

AUTIST AND MUSLIM

A Faith-Based Guide for Muslim Parents and Carers

BOOK 4

WHAT ISLAM SAYS:
HONEST QUESTIONS ABOUT AUTISM



Mustafa M. Farouk



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About This Booklet

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

May His Peace and Blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barkatuhu Parent or Carer

This booklet is the fourth of the five booklets providing a faith-based guide to being Autist and Muslim.

We know that caring for a child on the autism spectrum can be both a rewarding and emotionally complex journey. This booklet has been developed for you – the loving, faithful parent or carer seeking answers, understanding and spiritual reassurance.

Your questions are valid. Your love and challenges are not hidden from Allah, The All-Knowing and infinitely Merciful. This guide is not here to judge or offer easy answers, but to gently walk beside you through some of the most frequently asked questions about autism in the light of Islam. Details of some of the answers or subjects can be found in the other four booklets.

We hope it brings clarity, relief and renewed faith in the unique soul Allah has entrusted to your care.

May Allah strengthen your heart, increase your patience and fill your home with blessings.

With *aroha* and *dua*,

Mustafa M. Farouk

Father of Autist Muhammadu M. Farouk

2 Muharram 1447, 27 June 2025

A Light from the Qur'an and Hadith

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ
الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

Qur'an 2:156-158 – *Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil) but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere. Who say, when afflicted with calamity: "To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return". They are those on whom (Descend) blessings from Allah, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.*

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا. إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Qur'an 94:5-6 – *So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief. Verily, with every difficulty there is relief.*

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُصِيبْ مِنْهُ "

Narrated Abu Huraira, the Prophet ﷺ said, "If Allah wants to do good to somebody, He afflicts him with trials."

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّ عِظَمَ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عِظَمِ الْبَلَاءِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَا وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ السَّخَطُ.» «رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ وَابْنُ مَاجَهَ

The Prophet ﷺ said "The magnitude of the reward goes along with the magnitude of the affliction. When Allah who is great and glorious loves people, He afflicts them, and those who accept it gladly receive Allah's good pleasure, but those who are displeased receive Allah's displeasure". Mishkat al-Masabih 1566.

These verses and hadiths remind us that every challenge including raising a child with autism carries hidden gifts. It invites us to reflect on the promise of ease and mercy embedded in our struggles.

Introduction

Why We're Asking.....

Autism can feel like a mystery to many families, especially within Muslim communities where understanding is still growing. Parents and carers often face questions that are emotional, practical and spiritual. This booklet was made to walk alongside you, to bring reassurance from Islam's compassionate teachings, and to uplift your parenting and caring journey with hope. These questions reflect the concerns many families have raised from daily caregiving to religious responsibilities and community inclusion. No two autistic children are the same and no path is linear. We pray these reflections help illuminate yours, and Allah SWT Knows Best.

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Quran 39:9 Say: "Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endued with understanding that receive admonition."

فَسَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Quran 16:43 "... if ye realise this not, ask of those who possess the Message."

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said: "The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim." (At-Tirmidhi).

He ﷺ also used to say: "O Allah, grant me benefit in what You have taught me, teach me what will be of benefit to me, and increase my knowledge." (At-Tirmidhi).

I have also selected 30 Names/attributes of Allah SWT that parents and carers can call upon during their supplications related to their autistic wards for strength and patience. As Allah SWT says in the Qur'an 7:180 – وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا – "The most beautiful names belong to Allah. So, call on him by them. And in Qur'an 13:26 – أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ – for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction."

These verses of the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ remind us of the importance of knowledge regarding all we do; and reliance on Allah SWT.

Q1: Is autism a test from Allah SWT?

In Islam, life's challenges, including disabilities, are viewed as tests from Allah to strengthen faith and refine our character.

Autism should not be seen as a burden, but as an opportunity for growth in patience (*ṣabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), and deep spiritual connection with Allah SWT.

Disability is not a punishment. Rather, it is an occasion for those with ability to thank Allah, and for those affected, including caregivers, to respond with fortitude, thus earning immense reward in the hereafter.

Allah SWT Says in the Quran 2:156

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

“Who say, when afflicted with calamity: “To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return””

The hadith of the Prophet ﷺ reminds us that “The affair of a believer is perplexing, when good happens to him, he thanks Allah, and when bad happens to him he is patient and for both he gets rewarded in the hereafter.” (Sahih Muslim).

الرحمن
رحمنا الله

Allah SWT is Ar-Rahman – The Most Compassionate: His boundless compassion embraces every soul, regardless of ability.

Q2: Why did Allah SWT create some individuals with autism?

When faced with life's challenges, it's natural to ask why, especially when it comes to understanding autism in your child. As Muslim parents and carers, finding a sense of purpose and spiritual peace in this journey is very important.

Allah's Purposeful Creation

Every creation by Allah SWT has a purpose. Just as an intricate mosaic is made of many unique pieces, each autistic individual is a distinct and valuable part of Allah's design. They often offer unique insights and ways of seeing the world that can enrich our society and bring unexpected opportunities for growth, if we are open to them.

Even if we don't always fully grasp the wisdom behind every divine act, rest assured that behind every decision of Allah, there are one or many wise purposes. Our human intellect is finite, while Allah's Wisdom is infinite and unlimited.

A Divine Dialogue: Adam AS and Acceptance

This very question of why disabilities exist was first asked by Prophet Adam AS. When he was shown his descendants, including those with disabilities, he sought understanding from Allah SWT. Allah's profound response indicated that He allows such conditions "in order to be thanked" or "so that My gift will be thanked for."

This teaches us a very important lesson – while we may not always understand the full purpose behind every aspect of Allah's Will, our role is to accept His decree, practice patience and express gratitude to Him. This acceptance brings inner serenity and spiritual strength, knowing your child is a precious trust and a unique blessing from Allah SWT.



Allah SWT is Al-Hakim – The All-Wise: Every mind, including the autistic mind, is designed with divine wisdom.

Q3: Why do some verses in the Qur'an, especially 2:18, 171; 6:39; 11:24; 13:19; 17:72, 47:23, depict disabilities in a negative way or refer to disabilities negatively?

