

Huffington Post - Ramadan Reflection Day #7: Give Them Room to Grow

This Ramadan,
Imam

Khalid Latif, Executive Director and Chaplain of the Islamic Center, will for a second year in a row be keeping a daily journal for the Huffington Post. His seventh article, entitled "Ramadan Reflection Day 7: Give Them Room to Grow" was published earlier today. To read the entire article in full, please click [here](#)

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Imam Khalid Latif

Ramadan Reflection Day 7: Give Them Room to Grow

Imam Khalid Latif is blogging his reflections during the month of Ramadan, featured daily on HuffPost Religion. For a complete record of his previous posts, click over to the Islamic Center at New York University or visit his author page, and to follow along with the rest of his reflections, sign up for an author e-mail alert above, visit his Facebook page or follow him on Twitter.

My brother-in law Arvind, who is not Muslim, has a Muslim friend who fasts during the month of Ramadan. His dedication to his fasting was brought up, as this young man throughout the rest of the year, and even during some nights in the month, would drink alcohol, which is not allowed in Islam. During the day, though, his focus would be his fast, to the extent that he even orients timings that he had to take

medications around it. Arvind found it confusing that his friend, who didn't really, in his own words, observe too much else of the religion, would be diligent in his fasting.

When dealing with religion and religious communities, it can be tough at times to grow. Many of us have our own struggles, but we find ourselves being defined not by what it is that we are doing well, but mostly by what it is that we are failing to do. I take one step forward and instead of feeling empowered by that step, I am made to feel as if I am still 10 steps behind. As a result, I just stop moving at all. I become indifferent to embracing a process by which I can grow because the world around me chooses to elevate itself by denigrating me.

The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said, "God is kind and loves kindness and gives for gentleness what He does not give for harshness nor for anything else."

During Ramadan one will find people fasting who at other times of year may not be so engaged in their faith. We may not see them because we choose to look past them or fail to invite them to anything, but they are there nonetheless. What brings them out is the same excitement as everyone else. They won't see fasting as a burdensome ritual, but rather as a time in which they can grow, change and invigorate their spirit. They will definitely. We will play a role in helping them decide whether they will stay....to continue reading please click here