be patient with him because anyone who leaves the jama'ah (community) and later dies in that condition, he dies in jahiliyyah.”*

From Abdullah ibn'Umar, Bukhari relates that the Prophet (s), said:

“To listen and obey is a must for every Muslim in every matter whether he likes it or not. But if he is asked to commit sin, then he is not under obligation to listen and obey.”

Election Process in ICNA:

Election Process in ICNA is established in order for us to be able to entrust the responsibilities to best suitable person available.

As a member of the Islamic Movement, participation in the electoral process for selecting a new organizational body is not only your right, but also a duty as Allah (SWT) mentioned in the Quran:

“Allah commands you to deliver trust to those worthy of them; and when you judge between people, judge with justice.” (4:58)

In addition, this obligation also demands complete sincerity from us. When participating in the process, please make an intention that you will select the leadership that can prove to be a source of guidance and inspiration for all of us. When making your decision, request guidance from Allah through the Istikhara prayers and do not let any personal feelings of friendship or discomfort towards a person guide you in the decision process. The decision instead should be based on the moral values upheld by the person.

While making the decision you should:

Remind yourself of your oath as an MGA (if you are an MGA) as we all would be asked about it in hereafter.

Make sure you read clause 14 & 15 from the constitution so that you can give your vote correctly. Please keep in mind that this is a secret ballot.

Have a sense of responsibility about delivering the trust to the right people because this office is a sacred responsibility entrusted to the person

National Elections :At National level, MGA's (Members of General Assembly) of ICNA vote to elect the Ameer, the Central Shura (from the Brothers), National Coordinator of Sisters Wing and Central Shura of Sisters Wing. Our charter and By-Laws also allows for a limited number of Shura members to be appointed by the Coordinator.

Local Elections: Local Coordinator and Local Shura is usually elected by all members. All local elections are subject to approval from the National Coordinator and Shura. Local elections are usually held in Members Meeting. Your presence in the meeting is a must to be able to submit your vote. The Units that have more than 20 MGA's, according to the By-Laws, their elections will be held only amongst the MGAs.

Appointments: Many responsibilities like department heads and teams for departments and others are assigned to sisters by appointment and not

by elections. These appointments are made by elected National or Local Shura and hence it contains the barakah (blessing) of consultation.

No Canvassing /Campaigning for any person is allowed in any of ICNA's elections.

Consulting other members or Coordinator: Consultation during the process of election before sending your ballot is recommended, provided one follows basic ethics of this kind of consultation.

- Ask about one or more specific qualities mentioned in the Charter and By-Laws about 3 or 4 sisters at the same time.
- Neither of the sisters should at any point express their final opinion in order to keep the ballot secret.
- Keep this consultation private.
- Consulting previous coordinator, shura members, and the sisters at different offices at National Level helps to get to a sounder opinion.

Clause 14 and 15 of ICNA By Laws; Part IV: Qualities of the Office Bearers and Elections

Clause 14: Qualities of the Office Bearers

A) Qualities of the Ameer/President:

1. He should neither desire nor seek this office.
2. He should be, on the whole, the best of all among the members of I.C.N.A. in respect of the knowledge of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, *Taqwa* (piety), wisdom, vision and soundness of opinion, honesty, justice, sacrifice, patience and steadfastness in the struggle of the Iqamat-ud-Deen.
3. He should possess high administrative capabilities.

B) Qualities of the members of the Shura:

1. They should neither desire nor seek this office.
2. He should be, on the whole, the best of all among the members of I.C.N.A. in respect of the knowledge of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, *taqwa* (piety), wisdom, vision and soundness of opinion, honesty, justice, sacrifice, patience and steadfastness in the struggle of the Iqamat-ud-Deen.

3. He should possess high administrative capabilities.

Clause 15: Elections

A. Fundamental Principles of Elections:

1. All the elections shall be held by secret ballot.
2. A simple majority shall be decisive in the Central elections. In all other elections, approval of the Ameer shall also be required,
3. No member of I.C.N.A. shall have the right to do canvassing for himself or for someone else.
4. A member shall be entitled to consult and seek opinion from another member individually.
5. It shall be necessary that the new election be held before the expiration of the term of the existing office bearer. If that is not possible for any reason, the existing Ameer and other office bearers shall continue in their responsibilities. However, this period shall not exceed more than three months.
6. It shall be necessary for the Ameer and other office bearers to take their oath of office before assuming their responsibilities. This oath shall be taken in person or by phone in the presence of the Chairman of the Election Committee, the Ameer, or members as the situation may warrant.
7. The incharge of an election shall be responsible to inform the members of the principles and procedures of the elections and qualities of the office bearers. The incharge shall also make sure that the principles are observed and shall report to the Ameer if any violation takes place.

B. Procedure of Elections for another office:

I. Central Elections:

1. An Election Committee shall be responsible for holding central elections.
2. The Election Committee shall consist of a Chairman and two members appointed by the Ameer in consultation with the Shura.
3. The Chairman of the Election Committee shall be appointed, at least three months before the central elections.
4. The Chairman shall count the ballots in the presence of the other members of Election . Upon receiving a written complaint from a member or an incharge of election about any electoral irregularity, the Ameer shall take appropriate action, in consultation with the Majlis ash-Shura.
5. No member shall be elected for the same office for more than four consecutive years.

II. Interpretation:

A member, after having been elected for an office for four consecutive years may be elected in Committee.

III. Local Elections :

1. The Ameer shall appoint a representative for the local elections.
2. The representative shall obtain the votes of local members by direct secret ballot.
3. The representative shall obtain approval of the results of local election from the Ameer prior to their announcement.

“Leadership is about managing people, and people are the most complex beings to deal with as they have feelings, emotions, likes and dislikes, fears and anxieties, as well as drives, motivations, ambitions and last, but not least, they have the power of choice. People do not follow rules like machines, rather, they adapt dynamically to situations. Hence, managing people requires all of the above and other qualities.”(managementhelp.com)

The Concept of *Shura*: Mutual Consultation

The Qur'an emphasizes on *shūra* or consultation among members of the community on issues of governance, which means the process of decision making in matters, (3: 159; and 42: 38). The commandment on the issue involves both private and public domains, including business and government affairs. The concept of *shūra* underlines the participation of all members of the community in its affairs. Many contemporary Muslim scholars have compared this Qur'anic directive with modern day democracy. But the Qur'an seems to go beyond current democratic practices: It emphasizes on fairness and justice, and if democratic institutions fail to provide justice (e.g. recognition of the tyranny of the majority) for not only for human beings, but also for plants, animals and the whole environment, the Qur'an says that people will answer to God on the Day of Judgment. From the Qur'anic perspective the concern for moral and universal values would be extremely relevant. Good governance must be guided by these values.