Sometimes, when reading the Qur'an, we encounter verses like the ones in this question that use terms like "blind" or "deaf" in ways that can be confusing, especially when discussing disability. It's important to understand that these verses are not referring to physical or mental disabilities as we understand them today.

Instead, these terms are used metaphorically to describe spiritual states. The Qur'an uses them to refer to people who, despite repeatedly hearing divine messages from Allah's Prophets, stubbornly refused to open their hearts and minds. Their senses' ability to truly see, hear and grasp the divine truth are impaired spiritually, not physically. Consequently, they deprived themselves of Allah's mercy.

In contrast, the Qur'an's approach to individuals with actual physical and mental disabilities is one of compassion and alleviation, not reproach or blame. Verses like 24:61, 48:17 and 80:1-11 clearly show that those with real disabilities are granted legal ease and exemptions. This distinction highlights a profound truth in Islam, which is that true disability lies in the spiritual realm when one refuses to connect with Allah SWT, rather than in any physical or mental condition.



Allah SWT is Al-Hakam – The Judge: His judgment of worth is not based on worldly measures of normalcy.

Q4: Does autism indicate divine punishment? Is giving birth to an autistic a punishment to parents for their sins?

In Islam, disabilities are not seen as punishments, but rather as an integral part of Allah’s vast divine wisdom. Everyone is accountable only for their own actions. No one bears the burden of another’s sins or is punished for the benefit of others.

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ وَإِن تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ حِمْلِهَا لَا يُحْمَلُ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ
الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَمَن تَزَكَّىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّىٰ لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

Qur’an 35:18 “Nor can a bearer of burdens bear another’s burdens if one heavily laden should call another to (bear) his load. Not the least portion of it can be carried (by the other). Even though he be nearly related. Thou canst but admonish such as fear their Lord unseen and establish regular Prayer. And whoever purifies himself does so for the benefit of his own soul; and the destination (of all) is to Allah.”

Instead, when a parent or carer embraces an autistic child with patience and acceptance of Allah’s Will SWT, this act of devotion brings immense rewards. Among these blessings, if the autistic individual is not held accountable for their actions (non-*mukallaf*), their carer may even benefit from their intercession on the Day of Judgment.

As narrated by Aisha (RA), the Prophet ﷺ taught us:

لَا يُصِيبُ الْمُؤْمِنَ شَوْكَةٌ فَمَا فَوْقَهَا إِلَّا رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ بِهَا دَرَجَةً وَحَطَّ عَنْهُ بِهَا خَطِيئَةٌ

“The magnitude of reward is contingent upon the magnitude of affliction.” He also said, “Nothing befalls the believer, even if it were a thorn being pricked with, but Allah SWT records thereby the reward of a good deed for him or expiates a sin for him.”

These profound teachings highlight that enduring challenges with faith and patience leads to greater divine blessings and purification of sins.

الخالق
جل جلاله

Allah SWT is Al-Khaliq – The Creator: Autism is part of His creative diversity in humanity.

Q5: Is giving birth to an autistic related to the marriage of near relatives like close cousins?

There is no evidence that marrying one's close relative, like a cousin, results in giving birth to an autistic. Allah SWT specified those whom we can and cannot marry (Qur'an 4:23; 33:50). The Prophet ﷺ allowed Ali RA to marry his cousin and daughter of the Prophet ﷺ Fatuma RA. The main issue is religion and morality. The Prophet ﷺ said: "A woman should be married for her qualities: her property, her blood-lineage, her beauty and her religion. If you are lucky to find a religious woman then you are victorious". He ﷺ also said: "If you meet someone whose religion and morals satisfy you, then marry him/her, if you do not do so there will be chaos and great destruction on earth".

العَلِيمُ
جَلَّالَهُ

Allah SWT is Al-'Alim – The All-Knowing: He understands every sensory overload, every unique thought pattern.

Q6: Can autistic individuals achieve spiritual awareness and closeness to Allah SWT?

An autistic person's spiritual journey is valid and authentic, even if its manifestations differ from what society typically expects. Their spiritual awareness means respecting their unique processing styles, recognising their strengths, and providing opportunities for them to connect with the divine or their sense of purpose in ways that resonate with their individual neurotype.

A common autistic trait is a preference for literal interpretation and strongly valuing authenticity and honesty. This can translate into a very sincere and unpretentious approach to faith and spiritual practices (*Ikhlas*). They may find great comfort and spiritual clarity in the direct, unembellished truths of religious texts, unburdened by social nuances or metaphorical complexities that might dilute the message for others.

Many autistic individuals have a strong appreciation for patterns, systems and order. This can lead to a deep spiritual connection to the divine order in the universe, finding profound beauty and purpose in the consistent laws of nature or the structured patterns within sacred geometry or religious rituals.

Autistic individuals often have rich inner worlds. Their spiritual awareness might be highly internalised. It may be expressed less through outward social rituals and more through deep personal contemplation, unique forms of worship or private moments of transcendence.

There are many verses in the Qur'an including 2:164; 3:190; 4:82; 6:99; 16:69; 30:20-25; 22:46; 36:34-44; 45:3-5; 47:24; 50:6-8; 78:7-16; 88:17-20 that Allah SWT draws our attention to his signs (As He Says in Qur'an 50:8 *To be observed and commemorated by every devotee turning to Allah*). Because of the unique abilities of autists to focus, think deeply and how their minds work, it is possible that some autists may have stronger insight and awareness about Allah SWT and *yaqeen* (certainty) about the (Islamic beliefs and practices) – much more than their neurotypical equivalents.

اللَّهُ
الْوَدُودُ

Allah SWT is Al-Wadud – The Most Loving: Allah's love is unconditional, not dependent on societal standards.

Q7: Do autists have a special place in the Eyes of Allah SWT?

Before Allah SWT humans are all one, and he gets most honour who is most righteous.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

Qur'an 49:13 “O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).”

