



We are all familiar with the terms 'normal' and 'natural'. However, if asked to furnish a definition for normal and natural, how would we respond?

In the modern world, 'normal' is often defined as that which conforms to the norms of society and is deemed acceptable by society at large. However, it is obvious that this cannot be the yardstick by which we measure normality. If it were so, we would be forced to regard the behaviour of a cannibal tribe casually nibbling on their neighbours as 'normal' since their entire tribe and society accept this form of behaviour. Additionally, the yardstick of 'normal' would continue to sway and shift before the wind of society's ever-changing whims and fancies, ideals and ideas. In a nutshell, this would not signify the true 'normal', but would rather represent the collective inclinations and tendencies of society at large.

Likewise, some people attempt to define 'natural' as that which occurs in nature without the interference of man. This definition is similarly flawed, as since cancer occurs in the human body without any human interference, cancer would then be defined as 'natural'. Furthermore, since treating the cancer would involve human intervention, the treatment would be deemed 'unnatural'!

Since the line between natural and unnatural, and normal and abnormal, has become so blurred, the most perverse, indecent and lewd of behaviours are now being justified, rationalised and promoted as being completely normal and natural!

For proof of this, look no further than the Life Orientation syllabus which among other absurd, anti-Islamic ideas, teaches that same-sex relationships are completely 'natural' and masturbation is absolutely 'normal'. In fact, the disfigurement and distortion of 'nature' has reached the point where many nudists now refer to themselves as 'naturists', implying that public nudity is actually natural!

As Muslims, we firmly believe that Allah Ta'ala deputed the Ambiyaa ('alaihimus salaam) for the guidance of mankind. Allah Ta'ala created them as the most perfect of all His creation in every aspect and instilled in them the purest of natures, completely untainted and uncorrupted. These Ambiyaa ('alaihimus salaam) taught us the meaning of a pure and perfect life and showed us right from wrong, normal from abnormal, and natural from unnatural. Hence, it is Deen and the blessed way of the Ambiyaa ('alaihimus salaam) that sets the standard for us to follow.

In his blessed ahaadeeth (*Saheeh Muslim #604 and Sunan Tirmizi #1080*), Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has highlighted certain actions and qualities that were common among all the Ambiyaa ('alaihimus salaam), and explained that these actions and qualities constitute 'natural' and are inherent among people who are pure, normal and uncorrupted. Among these actions and qualities are; cleansing the private parts after relieving oneself (istinjaa), cleansing the mouth with the miswaak, trimming the nails and applying 'itr (perfume).

If we ponder over the above, we will realize that these actions will most definitely be normal and natural for any person whose disposition has not been tainted and corrupted, as no sane and normal person likes to be dirty and smell offensive. However, just as these actions constitute 'being normal', Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) mentioned another quality, and in fact commenced with mentioning that quality to highlight its importance – *the quality of hayaa (shame and modesty)*.

We thus understand that hayaa is a normal and natural quality of a human, and it is through the effect of the environment, company, etc. that a person is stripped of his hayaa, leading him to adopt unnatural behaviour and an unnatural lifestyle. Hence, it should be 'normal' for a woman to feel the urge to conceal herself from the gazes of strange men and avoid communicating with them. It should be 'normal' for a woman to feel the urge to dress in decent, concealing clothing, whether in the home or out of the home. If a woman does not feel these urges of hayaa, it is a sign that her 'normal' and pure nature has sadly been corrupted by the pollution of society.

*May Allah Ta'ala bless us all to shed the shackles of societal conformity and enable us to follow the 'natural' and 'normal' ways of the Ambiyaa ('alaihimus salaam), aameen.*