What does the word "Shura" mean in Arabic? The word *shāwara* which means 'to seek some one's advice' comes from the root of *sh wa ra* which literally means to take the honey out of the honey comb that leads to the meaning to bring the best of it. Thus it ultimately refers to consult the best among you or the experts and responsible persons regarding a matter before making a decision. In Surah 42 (Shura) verse 38 Allah (SWT) has said the following:

*"And those who accept the call of their Lord and establish prayer (by implementing it in their lives); and their decisions are carried out by **mutual consultation** (...); and they share or spend on the needy from whatever their Lord has provided them"*

In Surah 3 (Al-Imran) verse 159 Allah (SWT) says the following to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) after the Battle of Uhud:

*"(O Prophet), it was thanks to Allah mercy that you were gentle to them. Had you been rough, hard-hearted, they would surely have scattered away from you. So pardon them and pray for their forgiveness and **take counsel from them into matters of importance.**"*

SubhanaAllah! Imagine if Allah orders our beloved Prophet SAW to consult his companions, although He (SAW) was under the supervision of Allah through Angel Jiba'il, how much is it needed in our lives?

There is also a sound Hadith (Tibrani) that the Prophet (SAW) said the following:

*“The one who does Istakhara (asking Allah(SWT) advice in matters) is never disappointed. **The one who consults is never humiliated. ...”***

A Muslim’s life is always connected with people through family, work, community, masjid, city, state or an organization. To successfully live in peace and harmony and progress, he must adopt this quality of consulting from time to time. The reason why Allah (SWT) has ordered us to practice consultation in our daily life is:

Any matter where 2 or more persons are affected by its outcome, it is wrong to make a decision without considering the others’ feelings or input. Justice requires that all those whose lives are affected by the decision become part of that process. Since it is not possible to get opinion of each person, only trustworthy and responsible people should be consulted to make decision. The reason one likes to force his decision on others is because he considers himself better than others. This makes him arrogant (superior to others) and gives rise to lordship of man over man and injustice towards others. A true Muslim is best in character and is nowhere close to these ill feelings. The third and most important reason decision making is a very big responsibility. A God fearing person would never ever make a decision on his own, as he is accountable to Allah (SWT). He would, unlike the rejecters of the Day of Judgment would cautiously consult all the Shura members or responsible parties so the best decision is made. And God forbid if it was not the correct outcome then he alone will not be responsible.

Throughout Muslim History whenever the ruler or leader does proper consultation the empire always prospered and benefited. There are several examples of this:

- When the Prophet (SAW) took some of his followers to do Umrah for the first time, the Makkans stopped them outside of Makkah. The Prophet then signed the Treaty of Hudabiah which seemed to be a defeat for the Muslims but later gave the Muslims some peace with the Arabs tribes of Arabia. This is when Islam flourished at a greater speed throughout Arabia than any other time before. The treaty had clauses that banned the Muslims from doing the Umra this year and Muslims who were in Makka could not go to Medina. Some of the companions were very sad and angry at the situation. This was the only time in history that the companions did not obey the Prophet (SAW) right away. Prophet (SAW) consulted with his accompanied

wife, Umma Salama. She told him to initiate the taking off of the Ihram & shaving his head to indicate the end of Umrah. This act was followed by all the other companions; the Prophet (SAW) was much relieved to see all the Sahabas act abruptly.

- During Umar Abdul Aziz rule, the Muslim captured a town in modern Russia. Once the town was taken over, Umar Abdul Aziz heard complaints from the local town's people that they were not given any warnings or chance to give up according to the Islamic tradition. Umar Abdul Aziz consulted his senior advisor about the situation; they decide to send one of his trusted emissary to find out. He came back and told Umar Abdul Aziz that the local people complaints were valid, so Umar ordered the Muslims to leave the town and return it to the previous rulers. The local people saw such justice and fairness they immediately accepted Islam.

There are so many examples where Prophet SAW consulted Sahabas. For instance, Battle of Badar, Ditch, etc. Also, there are examples when Umar R asked the Prophet if what he said was his order or from Allah. When told that it was Prophet's own opinion, he suggested something better and without hesitation the Prophet SAW accepted it.

Mutual consultation or *Shura* is one of the most important principles in Islam and being in ICNA Sisterswing, it is very significant to achieve the goal of this organization. As members, part of a committee or member of the Shura committee in local or central level, we must fulfill this amanah(trust) as Allah has ordered us to. Not to mention the kind of responsibility is on the in-charges or Nazimas shoulder. May Allah help all of us to fulfill our responsibilities given by our tehreek and will be able to become the kind of personalities once Islamic history produced.

The inaugural speech of the first caliph describes the fundamental characteristic of good governance. Immediately after being elected by the community to succeed the Prophet, he said:

I have been given authority over you although I am not the best of you. If I do well, help me; and if I do wrong, set me right. Loyalty is to tell the truth to a leader; treason is to hide it. The weak among you will be powerful in my eyes until I secure his rights, if Allah so wills. The strong among you shall be weak in my eyes until I get the right from him. If people do not follow in the way of Allah, He will disgrace them. Obey me as long as I obey Allah and his Prophet, and if I disobey them, you owe me no obedience.

References:

- Dr Abdullah Ahsan article "***Man has an Amānah or Trust to Fulfill***"
- Maulana Yusuf Islahi book "***Ettiquette of Life***"
- ICNA Sister Wing pamphlet "***Shura-y-at*** "

** SAW Stands for Sallallahu-Alayhi-Wasallam which means "May Allah's blessings and peace be on him".

The Road That Leads Forward

Imagine a world where you never received a report card after a semester, or where your exams were never graded. How would you feel if you had a problematic coworker but no feedback department to report it at? What if you attended an event and had much to say about it, but there were no surveys through which to say it? Imagine you had employees under your training that you could not write progress reports on. All these scenarios pose a common problem: that you cannot evaluate yourself, your situation or performance, and hence, cannot move forward.

An essential part of our deen in the tarbiyyah department and specifically in the Tazkiya tu Nafs area, is to have an ongoing Muhasibah, or self evaluation, so as to pinpoint faults and to improve on them. As muslims, we have taqwa and know Allah is always watching everything that we do, and in that light, we should watch ourselves.