However, anyone who is afflicted with a challenge (Quran 2:156), including autism, and exhibits the moral attitudes/responses including servitude, patience (*sabr*) and gratitude (*shukr*), has a special place in the eyes of Allah SWT Who Says:

أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

Qur'an 2:157 “They are those on whom (Descend) blessings from Allah, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.”

الوكيل
جَلَّالٌ

Allah SWT is Al-Wakil – The Trustee:
Autistic people and their families
can entrust their affairs to Him.

Q8: Are autism or similar conditions mentioned in Islamic religious scriptures?

Autism, as currently understood, is not found in the Qur'an. In the Qur'an (2:282; 4:5-6) the word *Sufaha* (*Safih* singular) was used to describe those with weak understanding as opposed to those of sound understanding (*rushdan*).

While autism is not explicitly mentioned, the mind is described in Islamic literature in terms related to its function, understanding what is right and wrong and what is good or bad for the individual physically, morally and spiritually. This ability is tied to the intellectual capacity (in Arabic '*aql*') of such an individual.

According to scholars, '*aql* resides in the brain, and its function is closely tied to the heart. '*Aql* is mentioned 49 times in verb form in the Qur'an including *ya'qilun*, *ta'qilun*, '*aqalu*, *ya'qiluha* and *na'qilu* referring to the 'use of intellect'. Other terms pertaining to '*aql* in the Qur'an are *qalb* (heart), *lub* (minds), *nuha* (smart), *fikr* (thinks), *fiqh* (comprehension), *tadabbur* (reflection), *i'tibar* (lesson), *hikmah* (wisdom) and *ulul albab* (men of understanding).

Using the verb for '*aql* denotes the use of the intellect, rather than the intellect itself.



Allah SWT is Al-Musawwir – The Fashioner: Every brain's wiring is a unique design from Him.

Q9: Will autistic individuals be judged differently on the Day of Judgment? Do they have juridical status for responsibility (*taklīf*)

Judgment is based on individual capacity and intentions, with Allah’s justice encompassing all circumstances. *Mukallaf* is derived from the word *taklīf*, which literally means responsibility or being held accountable for our actions.

The first step in fulfilling the *taklīf* is to understand and comprehend the *khiṭāb*, because the act of fulfilling must be done according to Allah SWT’s intended purpose and following the example set by the Prophet ﷺ in his sunnah. Some Autists, depending on where they sit on the spectrum, would possess no juridical status for responsibility or won’t be held responsible for their actions. Autists’ abilities should be determined by clinical experts and based on their expert assessment juridical responsibilities for the individual can be ascertained. Ultimately, Allah SWT is the One Who Knows Best the juridical status of everyone including an autist.

At-takleef (being bound by religious responsibility and duty, commands, prohibitions, reward and punishment) are all dependent upon *al-‘aql* (having intellect). Intellect refers to the ability to reason, think abstractly and comprehend complex ideas. The Prophet ﷺ said, “the pen does not record the deeds of the sleeping person until he awakes, the child until he reaches puberty, and the insane until he recovers his mind.”

There are three requirements under Islamic criminal law for the application of punishment: (1) will, (2) knowledge and (3) intent. That is, to be punishable by law, “the offender must have had the power to commit or not to commit the act; he must have known that the act was an offence; and he must have acted with intent”. **“And action is required from each person in accordance with the level of intellect that he has been given.”**

It was narrated from ‘Ali bin Abu Talib RA that:

يُرْفَعُ الْقَلَمُ عَنِ الصَّغِيرِ وَعَنِ الْمَجْنُونِ وَعَنِ النَّائِمِ

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The Pen is lifted from the minor, the insane person and the sleeper.” Sunan Ibn Majah Vol. 3, Book 10, Hadith 2042.

Narrated Al-Bara, When the Verse: -- “*Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home)*” (Qur’an 4:95) was revealed, Allah’s Apostle ﷺ called for Zaid who wrote it. In the meantime, Ibn Um Maktum, a blind companion of the Prophet ﷺ, came and complained of his blindness, so Allah revealed: “*Except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame...*” etc.) (Qur’an 4.95). Sahih al-Bukhari 4593. Book 65, Hadith 115.



Allah SWT is As-Sami' – The All-Hearing:
He hears what autistic individuals
cannot always express verbally.

Q10: How can autists engage in prayer and worship if they struggle with routine or sensory overload?

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ ۗ
وَأَعْفُ عَنَّا وَآغْفِرْ لَنَا وَأَرْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

Qur'an 2:286 On no soul doth Allah Place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Pray:) "Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error, our Lord! Lay not on us a burden Like that which Thou didst lay on those before us, Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. Thou art our Protector; Help us against those who stand against faith."

Similarly, the Saying of Allah SWT that “no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear” (Qur'an 6:152; 23:62) underscores the Mercy of Allah SWT and His Judgement of individuals based on their abilities. In fact, we get rewarded more if we struggled more to fulfil our religious requirements. Thus, autists may be rewarded more for their struggles to meet those requirements compared to neurotypical individuals.

البصير
جَلَّالَهُ

Allah SWT is Al-Basir – The All-Seeing: He sees their internal struggles and unspoken strengths.

Q11: How can a person with autism fulfil their religious duties if they struggle with communication or social interaction?

In Islam, individuals are only held accountable for religious duties they can perform. If an autistic individual's condition significantly impairs their cognitive understanding or physical ability to perform a duty (e.g. a non-verbal person who cannot comprehend the meaning of prayer recitations, or someone with severe sensory issues that prevent mosque attendance), they may be exempt, or their requirements significantly eased. Allah SWT holds individuals accountable only for what they are capable of, and those unable to practice due to severe conditions will not be held responsible on the Day of Judgment. Allah SWT Says:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَأَسْمِعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِّأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ - فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

64:16 *So fear Allah as much as ye can; listen and obey and spend in charity for the benefit of your own soul and those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, - they are the ones that achieve prosperity.*

Ultimately, fulfilling religious duties for an autistic individual is about meeting them where they are, recognising their unique strengths and challenges, and providing a supportive, understanding and accommodating environment that allows them to connect with Allah SWT in the way that is most meaningful and achievable for them.