There are numerous Ayat of the Quran that clarify this point and state that there are no secrets we can keep from Allah. He says:

*From Allah, verily nothing is hidden on earth or in the heavens. Al-Imraan:5
For thy Lord is (As a Guardian) on a watch-tower. Al-Fajr:14.*

Why should we not watch ourselves if we are being watched; why not check your actions since they are already being checked by Allah and all those around us? The obvious reason as to why it is so essential to keep an eye on ourselves is because we have Iman in the Akhirah and in the Ultimate Hisaab, when every action will be judged, whether neglected or apparent by us, and it makes perfect sense to do your own Muhasibah before the ultimate one is done.

We would honestly never turn in a paper to be graded without properly proofreading or double checking it, but would thoroughly review it, omit mistakes and then hope for the best...so why do that with the report card of your life? Criticizing yourself will only increase your chances of having a better shot at succeeding. This leads to the other main reason as to why Muhasibah should be part of a regular routine: because you would never be able to improve without it. If we didn't actively recall and note our past actions, we wouldn't remember most of them. We all agree and observe how we as humans forget many things simply with the passage of time or be-

cause other thoughts just replace them- there is only so much our mind can hold actively at a time. If we consciously do not recall our actions, they will just slip into the distant memory box, never to be opened again, in this life-time. It is safe then, to say that if we do not perform muhasibah after every brief interval of time, say every night for the previous day, or after an event where you care about the performance, we would essentially be at a dead end, where we couldn't learn from nor change our faults. How else could we, as faulty and weak muslims and members, improve?

Our leaders and role models, such as the Sahabah (ra), would actively do this, in public and private, and would explain how this would weaken their Nafs, remind them of the Akhirah and increase their Taqwa. One only has to look into the accounts of Hazrat Umar (ra)'s life as Khalifa and see how this is exemplified and even the topmost leaders should not be immune to worrying about their shortcomings. Umar once stated and what a beautiful statement "*Haasibu qabl un tuhaasibuu*" which means "*Evaluate/check yourself before you are evaluated (on the Day of Judgment off course)*".

As we run about the chaos of our daily lives, this stepping back and evaluating ourselves does not come naturally nor is it easy to do. If we crave goodness in the Dunya and Akhirah however, and remind ourselves of that as the goal, only then can it become a pleasant act to do our Muhasibah. Remaining conscious of death, by remembering your own end and observing that of others', also helps in this process of evaluation.

With this in mind, we have created clear, written report systems to aide members with developing this habit. We should also remember that after we do analyze ourselves and pinpoint where we went wrong, then we should make Tawbah and new, better plans for the future. As muslims, no two of our consecutive days should be alike, but rather be moving towards improvement. Especially in the struggle in Allah's cause, as an active member and Da'i, we need to be even more aware of our actions, as they affect our reports in the akhirah, in addition to the performance of the organization and all whom it influences. As our responsibilities multiply, the depth and frequency of our self evaluations should also enhance. Without an effective muhasibah, we would be on a road that either leads backwards or to a road-block, and does anyone really want to waste their life and not move forward?

A Closer look at our Individual Evaluation Form:

One of the tools that help make the task of evaluating oneself and making progress easier is our Individual Report Form or Evaluation Form. Let's look at the columns and sections in this form and understand how it could be beneficial. (See the form in Appendix _)

Streamlining Salat:

The first section (two columns) of our evaluation form are regarding our daily obligatory prayers. As we all know, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, *"The first of man's deeds for which he will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection will be Salat. If it is found to be perfect, he will be safe and successful; but if it is incomplete, he will be unfortunate and a loser. If any shortcoming is found in the obligatory Salat, the Glorious and Exalted Rubb will command to see whether His slave has offered any voluntary Salat so that the obligatory Salat may be made up by it. Then the rest of his actions will be treated in the same manner."* [At-Tirmidhi].

The punctuality and the focus both are very important in order to receive the purification of the heart that the Salat is intended to help with. This form is more like a log of any activity that helps streamline the procedure. When we fill it in we need to rid ourselves from the feelings of Show Off (riya) or shyness.

Connecting with the Quran:

The next section consists of Quranic Recitation, Study of Tafseer and memorization.

Recitation of the Quran in Arabic while doing your best to pronounce each word right, while trying to understand the meaning has great reward. Many of our sisters may find it difficult to recite a non native language at first but here is hadith that will move our heart enough to keep struggling as we learn. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, *"The one who is proficient in the recitation of the Qur'an will be with the honorable and obedient scribes (angels) and he who recites the Qur'an and finds it difficult to recite, doing his best to recite it in the best way possible, will have a double reward."* [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Pondering over its message and trying to connect it to the present world are equally important. In order to hold on tight to this Rope of Allah we need to

feed our souls with its message every day.

Memorizing any text helps ponder over it, connect it with ones life situations and helps teach it to others. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "*He who does not memorize any part from the Qur'an he is like the ruined house.*" [At-Tirmidhi]. Every month make new goals of memorization and revising the memorized surahs in order to preserve them.

Hadith and Islamic Literature Study:

These sections help us quench our thirst for knowledge everyday little by little. Only one hadith everyday can keep us connected with the wisdom of the Prophet SAWs, the living Quran. Islamic Literature is the company of the knowledgeable that we need to understand the commandments of the Quran in today's context. Discussions with buddies on all of these reading material, participation in the book club as one reads also makes this more engaging and fruitful.

Nurturing our Families:

While taking care of our family's physical needs diligently, one thing that often gets neglected is nurturing the souls and planning for it proactively. We do here and there remind our family "do this.." and "don't do that", but these are neither enough nor very effective. This column is there to remind us to plan for our family's improvement in knowledge, connection with Allah through Salat, Zikr, Quran and Hadith Study etc. The families where the parents/ grandparents provide a boost of motivation for the good very often tend to assist each other in Taqwa instead of pulling each other away from it. One of the sisters used to suggest applying all the tarbiyah systems within the family helps a lot. Like making buddies in the siblings to help each other understand what we read, having family book club or Quran study circles, having family shura meetings (at the dinner table) to resolve any problems or make any plans etc. Similarly involving them in all the dawah and relief efforts can provide our family with a lifelong passion for the cause, inshallah.

Dawah efforts:

Next three columns are a log of Dawah efforts done everyday, for the whole month. This helps us remember our responsibility of Witnessing unto mankind and making some effort in this regard everyday. "Contact" means a simple good conversation (in person or over the phone) that was done in order to try to increase and nurture our iman. Sometimes even trying to get to know a new sister in the area or your new neighbor will be counted in this if you are intending to invite them to the purpose of life later on, inshallah.

The term "Native Sisters" means American sisters, non immigrants. This was added so that special emphasis and effort is made in incorporating these sisters in our Islamic Movement.

Participation in the Islamic Movement:

Achievement of our goal of earning the pleasure of Allah depends directly on the effort and struggle we endure. Fulfillment of our duty of witnessing over mankind and establishing our Deen requires an organized effort. The different meetings/classes/ programs with different short or long term goals are an integral part of this effort. In this column we keep a track of how involved we are in these collective forums.

Buddy System:

Last but not the least is our Buddy System log where we see how much closer we are with our buddies. How much we are helping each other grow in faith and conviction. Our buddy system helps us become a fortified wall with deep rooted relationship with each other.

The rest of the questions at the bottom are to be filled in at the end of the month. We share are form with our Unit Coordinator in order to seek her advice and also so we can collectively know what we all need to work on. These forms are not publically discussed or advertised but actually only returned with comments and suggestions. Sometimes compiled with no names to form a general report of how overall these aspects are progressing in our organization.

All of these are only ways to improve our efforts on individual and collective levels. Inshallah if used with all of these reasons in mind, this tool should prove to be very beneficial in our journey to Jannah.

Buddy System

According to the Wikipedia (the free online dictionary), the term buddy system is a procedure in which two people, the buddies, operate together as a single unit so that they are able to monitor and help each other. When this system is used as part of training for the newcomers to an organization, the less experienced buddy learns more quickly from close and frequent contact with the experienced buddy than when operating alone. This concept is also applicable to minimize tool setup time.

According to the teachings of Islam, the definition of brotherhood or buddy system can be well explained by the following Hadith: it is related by Abu Musa Ashari @ that The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "*The connection between Muslims is like that of a strong building - one part strengthens another.*" The Prophet (PBUH) then showed this by interlocking the fingers of one hand with those of the other. If we look at this Hadith intently, the building is our organization and the members are the bricks that strengthen the structure. Due to the fact that the strength is derived from the members, it is very important that each one of us knows exactly where we stand in the structure and how we need to communicate and bond with our brothers/sisters.

The Best of Relationship:

One finds many different kinds of relationships and associations that are made between people and are prevailing in the society. One of the highest forms of these relationships and a true milestone in terms of human interaction is that of brotherhood. This tight bond is one that ties the hearts of people together in a way that is governed by no worldly gain or desire. Brotherhood yields the fruits of faith and love for the sake of Allah SWT. Allah SWT says: "*And hold fast, all of you together to the Rope of Allah and be not divided among yourselves and remember Allah's favor on you, for you were enemies one to another, but He joined your hearts together so that by His Grace you became brethren.*" (Q3:103)

The Prophet (PBUH) and Muslim Brotherhood:

Soon after migration to Medina, the first important social step taken by the Prophet (PBUH) was the issue of brotherhood called muakhaat. This shows the importance of the bond of Islamic brotherhood and fraternity in Islam, and also that one of the first step towards building an Islamic community is creating the atmosphere for Islamic brotherhood and fraternity.

Importance of Brotherhood in Islam:

The importance of brotherhood is well defined in the Quran and Hadith. Here are a few examples of them.

“And hold fast to the covenant of God, all together, and remember the favor of God upon you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favor you became brethren, and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it; thus does God make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way” (Q3:3).

Brotherhood is synonymous with Islam. It provides strength for good. It is a foundation of peace and justice for everyone. Allah SWT in the Qur'an describes that this brotherhood among Muslims is based solely on Islam: *“The Muminoon are but a single Brotherhood.” (Q49:10)*

Allah SWT further defines this Brotherhood by explaining that Muslims are awliyyaa (allies, friends, supporters) of one another, and this again is based solely on Islam:

“The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin the maroof (all of Islam), and forbid the munkar (all that is evil; kufr): they observe regular prayers, pay Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise.” (Q 9:71)

Conditions of Brotherhood in Islam:

Upon being a part of an ummah/organization, it is imperative for a member to realize the concept and reason behind such brotherhood. The brotherhood described by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and his followers has important conditions.

First, the relationship must be established purely for the sake of Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once said: *“A man set out to visit one of his brothers for the sake of Allah and Allah SWT appointed an angel to watch over him. The angel asked the man, ‘Where are you going?’ The man replied: ‘I wish to visit my brother.’ ‘Do you need anything from him?’ asked the angel. ‘No,’ replied the man. ‘Then why are you going to visit him?’ inquired the angel. The man answered, ‘I love him for Allah’s Sake.’ The angel said, ‘Then know that Allah has sent me to tell you that Allah loves you because of your love for your brother and that He has decreed Paradise for you’.” (Muslim)*

The second condition is that the brotherhood must be paired with Iman and Taqwa. The Qur'an says about the Day of Judgment: ***“Friends on that day will be foes one to another except the righteous (ones who have Taqwa).”***

Third, the brotherhood should be of the Islamic manner and style. This is best exemplified by the Hadith that gives an explanation of two men who loved each other for Allah's sake.

The fourth condition is that mutual advice for the sake of Allah SWT should be an essential pillar of the brotherhood. If one finds something good in his brother, he should encourage and help him in that good thing. If he detects a shortcoming in his brother, he should advise his brother confidentially and exhort him to repent and return to a more correct behavior or attitude.

Fifth, the brotherhood should be built on cooperation and meeting each other's needs in both comfortable and difficult times. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *"The example of the believers' love, affection, and mercy for one another is like that of the body: when one of its organs ails, the rest of the body responds and watches over it by contracting fever."* (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Rights of Brotherhood:

Brotherhood is a responsibility in Islam and each brother has a right on the other. Abu Huraira ® narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *"Keep away from suspicion, for it is the most deceptive discourse. Do not attempt to probe, spy on, compete with, envy, or be hateful of one another, but be, O servants of Allah, brothers. The Muslim is the brother of his fellow Muslim: he does not oppress him, fail him, or scorn him. Taqwa is here [points to his heart]. It is wrong for a man to hold his Muslim brother in contempt. Everything pertaining to a Muslim is forbidden to another: his blood, his honor, and his wealth."* (Muslim)

Al-Hassan Al-Basri ®, said, "Our brothers are more beloved to us than our family and children because our family reminds us of this life, but our brothers remind us of the hereafter."

A Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) says: *"Whoever relieves a believer from a distress of this life, Allah will relieve him from a distress on the Day of Judgment. Whosoever brings ease to a believer who is in difficulty, Allah will bring ease to him in both this life and the next. Whosoever conceals the shortcomings of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his shortcomings in this world and the next. Allah will always help a servant as long as that servant helps his brother."*

According to different Quranic verses and Ahadith, we find out that a Muslim has many rights upon his/her brother/sister. Being members of an organization and working closely with each other in it, it becomes necessary in many circumstances to remember the rights of his/her brother/sister.

Spread Peace: Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: *“You will not enter Paradise until you have faith, and you will not have faith until you love each other. Shall I direct you to something which if you fulfill you will love one another? Spread peace among yourselves.”* (Muslim)

Meet with a smiling face: Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said: *“Don't belittle any good deed even to meet your brothers with a smiling face.”* He also said: *“Your smile in the face of your brothers is an act of charity.”*

Love for one's brothers what one loves for himself: The Prophet (PBUH) said: *“Each of you cannot be a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”* The companions and early Muslims used to prefer their brothers over their own selves. That is why the Quran praised them in the following verse: **“And they prefer (their brothers) over themselves even if they are hungry.”** (Q59:9)

Avoid harming other Muslims by words or actions: **“And when they hear vain talk, they turn away there from and say: To us our deeds, and to you yours; peace be to you: we seek not the ignorant.”** (Q28:55) Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said: *“The Muslim is he from whom people are safe from his tongue and hand (actions).”*

Humbleness and modesty: Hadrat Luqman gave his son one precious piece of advice **“Never turn your cheek to other people in arrogance.”** (Q31:18) Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: *“Whoever humbles himself to Allah, Allah will raise him (in respect) and He will not enter Paradise who has in his heart an atom's weight of arrogance.”*

Slandering and backbiting: This means a Muslim should turn deaf ears to other people's slandering of his/her brothers or sisters. That is why the Messenger (PBUH) once passed by two graves. He stood in front of them and said: *“They (the dead ones) are punished due to minor sins”* One of them used to spread calumny and slander among people.

Doing good to people all as best as you can: **“And cooperate with**

one another in all that is good and pious and don't cooperate in sin and aggression." (Q5:2) Allah's Messenger was asked: "Who is the dearest person to Allah?" He said: "Those who are most useful to (other) people." He also said: "And Allah will surely help the person as long as he helps his brother."

Treating them nicely and with best manners: "And you are indeed of supreme conduct." (Q68:4) The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "The most perfect believers are those who are best in conduct and who are nicest to their household."

Do not forsake your brother for more than three days: "Believers are indeed brothers so reconcile your brothers." (Q49:10) The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) also said: "Let not any one of you desert his brother more than three days. They meet and each of them turns away from the other; but the best of the two is the one who starts with the salutation of peace."

Respect each others' privacy: "O ye who believe! Enter not houses other than your own without first announcing your presence and invoking peace upon the folk thereof. That is better for you, that you may be heedful." (Q24:27)

- Fulfilling one's promise to his Muslim brothers.
- Hiding their shame and concealing their weaknesses.
- Saying **yarhamukallah** (May the mercy of Allah be on you) to anyone who sneezes.
- Visiting the sick Muslims: This is based on a Hadith Qudsi: "My slave I was sick and yet you did not visit me?' The slave would exclaim: 'How can I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds?' Allah would answer: 'Did you not know that My slave so-and-so fell ill; don't You know that had you visited him you would find Me with him?'"
- Attending the funeral prayer and to follow a funeral to the grave.
- Visiting graves of Muslims and invoking Allah's mercy upon them.
- Return the greetings when he is greeted. Accepting an invitation to a meal.

How to Maintain and Improve the Status of the Current Buddy System in the Organization:

Occasionally, preoccupation with the worldly life may cause a brotherhood to become a secondary and routine act. It turns out to be more of a formality to do so, rather than being an institution of love and caring and source of self-improvement of one another. Not only does being preoccupied with worldly matters disintegrate the buddy system, but it also fades our involvement in working for Allah's (Swt) Deen. ICNA Sisters Wing has formulated a plan to better adjust the buddy system to fit your schedule and that of your buddy's. For example, Monday has been suggested for follow up with your buddy, of course depending upon her availability. At least one day of the week should be set in which, as time goes on, you get to know each other well, you become great friends, you constantly are a reminder of righteousness and good to one another, you enhance each other's capabilities and knowledge and studious efforts and do all this with appropriate emails, phone calls and visits. The buddy system, originally designed by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), is not for just a particular time or need, but is a continuous and everlasting bond to make a positive impact on you, the organization, your community, the Ummah and mankind at large. The following are some additional suggestions to rectify a lackluster buddy system:

1. Mingle more in the company of your sisters.
2. Always remind yourself of the necessity of pure intentions, affection, and friendliness among your sisters.
3. Strive to unite all the sisters in the Movement.
4. Concentrate on the aspects of faith that awaken the hearts and cement them together.
5. Should you love a sister, tell her so.
6. When you meet one of them, hasten to smile and shake hands with her.
7. If you take leave of a sister, ask her to make dua for you.
8. Visit her often and on a regular basis.

When special occasions arise, congratulate your sister and join her in rejoicing.

Guidelines for Quran Study (Dora -e-Quran)

Ramadan has a special relationship with the Qur'an, of course:

"The month of Ramadan is the one in which the Quran was sent down, a guidance for mankind, clear proofs for the guidance, the Criterion; so whoever amongst you witnesses this month, let him fast it." (cf. Surah al-Baqarah 2:185)

The word 'so' (fa) in this ayah leads to the following paraphrase of one aspect of its meaning: "Fast this month because it is the one in which the Qur'an was sent down" -- see Fasting in Ramadaan by Ali al-Halabi & Saleem al-Hilali, Al-Hidaayah, 1414/1994, pp. 11-12.

Ibn 'Abbas narrates *"that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was the most generous person, and he would be at his most generous in Ramadan because Jibril would come to him every night and he would rehearse the Qur'an with him."* (Sahih al-Bukhari, Eng. trans. 6/486)

This hadith contains recommendation of the following:

- Studying the Qur'an in Ramadan;
- coming together for this purpose;
- checking (one's memory/knowledge of) the Qur'an with someone who has preserved it better;
- increasing recitation of the Qur'an in Ramadan;

Further, *Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated from her father (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who told her that Jibril would rehearse the Quran with him (in Ramadan) once every year, and he did so twice in the year of his death.* (Bukhari 6/485)

In Surah al-Mu'minoon (23:53), there is mention of the people before us (in whose footsteps we would follow), who broke up their Deen into sects (zuburan), each party rejoicing in what it had. One understanding of this, from the word zuburan meaning literally 'books', is that each sect left the Book of Allah, & concentrated solely on the books of its own sect, so "they split their deen up into books"!