التَّكْوِينُ
حَمْدًا لِلَّهِ

Allah SWT is Ash-Shakur – The Appreciative: He values even the smallest efforts they make.

Q12: What accommodation can be made for an autistic person in religious spaces and functions?

All effort should be made to accommodate autistic individuals in the mosque and at social gatherings. However, during worship, accommodation is done for most attendees, and the *maqasid* of sharia, in terms of prioritising spaces, must be followed. If an autistic person is sensitive to loud noises, they should be given mufflers; if lights, they can be placed in smaller rooms; they can also come to the prayers where recitation is quiet such as during zuhr and asr when lights do not need to be turned on during the day.

Under no circumstances should a larger group of worshippers be denied worship to accommodate a few, including autists. On the other hand, no one should be denied the opportunity to worship in congregation as much as possible. Therefore, families need to work with the management of mosques and be sensitive to the needs of the mosque's majority of worshippers, as they expect their needs to be accommodated. Because the five daily prayers require the full concentration (*khushuh*) of those praying, if an autistic person is disruptive or makes noises, it is better not to bring him/her during congregational prayers, but to let them pray at home or pray in the mosque after the congregational prayers are completed.

All other activities that do not require the level of *khushuh* expected during prayers should accommodate even the noisiest autists.



Allah SWT is As-Sabur – The Patient:
He embodies the patience
caregivers and autistic individuals
often need — and rewards it greatly.

Q13: Can autists inherit from parents and relatives?

Autistic children can inherit from parents and relatives just like their neurotypical equivalents, as clearly spelled out in the Qur'an (4:11, 12, 33, 176). Whether the inheritance is handed over to the autistic would depend on their abilities to manage their own affairs (4:2, 5-6).

وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوْلَىٰ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَأَتَوْهُمْ نَصِيحَتُهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا

Qur'an 4:33 – To (benefit) everyone, We have appointed shares and heirs to property left by parents and relatives. To those, also, to whom your right hand was pledged, give their due portion. For truly Allah is witness to all things.

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا
مَعْرُوفًا

Qur'an 4:5 – To those weak of understanding Make not over your property, which Allah hath made a means of support for you, but feed and clothe them therewith, and speak to them words of kindness and justice.

Autists can also be bequeathed money or property by family members, just like their neurotypical equivalents (Qur'an 2:180; 5:106). An autistic may be favoured over a neurotypical individual when it comes to property bequests, particularly those who have limited abilities to earn a living themselves. Some jurists suggest that it is not against the spirit of *sharia* for a father to favour one of his children with a *Waqf* as a kind of consideration for his/her disability, providing it is not done maliciously to deprive other inheritors of their rights.

الْبَرُّ
جَلَالُهُ

Allah SWT is Al-Barr – The Source of All Goodness: All variations in human minds are part of His goodness.

Q14: Does autism make a person more likely to be violent or attracted to extremism?

This is a serious and important question, especially in an age where fear and misinformation often cloud how we view autism and difference. As Muslims, we are taught to judge justly, to protect the honour of others, and to seek understanding through both faith and reason.

Autism is not a flaw, and it is certainly not a pathway to violence. In fact, many autistic people are deeply sensitive to harm and injustice. They may be especially distressed by violence or chaos. Scientific studies clearly show that autism, by itself, does not lead to violent behaviour or terrorism. People on the autism spectrum are more likely to be victims of bullying and abuse than to cause harm.

However, like all people, some autistic individuals may struggle with understanding complex emotions, be socially isolated or become intensely focused on certain interests. These challenges do not make them violent — but they can become vulnerable if not adequately supported. Some researchers note that when autistic individuals lack support, or are exposed to online grooming or harmful ideologies, their loyalty or literal thinking might be taken advantage of. But this is not a problem of autism – it is a failure of protection and community care.

As a Muslim community, our duty is not to fear autistic children or adults, but to protect and nurture them. We should ask ourselves:

Are they included in our mosques, classrooms and other common spaces?

Do they have mentors who guide them with gentleness?

Do we honour their uniqueness and help them make sense of the world through faith and trust in Allah?

If we abandon our children, whether autistic or not, we leave them vulnerable to loneliness, confusion and the harmful influences of individuals waiting to prey on their vulnerabilities.

اللَطِيفُ

Allah SWT is Al-Latif – The Subtly Kind: He understands the subtle needs and inner worlds of autistic individuals, even when others overlook them.

Q15: Can an autistic be an Imam or religious leader?

Leadership roles are based on knowledge, piety and capability; neurological differences do not inherently disqualify individuals. It is generally agreed that people with disabilities can be employed and paid wages. There are, however, some positions that people with certain disabilities would not be able to do because they would not be able to execute the task entrusted to them. People with mental disabilities like autism would not be capable of doing traditional roles like being a muezzin, imam, judge or caliph.

While an autistic may lead individuals in prayers if he understands and can complete a prayer with all its requirements, the role of an Imam of a community extends significantly beyond merely leading prayers; they are expected to be devout spiritual guides, community leaders, educators and moral exemplars. This necessitates good knowledge of Islamic texts such as the Qur'an, Sunnah, Hadith and Fiqh, coupled with a strong foundation in Islamic history and theology.

Beyond scholarly attainment, an Imam must embody exemplary piety (*Taqwa*) and strong moral character, serving as an upright role model through virtues like integrity, sincerity, humility and compassion. Effective leadership and interpersonal skills are also crucial, encompassing not only the ability to lead prayers correctly but also to communicate inspiringly, provide wise counselling, foster community unity, and commit to continuous personal and intellectual development. If an autistic can accomplish all those requirements, then he can be an Imam or hold any other religious position.

For any given role in the society, an autistic should only be limited by their abilities in fulfilling the role, as ascertained by a specialist but not by societal judgements.



Allah SWT is Ar-Rafi – The Exalter: He raises the rank of those often underestimated by society.

Q16: Can music, dogs or Islamically prohibited things be used as therapeutics for a Muslim autistic?

There are different opinions regarding the permissibility of listening to songs, music, singing. Overall music may be allowed for therapeutic purposes for an autistic, on certain conditions including that the subject matter is not against the teachings of Islam and does not lead one to commit sins.

To avoid risk in the use of music in therapy, some studies show that listening to the Qur'an has psychological benefits for Muslims, with a good potential to calm young people on the spectrum. In addition, Qur'anic sound therapy may provide similar or even better outcomes than music therapy, as listening to Qur'anic recitation has been shown to elicit a higher percentage of alpha brain waves than listening to music. Alpha waves are associated with a relaxed state. Qur'an has been used in speech therapy for autistics.

The use of animals in therapy is generally acceptable for autistic people, except for dogs and pigs which are prohibited. Horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, cats or any of the accepted animals should be considered instead of prohibited animals wherever and whenever possible.

اللَّهُ هَادِي

Allah SWT is Al-Hadi – The Guide: He guides autistic individuals and caregivers toward the right support.

Q17: How can Muslim communities be more inclusive of autistic individuals?

Education, awareness and proactive accommodations foster inclusivity and reflect the compassionate teachings of Islam.

Efforts to make religious spaces more autism-friendly include:

- Providing quiet spaces or sensory rooms within mosques or madarasas
- Offering noise-cancelling headphones or fidget tools where needed
- Creating visual schedules or social stories to explain religious rituals and practices
- Adjusting lighting and reducing other sensory stimuli that may be overwhelming.

Education and awareness programs for religious leaders and congregations are crucial in building understanding and acceptance. These programs often focus on dispelling myths about autism, providing practical strategies for inclusion, and emphasising the gifts and perspectives that autistic individuals bring to the faith community. Adapting religious practices and rituals for autistic individuals may involve modifying traditional elements to be more accessible.

Involving parents and carers of autists on mosque and madrassa committees will help enlighten other members and make it easier to accommodate autists in religious spaces. Parents and carers must be advocates for their wards within and outside the Islamic community.



Allah SWT is Al-Fattah –
The Opener: He opens
minds, opportunities, and
understanding in others.

Q18: Can a pregnancy be terminated if it is proven that the foetus will be born with autism?

The general answer is no, unless failure to terminate the pregnancy could endanger or kill the mother. This needs to be confirmed by trustworthy and competent physicians. Even then, two important factors must be considered – the stage of the pregnancy and the seriousness of the autism. One opinion is that it may be terminated if the disorder is incurable and is done before 120 days. The other opinion is an outright no under any circumstances. Allah SWT Knows Best.

Autism may not be completely curable; however, it does not hinder an autist from contributing to the society in many wonderful ways. “Every human being is Allah’s Creation, and no one may decide the termination of another human’s life.”

أولاء الله
المؤخرون
جل جلاله

Allah SWT is Al-Mu'akhkhir –
The Delayer: He may withhold
certain abilities for a time to
bring about a greater wisdom

Q19: How should families of autistic individuals view their role in caring for them Islamically?

Families are encouraged to view caregiving as a noble responsibility, an opportunity to seek spiritual growth through service and patience.

A central teaching in the Qur'an is to test (*imtihan, tamhis, ibtila, fitna, bala*) the faith of the afflicted to see who is firm in belief (2:214; 3:141, 154; 9:126; 21:35; 29:02; 49:03; 76:02; 89:15-16). This test is not only for the afflicted but for their families and society to determine who will take responsibility for caring for the afflicted person and who will offer a helping hand and reap the reward here and the hereafter.

Caring for your child is not only parenting, but also an act of *ibadah* (worship).

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever takes care of a person in need, Allah will take care of them in this world and the Hereafter."

المُتَمِّتُ
جَلَّالَهُ

Allah SWT is Al-Matin – The Firm: He grants stability when life feels overwhelming.

Q20: What is the moral responsibility of the Muslim community toward autists?

Communities are called to offer support, inclusion and resources, embodying the principles of compassion and justice. The moral responsibility is general support of the autist. Financial obligations to support dependent or needy autists can be met by:

Family members – A family is composed of the self, the spouse and the immediate ancestors and offsprings. There is mutual responsibility between the individual and the immediate family (Qur'an 17:23-24; 31:14-15; 33:6). An autist who has no means has the right to be maintained by family members with all the essentials of life, such as food, clothes and lodging. In Islamic jurisprudence, the general rule is that every adult male should maintain himself using his own resources. The maintenance of a single female falls to their father or brother. The family obligation to maintain a needy autist whose father is dead depends on their inheritance shares or status relative to the autist. It depends on whether all the relatives are ancestors; or some are ascendants and others as collaterals; and whether they are all collaterals. In short, responsibility to maintain will be based on the proportion of the family members' inheritance shares.

Bequest (*Wasiyya*) – Up to 1/3 can be bequeathed to an autist by a family member that he/she is not entitled to inherit.

Waqf Ahli and Khayri – endowment meant for family members and for society at large if it specifically mentions autistic individuals among the beneficiaries of the *Waqf* by the *Waqif*.

Zakat – can be used to support an autist if they qualify as *mustahiqs*. An autist cannot be given a *zakat* if he or she is a father or mother or grandfather or grandmother of the one paying the *zakat*. If an autist falls within the 8 categories listed for *zakat* (Qur'an 70:24-25) then the person can be supported with *zakat* funds and may constitute one of those that should be prioritised due to their disability. If the need arises, the community can be required to pay more than the *zakat* due to support the needy amongst whom can be autists.

State support – In countries like *Aotearoa* New Zealand, where the social welfare system supports everyone who is not employed or employable, autists enjoy similar rights to neurotypical individuals in terms of social welfare support based on abilities and income. Islamic countries that do not have similar support systems for their autists should implement Islamic teachings and support their autists as done in *Aotearoa* New Zealand. If the support the state offers is not sufficient, the sources listed in the previous paragraphs should be used to make up for the shortfall.

Generally – Autists, just like their neurotypical equivalents, deserve protection from all form of abuse listed in Qur’an 49:10-12, such as being mocked, spied upon, suspected, backbitten, called names, gossiped about, having their honour tarnished or their lives taken.