Hence, O slave of Allah, leave aside secondary books and concentrate on

studying the Blessed Book of Allah in this Blessed Month (use a good translation/commentary if needed), for it is the source of all Knowledge in other books, and keep away from wasting time, especially in futile discussions and arguments which lead nowhere, for that is a sure sign of being misguided, as the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, *"Whenever a people went astray after they had been on guidance, they were given to argumentation (jahl)." (Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah - Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir, no. 5633)*

The Objectives of the dura-eQuran

- To give every one an introduction to the Quran.
- To connect people with the Quran.
- To give people the knowledge of the Quran.
- To tell people about the difference between real Islam and the "cultural version".
- To stir up passive listeners in the manner that affected the Sahabah and the early students of the Quran.
- A multi dimensional training through the Quran.
- Establishment of Islam, its need and importance.
- To make people realize their purpose in life.
- To invite people to Islam with love, hikmah (wisdom) and respect.

How to prepare for Dora-e-Quran.

- Tips for personal preparation:
- Inform your family about your unusual schedule.
- Manage your time wisely for your daily studies
- Prepare every juz' separately and take notes.
- Bear in mind the guidelines provided by the Dawah Dept.
- Keep an eye on your weaknesses and try to overcome them(ask Allah for help)
- Keep an eye on the trends of the society, (mental attitudes and abilities of the listeners)
- Keep yourself updated with the current events(do research)
- Sources for research: Authentic Tafsir, Ahadith, Uloom-ul-Quran, Islamic literature, current events etc.

Following are few links to help out the teachers

1-Maruf-ul-Quran in English (www.islamibayanaat.com)

2-Tafseer ibn-e-kaseer (qurango.com/tafseer.html)

3-Tafheem-ul-quran in English ([www.youngmuslims.ca/online% Flibrary](http://www.youngmuslims.ca/online%20Flibrary))

Personal Relationship with the Quran

The believers are only those who, when Allâh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses are recited unto them, they increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone); (Al-Anfaal: 2)

Our relationship with Quran should be exactly like the Messenger's (pbuh) relation with the Quran. He absorbed it in his heart first and then he preached it to others.

Importance of tazkiya.

Purification of our intentions, pondering on the ayahs of the Quran. (Taffakur -Tadabbur)

To find the solution of our problems in the light of the principals given to us by the Quran.

Planning and Publicity

Plan online and in-person Tafsir Sessions in your region, city units etc

Give out flyers

Always have a back-up and a co-teacher

Keep active workers and participants with you. (Potential teachers).

Invite people in Tafsir Sessions through personal calls and contacts.

Teachers and students should work side by side

Assorted Surah's for Dora-E-Quran

1. Surah Al Fatiha

2. Sura Al Baqara: (whole surah) Ummah and witness to Truth

3. Sura Al Emran: (P. 190-200) privilege of collectiveness and importance of Ummah

4. Sura Al An'am: (P. 145-165) Knowing Allah, sincere devotion, servitude

5. Surah Ibrahim (Whole Surah) Way of life of Ibrahim AS (his conduct)

Truthful saying and righteous creed "The Pure Word" in opposition to "The Evil Word" basis of false creed, disbelief and idol-worship

6. Surah Al Kahf: (whole Surah) Reliance on Allah, Importance of acquiring Knowledge

7. Surah Al Anbiya: (whole surah) implementing the character and conduct of the messengers of Allah in our lives
8. Surah Al Hajj: (whole Surah) Rituals and Manasik Hajj
9. Surah Al Noor: (whole Surah) Include the ayat of modesty and hijab from Surah Al Ahzab
10. Surah Luqman: (whole Surah) Advice of parents to their offspring
11. Surah Al Furqan: (whole Surah) characteristics of „ebadurRahman (the true servants of Allah) strength of character and conduct
12. Surah Yaseen: (whole Surah) Remembrance and preparation for the Hereafter
13. Surah Zumr: (whole Surah) Discuss the groups of people in the Heavens and in the Hellfire.
14. Surah Al Hujurat: (whole Surah) Importance of Rasool Allah SAS“s personality and his greatness for us, our social life and moral conduct
15. Surah Ar Rahman: (whole Surah)
16. Surah Al Waqiyah: (whole Surah)
17. Surah Al hadeed: (whole Surah)
18. Surah Al Hashr: (whole Surah) Complete description of Tawheed
19. Surah Al Mumtahanah: (whole Surah) Working with Reverted Muslims and supporting them
20. Surah As Saff: (whole Surah) Muslim Ummah should be an example of “Bunyanum Maroos” strong like a solid wall.
21. Surah At Tahreem: (whole Surah)
22. Surah Al Mulk; (whole Surah)
23. Juz 30: (whole Juz) Remembrance and belief in the Hereafter, take warning from the stories of the Nations, take advice from the repetition of admonition, instill in the mind not to ever forget

NOTE: You can decrease the amount of assorted surahs but the surahs covering the 4 dawah points should not be omitted. The Dawah points are:

- Witness unto mankind
- Continuous and collective struggle
- Meaning of La ilaha illallah- Our Creed
- Introduction of ICNA as a platform for this continuous struggle

Individual and Collective Study

Consider what the esteemed Quran mentions:

“And say; ‘My lord! Increase me in knowledge.’” (20:114)

“Are those who know equal to those who know not?” (39:9)

“Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge.” (58:11)

“It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah.” (35:28)

In the same light, in stressing the importance of knowledge, there are many Hadith as well to consider:

Narrated Mu’awiyah, that Allah’s Messenger (peace be upon him) said, ‘When Allah wishes good for someone, He bestows upon him the understanding of religion.’ (Bukhari and Muslim).

Narrated Abu Hurairah, that Allah’s Messenger (peace be upon him) said, ‘Allah makes the way to Paradise easy for him who treads the path in search of knowledge.’ (Muslim).