الْغَنِيِّ
عَلَى اللَّهِ

Allah SWT is Al-Ghani – The Self-Sufficient: A reminder that self-worth is from Allah, not from social approval.

Q21: Can an autistic person marry, and what guidance does Islam provide for spouses?

Marriage is permissible for a male or female autist. Guidance emphasises mutual understanding, patience and support within the marital relationship.

An autist can marry if he or she can meet the requirements of being a husband or wife, including, preferably, the two important requirements – a sexual relationship and good companionship.

Marriage for companionship alone is allowed if both parties agree before the marriage. All the rules related to non-autists apply, including consent, the ability to maintain the wife and offspring from the marriage. If the severity of the autism prevents the individual from giving informed consent or providing the financial support required, then the autist's parent or guardian can give consent, provide the financial support needed and arrange for the upkeep of children from the marriage.

The impact of autism, as understood today, on good companionship should be considered when an autist is getting married to non-autist.

In the case of autism, a clinical rather than social decision is prudent in all circumstances involving the marriage of those with mental disabilities or in determining other marital and religious responsibilities.

اللَّهُ مُقْتَدِرٌ
الْمُقْتَدِرِ

Allah SWT is Al-Muqtadir – The Determiner of All Power: He assigns capabilities and limitations in perfect balance.

Q22: Are there ways of controlling the behaviour of teenage autists exhibiting sexual urges?

Some of the behaviours reported in the literature about adolescent autists manifesting sexual urges include mentioning and showing obscene symbols, sitting too closely to friends of the opposite sex, observing them and joking obscenely, masturbation, indecent exposure (flashing) and the inappropriate touching of others.

The best way for everyone to control sexual urges, including autists, is through marriage or fasting, as advised by the Prophet ﷺ.

Depending on the abilities of the autist, and as explained in Q21, marriage should be considered, if suitable, otherwise fasting if possible. Other approaches, including masturbation as a way of controlling sexual urges, have been mentioned in the literature. Masturbation is forbidden in Islam because it is harmful to health and contradicts Islamic teachings, although the Hanbali School of Law differs from other schools on this. The Hanbali view it as forbidden only if done purely for pleasure. In desperate circumstances, such as to avoid fornication, it becomes *makruh* (permissible but disliked; abstention will be rewarded). The Hanbali view is based on a narration by Ibn Abbas RA when he was asked by a young man concerning the rule on masturbation, to which he directly replied: “Marrying a slave-girl is better than fornication (*zina*).” This statement clearly shows that the act could be permissible if a person is desperate to avoid fornication. Thus, this rule of permissibility would apply to autists who have a problem controlling their sexual urges if they are unable to get married or fast. In general, it is safer to view masturbation as forbidden (*haram*) and consider other ways of controlling urges where possible.

A traditional remedy for controlling sexual urges and libido is regular drinking of strong red or black tea liberally mixed with lemon. This is believed to have a calming effect on sexual urges. However, care should be taken to avoid permanently damaging the libido in case marriage becomes an option for the autist in the future.

اللَّهُ
الْمُقَدِّمُ

Allah SWT is Al-Muqaddim – The One Who Brings Forward: He can place autistic individuals in situations where their strengths shine.

Q23: How can one balance faith and modern medical/psychological approaches to autism?

There is no conflict between the modern views about autism and Islamic faith. Juristic discourses about the treatment of disabilities, including autism, are holistic rather than a one-sided approach. Integrating faith with medical interventions is encouraged, using all resources provided by Allah SWT for holistic wellbeing. An autistic person can be treated by standard medicine, or by religious approaches from the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, or a combination of both. What is common to both approaches is to relieve or minimise whatever is being treated.

القَوِيّ
جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ

Allah SWT is Al-Qawiyy – The Strong: He gives them resilience in facing social misunderstanding.

Q24: Is seeking therapy or medical interventions for autism a sign of lack of faith in Allah SWT's plan?

There is no contradiction between Allah's will and seeking treatment. In other words, parents and carers of autists should use religious values to help them cope but should not use their beliefs as an excuse not to seek help for their autist wards. Pursuing treatment is viewed as taking responsible action, aligning with the belief that Allah SWT provides means for healing and support.

Muslims have been taught in the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ to seek cures for all ailments. Allah SWT says, “*And We send down from the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe*” (Quran, 17: 82). Likewise, the Prophet ﷺ instructed: “O Worshipers of Allah! Seek medical treatment, for Allah has not made a disease without making a remedy for it.”

It was narrated from al-Hasan that Abu Bakr RA addressed the people and said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ لَمْ يُعْطُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا خَيْرًا مِنَ الْيَقِينِ وَالْمُعَافَاةِ فَسَلُّوهُمَا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “O people, the people are not given anything better in this world than certainty of faith and wellbeing, so ask Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, for them.” (Musnad Ahmad 38 Book 1, Hadith 37).

Because of the limited understanding of autism among the Muslim communities, particularly among recent immigrants to the western world, there is the tendency to confuse autism with insanity. It is very important for parents and carers to understand that autism (*al-'Atah*) is not insanity (*Junūn*). As such, the approaches and treatments customarily used on those who are possessed by *jinn*s or spirits (*mass al-jinn*), or are insane, should not be applied to autists. Doing so is tantamount to neglecting our responsibilities to seek the right treatments for our wards.

المجيب
جواب

Allah SWT is Al-Mujib – The Responder: He answers the prayers and unspoken needs of every soul.

Q25: Can an autistic be left in the care of a non-*Muharrem* woman and vice versa?

It depends on the severity of autism. If the autism is severe, so that the man does not comprehend, understand or perceive ideas, and he lacks the desire that makes him stare at women, touch and so on, and he has no interest in women, but is rather like a child or less, there is no need to cover up in his presence. He then belongs to those defined by Allah the Exalted: “or male attendants who lack vigor” (Qur’an 24:31).

An autistic female should not be left alone to be cared for by a non-*Muharrem* man, especially if she is not able to communicate any form of sexual contact or abuses.

Autists can be vulnerable to male or female predators. So, it is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure they are left with trustworthy individuals *Muharrem* or not.

اللَّهُ
الرَّحِيمُ

Allah SWT is Ar-Rahim – The Most Merciful: His mercy is tailored to each person’s needs and struggles.

Q26: How can parents of autistic children maintain patience and faith despite challenges?

There could be many challenges associated with having a child with autism, depending on the severity.

Challenges include higher levels of stress; lower quality of psychological and physical health; higher levels of family/carer responsibilities; lower marital satisfaction; lower quality of life, and significant financial challenges which are often exacerbated by impacts on employment.

Overall, studies suggest that parents and siblings can be stressed or negatively affected by the support they provide to children with disabilities.

Adequate internal support (e.g. religious beliefs) and external support (e.g. family involvement) significantly help parents and carers maintain patience.

By framing their child's disability within Islamic beliefs and practices, including *zikr* (remembrance of Allah) and using the names and attributes of Allah SWT used in this booklet, parents and carers could derive greater satisfaction and fulfilment in supporting their autistic children. Engaging in regular prayer, seeking community and government support and reflecting on scriptural teachings can bolster resilience and trust in Allah SWT.

Allah SWT says in the Qur'an:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي. لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافُهَا وَأَبْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا

2:186 “Say: When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every supplicant when he calleth on Me: Let them also, with a will, Listen to My call, and believe in Me: That they may walk in the right way.”

17:110 “Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name ye call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Neither speak thy Prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between.”

Here is how parents and carers can use the Names of Allah in making dua on various aspects of autism to maintain patience and faith:

- 1. Praise Allah** – Start by praising Allah, such as saying *SubhanAllah* (Glory be to Allah), *Alhamdulillah* (Praise be to Allah) or *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is Greater).
- 2. Invoke Allah’s Names** – Choose names of Allah that are relevant to your specific *dua* from the 99 known names/attributes or from the 30 in this booklet. For example, if you are seeking forgiveness, you can say *Ya Ghaffar* (forgive me) or *Ya Rahman, Ya Raheem* (have mercy on me).
- 3. Send Blessings on the Prophet ﷺ** – After mentioning Allah’s names and making your request, send blessings and peace upon the Prophet ﷺ. You can say *Allahumma salli wa sallim ‘ala Nabiyyina Muhammad* (O Allah, send prayers and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad).
- 4. Conclude with *Dua*** – Conclude your supplication with a general *dua*, such as *Ameen* (O Allah, accept), or by repeating your specific request.

الحَفِيزُ
جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ

Allah SWT is Al-Hafiz – The Preserver: He safeguards their dignity, uniqueness, and potential.

Q27: Is it acceptable to hide one's autistic child for fear of embarrassment?

Families and carers should not hide their autistic child. They must socialise them as much as possible in the community depending on the autistic child's ability to cope. They should take the autistic child out in public so that healthy people see him or her and consequently praise Allah SWT for whatever abilities they possess that others might not. An exception is if they have difficulty carrying and moving the autistic child around – then it is legitimate to leave him or her at home to ease things for the child's family. With all the mobility support available these days, it is easier to move disabled individuals around. Therefore, families and carers must do their best to socialise their autistic child in society and seek help to ensure those Allah SWT Put in their care are not isolated and denied their basic rights.

المُهَيِّمِ

Allah SWT is Al-Muhaymin – The preserver of safety: He witnesses the saying and deeds of His Creatures.

Q28: Should autistic individuals be expected to learn to read Qur'an, fast, perform pilgrimage (Hajj), or engage in other religious obligations?

Obligations may be adjusted based on individual capacity, with allowances made to ensure practices are manageable rather than harmful.

Depending on the severity of the autism and the ability of the autist to learn, the autist may be capable of learning to read Qur'an. Many Autists are able to memorise the whole Qur'an. These strategies are suggested for teaching autistic individuals the Qur'an (<https://www.discoveryaba.com/aba-therapy/islam-and-autism>):

Use visual aids: Many autistic children are visual learners and benefit from the use of pictures, videos or diagrams to help them understand concepts. Using visual aids, such as flashcards or charts, can be helpful in teaching Qur'anic concepts and vocabulary.

Break it down: Autistic children may struggle with processing large amounts of information at once. It is important to break down the teachings into smaller, more manageable parts that can be learned one at a time.

Use repetition: Repetition is key for many autistic learners. Repeating lessons or phrases multiple times can help reinforce learning and improve retention.

Incorporate sensory input: Sensory input can be an effective way to engage autistic learners in the learning process. Activities that involve touch, smell or sound can help increase their attention span and motivation.

Tailor instruction to their learning style: Each child with autism has their own unique learning style. Some may prefer hands-on activities, while others may respond better to verbal instruction. It is important to identify what works best for each child and tailor instruction accordingly.

Create a calm environment: Autistic children may become overwhelmed by loud noises or bright lights. Creating a calm and quiet environment for learning Qur'an can help reduce anxiety and improve focus.

Fatwas from the major Islamic Fiqh academies regarding acts of worship (*Ibadat*), generally rule that individuals with severe intellectual or cognitive disabilities are not held accountable (*ghayr mukallaf*) for performing duties like prayer and fasting. This is consistent with the prophetic tradition that lifts the pen from those with a lack of legal capacity. For those with autism who can understand and perform these rituals, their acts of worship are considered valid and accommodations, such as providing a sensory-friendly space for prayer in a mosque, are encouraged. The obligation to perform Hajj is also lifted from individuals with significant disabilities, though a guardian may perform it on their behalf if they have the means. The obligation to pay *Zakat*, however, is tied to the wealth itself, meaning a guardian is responsible for paying it on behalf of a disabled person if their assets meet the minimum threshold (*nisab*).

القادر
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Allah SWT is Al-Qadir – The All-Powerful: No aspect of neurodiversity is outside His power and intent.

Q29: Does receiving payment for caring for an autistic family member affect the reward the carer receives in the hereafter?

In New Zealand, legislative and policy changes have changed to allow family members of disabled individuals to be paid as carers, recognising their vital role and the significant support they provide.