Having a regular routine of study is imperative for every Muslim to have. The first word of the Quran that was revealed was ‘Iqra’= read, which gives a strong indication of the importance of knowledge. By observing the lives of the Prophet(SAW)and sahaba(RA), we come to know that they deliberately spent their time, money, mental and physical abilities and all other means to gain knowledge and to practice upon it. Along with men, women were equally involved in the process of learning and passing their knowledge to others. The wives of the Prophet (SAW) were very active in learning and teaching. This tradition has been passed on and must remain alive amongst the Muslim women of today.

To transform from a little plant of knowledge into a strong and functional plant of wisdom, we need a daily routine of study and practice upon what we learn. As we know, knowledge means nothing without practice.

The process of studying can be broken down into to categories of individual and collective study. Both are equally important and one cannot follow either one method and abandon the other. Both styles of study must be implemented in our lives.

Individual study consists of studying Quran, Hadith, Islamic literature, news and books on general knowledge or even with the latest tips or information. The syllabus provided by ICNA is a good guide for individual study. Following that syllabus is encouraged because it helps in character building of a movement-oriented worker. It also helps moving a large number of people in the same direction. Although all the sisters are doing the same reading when studying the syllabus, it is also encouraged to be done collectively. This also aids in one's individual study because knowing your close friend and sister is also studying the same material motivates one to strive in unity. Thus, study of the syllabus is highly encouraged in meetings, amongst buddies and along with individually.

The Quran is the book which is the guidance for our lives in order to distinguish right from wrong and ponder over our lives. We are supposed to do our utmost to understand the Quran and implement it into our lives. Because of its importance, this should be studied just as intensely.

There is no point in only learning a theory and not know how to act upon it. It is a great blessing of Allah that he gave us everything in completeness. Hadith aid us in how to implement the rulings of the Quraan specifically by showing us how the best role model lived, the Prophet Muhammad himself (SAW). We will not understand the will of Allah in its entirety unless Hadith is given equal importance and studied.

For even further and deeper understanding, literature is an important source of study of Islam. It is an incredible experience to read literature because we get the opportunity to learn directly from the scholars themselves. Literature also helps us to implement our knowledge according to today's society, as well as help us to further understand Quran and Hadith.

It is an absolute must to make all of the above our daily routine by allocating time for this everyday, just as we clean our homes or cook. We must not forget that where there is a will, there surely is a way. We should infuse this study regiment so strongly into our lives that it becomes a strong habit that cannot be stopped.

Studying at collective levels has a great significance in a member's life. This method not only clarifies questions, but also helps in sharing of thoughts on the same level and guides the direction of thinking among the workers.

Alhamdulillah, due to Allah's mercy and blessings, ICNA sisters have the facility of attending the online Quran class for their benefit. Attending it collectively with the other ICNA sisters gives many advantages. It gives a clearer and even stronger understanding of the Quran. Questions that come to mind while studying can be immediately answered by the teacher. The teacher comes with a thorough study and research in many tafasir before teaching the class and students are also recommended to go through different tafseer books while studying their every day Quran lessons. Through interaction and doing projects and homework, the understanding of the Quran is enhanced greatly. An environment of closeness and unity with the Ummah is created because we all are reminded of our goal to please Allah in the process.

As previously mentioned, literature is also very important, which is why we have the book club. We usually give much importance to Quran and Hadith and fail to realize that in order to understand them, literature is highly important. Usually, a book study is done individually, but if however, its done collectively, you would get a better understanding of the book especially when you hear what someone else understands from it. Also, sharing what you understood is also exciting. The type of study that one does for a book club as compared to studying for oneself would be different. Knowing that you have an opportunity to share views motivates one to study more thoroughly and to try to remember more.

This is yet another type of collective study called the study circle. A portion from Quran, a book or a booklet is first studied individually by different members, and then they sit together physically or on the phone to discuss their notes, to clarify their confusions, to answer their questions or just for a better understanding of what they studied. Study circles can be performed in a members' meeting, MGA meeting, in buddy discussions or there may be a special sitting for just the study circle.

Collective study was always encouraged by the Prophet (SAW). From the very first revelation to the last, the Muslims would gather together and try to understand the revelation piece by piece. One shouldn't forget that team stands for T- together, E- Everyone, A- Achieve, and M- More.

Why Islam's Guidelines for Ramadan Library Display

1. First make your intention that you are making this display to please Allah (swt) by doing dawah to your community.
2. Seek permission from your local library administrators to set up a display of materials about Ramadan during the month of Ramadan. Permission needs to be sought as early as possible to secure a place for display. If the month of Ramadan is not available for display, ask them for any other month when you can set up a display and make your display a general one about Islam. A sample permission letter is at the end of this guideline.
3. Schedule a set-up date and a wrap-up date with the library administrator. Thank them a lot for giving you the opportunity to set-up the display. Verbal or written thank you note / card is fine.
4. Find volunteers to help set up display at different local libraries in your areas. Delegate the work for making your poster boards and gathering your materials.
5. Below is the list of materials for display. Feel free to add more things for creativity.
 - Poster Board/s explaining what Ramadan is and its significance
 - Holy Qur'an and books pertaining to Ramadan
 - Brochures about Ramadan, Islam and Muslims for people to take
 - Dates for people to try
 - Islamic holiday clothing (kid's size), small gift boxes, holiday cards and crafts
 - Prayer rug, prayer beads
 - Provide your local contact information or the mosque's contact info in case someone is interested in learning more about Islam.
6. Visit your display at least once a week during the entire month and replenish your brochures and dates. Observe patrons if they are stopping at the display. Be available and visible to explain the display and to answer questions.

7. When wrapping up your display, clean-up the area real well and do not leave scraps of papers, tapes etc.

8. At the end, send a thank you note /card to the library administrator for their positive cooperation and for giving you the opportunity to educate the public about Ramadan and Muslims. Book them for Hajj display too and for next Ramadan.

9. Ultimately, thank Allah (swt) for giving us the courage and the resources to carry out this dawah opportunity.

Why Islam

Date:

ICNA (Islamic Circle of North America)
(write your own address)

RE: Request for Library Display in Ramadan

Dear [insert name of the Library Administrator],

As a patron of your library and a member of Why Islam / ICNA organization, I request permission to place informative materials for display at your library during the month of Ramadan. Ramadan is the month of fasting for Muslims all over the world. We abstain from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset for 30 days.

This year, Ramadan will be from September 1st to September 30th 2008. This is the perfect opportunity to introduce and explain the significance of this month to our local community. As a member of this community, I encourage you to please consider my request and allow my friends and I to display the following articles at your library:

- Poster Board/s explaining what Ramadan is and its significance
- Holy Qur'an and books pertaining to Ramadan
- Brochures about Ramadan, Islam and Muslims for people to take
- Dates for people to try
- Islamic holiday clothing (kid's size), small gift boxes, holiday cards, etc.
- Prayer rug, prayer beads etc.