Historically, there was a general principle that family members would not be paid for care provided to relatives, leading to litigation and calls for reform. The primary legal framework that addressed this was the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000, specifically Part 4A, inserted by an Amendment Act in 2013. This amendment allowed Health New Zealand *Te Whatu Ora* to adopt “family care policies” that permit payments to family members in certain circumstances.

The outcome of this legislation and subsequent policy developments, such as the Funded Family Care (FFC) policy and aspects of Individualised Funding (IF), means that eligible family members can now receive payment for providing support services to disabled relatives. Eligibility for these payments is typically determined through a Needs Assessment and Service Coordination (NASC) process, which assesses the support needs of the disabled individual. Payments for family carers under these policies may be at specific rates, potentially differing from those for non-family carers, and are intended to cover the costs of personal care and household management that would otherwise be provided by external support workers.

In Islam the Prophet ﷺ said, “all actions are judged according to intention”. If the family carer’s intention to care for the family member is not motivated by the payment from government, but by familial duty, as ordained by Allah SWT, then the carer’s reward will not be diminished by these worldly exchanges. One should consider such payments as bounties from Allah SWT in the light of these verses (4:70; 27:73; 35:30; 42:23; 62:4; 65:3).

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

Qur’an 62:4 “Such is the Bounty of Allah, which He bestows on whom He will: and Allah is the Lord of the highest bounty.”

وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَلِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا

Qur'an 65:3 "And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine. And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is (Allah) for him. For Allah will surely accomplish his purpose: verily, for all things, has Allah appointed a due proportion."

المُغْنِي
جَلَّالَهُ

Allah SWT is Al-Mughni – The Enricher: He enriches lives through unique perspectives autistic individuals bring.

Q30: Does Islam say anything about neurodiversity?

Contemporary research in autism emphasises the neurodiversity paradigm, which views autism as a natural variation in human cognition rather than a disorder to be fixed. Researchers are increasingly recognising that the autistic mind works differently, not less effectively, and that neurodivergent individuals bring unique strengths to society. Some studies suggest that the differences in cognitive processing in autism—such as enhanced attention to detail, systematic thinking and deep knowledge in specific areas—are adaptive and contribute to societal progress, particularly in fields requiring precision, innovation or unique problem-solving methods.

In terms of neurodiversity or the intellectual disparity among humans, Imam Ghazzali, in his *Ihya Ulum-Id-Deen*, quoted a hadith of the Prophet ﷺ that succinctly described neurodiversity from an Islamic perspective. In the hadith reported by Abdullah bn Salam, the Prophet ﷺ at the end of a long sermon described the Throne of Allah SWT and stated that the angels asked Allah SWT: O Allah, have you created anything greater than the Throne? He Said: Yes, Intellect ('*aqil*). They asked: How great is it? He Said: Alas, your intellect cannot grasp it. Can you count the number of sands: They said: No. Allah said: I have Created intellect in different minds as numerous as sands. Some men have been given one grain, some two, some three, some four, some over one *Farq* (~10kg), some a *Wasq* (~195kg) and some more.

الْبَارِي

Allah SWT is Al-Bari – The Evolver:
He shapes individuals with unique
traits and talents.

What We Learned:

5 Things to Remember

- 1. Autism is not a punishment from Allah.*
 - 2. Your child is created with divine purpose and wisdom.*
 - 3. Islam encourages you to seek knowledge and support.*
 - 4. Worship obligations are based on capacity, not uniformity.*
 - 5. You are never alone – Allah Sees, Knows and Supports you.*
-



Final Dua and Blessing

Dua for Parents and Carers:

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

Qur'an 25:74 "...Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous."

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

Qur'an 3:8 "Our Lord!" (they say), "Let not our hearts deviate now after Thou hast guided us, but grant us mercy from Thine own Presence; for Thou art the Grantor of bounties without measure."

"O Allah, grant me the strength to nurture with love, the clarity to guide with wisdom, and the faith to trust in Your plan. Make this journey a path to Jannah and make my child a source of coolness to my eyes and of light in this world and the next."

I pray that this booklet has brought you comfort and clarity. Keep walking with faith and know that you are not alone.

I request your prayers too for Allah's Forgiveness and Mercy for any unintentional errors I might have committed in putting this booklet together and for my shortcomings as a person.

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هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَنِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ

Qur'an 55:60 "Is there any reward for good other than good?"

May the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who said:

"He who does not thank people has not thanked Allah." (Abu Dawood).

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A Personal Message

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

My dear parents and caregivers

Know that no two Autist are the same

Our beloved son, Muhammadu Farouk whom we affectionately called *Modibbo* (a scholar in *Fulfulde*) or simply *Modi* is a tall 22-year-old who continues to live at home with us and attends individually focused services five days a week.

According to his psychometric assessment, Modi's developmental profile places him below the age-equivalence of 5 years in communication, daily living skills, and socialization. These results meet the criteria for a severe intellectual disability, which is generally marked by significant delays in development and limited communication abilities.

But numbers and labels never capture the fullness of who Modi is. He is a young man with a radiant smile that warms hearts and a gentle presence that draws people toward him. Modi delights in melodies, enjoys good food, loves exploring the internet, walking outdoors, and splashing in the water. He cherishes being around others, often happily immersed in his own world while still enjoying the comfort of the crowd.

To us, Modi is not defined by his limitations but by the joy, love, and light he brings into our family and community.



Loving You, Just as You Are

You are our child who learns in ways unseen,

*Who may not speak much,
but whose heart is keen.*

You give us patience, love that does not fade,

*Beauty in small things,
trust in each step made.*

*You remind us in your own ways, to hold you
in kindness, see not what you lack,*

But all that you offer, all that you track.

*Allah's Love is the light that guides your way,
And in His care, you are growing every day.*

AUTIST AND MUSLIM

A Faith-Based Guide for Muslim Parents and Carers



30 Honest Questions About Autism
A Journey of Faith, Understanding, and Divine Wisdom
in the Light of Islam

Autism is not a flaw in the design; it is the design itself—a reflection of the
boundless wisdom of Allah (SWT)



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