Why Islam organization was created after the unimaginable event of 9/11. The purpose of its creation is to educate the American public with accurate information of Islam and to clarify any misconceptions our community may have about Islam and Muslims. Ultimately, we hope to build a bridge of understanding between Muslims and Non-Muslims.

Many of our members have successfully set up Ramadan displays at their local libraries in the past and they have received a tremendous response. Therefore, we are hoping to extend this experience to other libraries all over the United States that may be interested in expanding their horizons.

If granted permission, it will be our pleasure and honor to set up a Ramadan display at your library this year and the years to come. If for some reason, your library is not available for the dates we are requesting, any other dates would be greatly appreciated as well. Please contact me via e-mail or phone at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your time and attention regarding this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Sender's Name)

(Contact number or email)

Appendix I: Book Club Syllabus

- In the Early hours by Khurum Murad
- Four Basic Quranic Terms by Syed Abul-Ala Maududi
- Book of Iman by Ibn-e-Taymiyah
- To Be a Muslim by Fathi Yakan
- Status of women in Islam by Aysha Lemu and Fatima Narrem,
- Men around the Messenger by Khaalid Muhammad Khaalid/
Sheikh Muhammad Gemeiah
- Inner Dimensions by Imam Ghazali,
- Manual of Tazkiyah by ICNA
- Riya the hidden Shirk-Dar-us-salam
- How to tell others about Islam by Yahya Emrick,
- Dawah and its objective by Shameem Siddiqui,
- Dawah Program by Shameem Siddiqui,
- Principals and practice of Islamic Jama'ah by Dr. Yunus
- Islam its Meaning and Message compiled by Khurshid Ahmed
- Shariah the Islamic law by Doi,
- Priorities of Islamic Movement by Yusuf Al Qardhawi

Appendix II: Forms and Oaths

Islamic Circle of North America

Membership Form

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

1. I agree with the aqeedah, goal, methodology and program of the Islamic Circle of North America.
2. I promise to cooperate in its struggle.
3. I shall seek to practice Islam in my life.

May Allah (SWT) enable me to fulfill this pledge, Aameen.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: Br. /Sr. _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone (Res.): _____

Phone (Off.): _____

Date and Place of Birth: _____

Signature of local/regional President

Com-
ments: _____

Date: _____

Islamic Circle of North America

Oath of Member General Assembly

In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful

I _____ declare that there is no deity except Allah, He is alone and He has no partner, and I declare that Muhammad (SAW) is His servant and Messenger. With Allah Rabbul Aalameen (The Lord of the Universe) as my witness, I affirm that:

1. I have thoroughly studied the aqeedah, goal, methodology and program of I.C.N.A. After its proper understanding, I affirm that the establishment of Allah's Deen in this world is the goal of my life. I am joining I.C.N.A. for the achievement of this very purpose. I have no other objective in mind except the attainment of Allah's pleasure and the success in the Hereafter.
2. I have studied the Charter and By-laws of I.C.N.A. and do hereby pledge that I shall fully abide by its discipline, Inshallah.

May Allah enable me to remain faithful to this pledge, Aameen.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____ Unit _____

Signature of the Ameer

Islamic Circle of North America

Oath of Office for the Ameer/President

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

I, _____, who has been elected as Ameer/President of the Islamic Circle of North America _____do hereby affirm, with Allah the Lord of the Universe, as my witness that I shall Inshallah:

1. Place the obedience and faithfulness to Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) above everything else.
2. Consider achieving the goal of I.C.N.A. as my first and foremost duty.
3. Give preference to the interests and responsibilities of I.C.N.A. to myself and my personal interests.
4. Always lead members of I.C.N.A. justly and honestly.
5. Safeguard my trusts and seek to maintain proper order within I.C.N.A.
6. Remain bound and faithful to the Charter and By-Laws of I.C.N.A.

May Almighty Allah enable me to fulfill this pledge, Aameen

Signature _____ Date _____

Islamic Circle of North America

Oath of Member of Shura

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

I, _____, who has
been elected/appointed as a member of the _____
Majlis ash-Shura, do hereby affirm, with Allah the Lord of the Universe as
my witness, that I shall Inshallah:

1. Place the obedience and faithfulness to Allah and His Messenger (SAW) above everything else.
2. Remain bound and faithful to the Charter and By-Laws of I.C.N.A. attend regularly the meetings of the Shura.
3. Express my honest opinion without fear and reservation.
4. Try my best to rectify whatever defect I may find in the order of I.C.N.A.

May Allah enable me to fulfill this pledge, Aameen,

Signature _____ Date _____

Islamic Circle of North America

Oath of Secretary General

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

I, _____, who has been appointed as Secretary General of I.C.N.A. do hereby affirm, with Allah the Lord of the Universe as my witness, that I shall Inshallah:

1. Place the obedience and faithfulness to Allah and His Messenger (SAW) above everything else.
2. Remain bound and faithful to the Charter and By-laws of I.C.N.A.
3. Safeguard my trusts and responsibilities as Secretary General with sincerity and honesty.
4. Try my best to rectify whatever defect I may find in the order of I.C.N.A.

May Allah enable me to fulfill this pledge, Aameen.

Signature _____ Date _____

Useful Contacts:

Members may write down Names and Contact Numbers of National and Local Office holders here for their reference.

Year: _____

National Coordinator:

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Secretary General:

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Central Shura:

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Tarbiyah Department:

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Dawah Department

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

MCNA Department

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Other National Contacts:

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Sr. _____ City/State: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Useful Contacts:

Members may write down Names and Contact Numbers of Local Office holders here for their reference.

Year: _____ Unit/ Region: _____

Unit Coordinator:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Secretary General:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Shura:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Local Tarbiyah Department:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Local Dawah Department:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Local MCNA Department:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

My Sub-Unit: _____ Number of Members: _____

Coordinator:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

My Buddies:

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Sr. _____ Ph: _____

Sr. _____ Ph: _____



وَلْيُحِبِّوا لِدِينِنا قَوْلَنا



ICNA

ISLAMIC CIRCLE
of NORTH AMERICA

Member's
Hand Book

ICNA SISTERS' WING

166-26th ave. JAMICA. NY 11432
<http://www.icna.com/sisterswing>