Teen Suicides on the Rise, what's going wrong?

News:

"As the awareness of mental illness gains traction around the world this week, research is showing the fatal effect of this silent killer amongst a vulnerable generation of youths. As technology advances and the fragmentation of the human natural space continues to be replaced by machines, mental illness in has risen to be the number one cause of teen deaths around the world.

Teen deaths have increased tremendously in the last decade, accounting for the cause of over 38 percent teen women in Canada. According to a 2014 WHO report, in the United States, suicide eclipsed maternal mortality as the leading cause of death in girls ages 15-19 in the developing world. While the causes of the sudden impression of the need to ends one's life remains debatable, there is no doubt that the technological advancement, the industrial evolution of our once natural environments and the pressure that filters in through the use of internet are root causes of the increase in such kind of deaths." (google.nl)

Comment:

The amount of youngsters suffering from psychological problems and being diagnosed with having a mental illness or a personality disorder is growing within western societies. Many of these youngsters also suffer from reoccurring thoughts on ending their lives. When looking at the above statistic it seems that these youngsters are increasingly putting these thoughts into action. A very worrying occurrence.

Every ideology has its own definition of happiness and the objective on how to attain this. Society will seek to mould the individuals of this idea and will help them pursue this happiness.

Western societies are based on the capitalist ideology which is a materialistic ideology which establishes the pursuit of material pleasures as the core objective of life. It views that attaining wealth and luxuries is a fundamental source of happiness and satisfaction in life. Also the so called liberal freedoms teach youngsters from a young age that the ultimate goal of this life is to attain as much pleasure as one can and that their own happiness is what should shape their behaviour.

So why are so many youngsters experiencing feelings of despair, anxiety and a general feeling of hopelessness that is so severe they are resorting to taking their own lives? And is society able to provide these youngsters with answers when they don't experience the happiness they were supposed to feel as society taught them?

One first attempt to help youngster we see in westerns societies is offering psychological help. In these therapies youngsters are guided in focussing their attention on positive aspects of their lives by attempting to change the way they perceive their surroundings. They aim to create new objectives to which youngsters can focus their attention, objectives that could help these teens make positive steps forward. But what if finding these sparks of hope becomes nearly impossible because there truly aren't any as seems to be the case with many of these youngsters. What happens to all those youth who don't feel this happiness because they aren't able to attain this ultimate goal? And what to say to youngsters who do attain the ultimate goal and have everything they could wish for in terms of materialism but still don't feel the happiness. What happens to those youth who are so disappointed in what life has to offer through multiple problems they have experienced and who also believe that

life ends after this worldly life? Which lies will society then be able to sell to them? Which sparks of hope will society then be able to give them?

As mentioned above every ideology has its own definition of happiness. When looking at Islam's view on happiness, we see that the Islamic goal in life is all about seeking the pleasure of Allah. It is through seeking the pleasure of Allah that a Muslim will attain happiness.

The Islamic society will also aim to produce a mentality amongst its individuals who will yearn to seek the pleasure of Allah collectively. Difficulties will come on everybody's path but they will understand that they will need to deal with these situations in such a way that they achieve the approval of their Lord. When dealing with difficulties in such a way they will understand that these difficulties have served a purpose and have brought them one step closer to achieving not only happiness but eventually pure blissfulness because their meeting with their Lord will be one step closer. They will be prepared for these difficulties through verses such as the following:

﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ ٱلْخَوْفِ وَٱلْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ ٱلأَمَوَالِ وَٱلأَنفُسِ وَٱلثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلصَّابِرِينَ﴾

"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" *[2:155]*

And they will be able to put thing in perspective when reading:

Abu Hurayrah both narrated that the Prophet (saw) said:

«مَا يُصِيبُ الْمُسْلِمَ مِنْ نَصَبٍ وَلاَ وَصَبٍ وَلاَ هَمٍّ وَلاَ حَزَنٍ وَلاَ أَذًى وَلاَ غَمٍّ، حَتَّى الشَّوْكَةُ يُشَاكُهَا إِلاَّ كَفَّرَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ خَطَايَاه»

"A Muslim is not afflicted by hardship, sickness, sadness, worry, harm, or depression – even if pricked by a thorn, but Allah expiates his sins because of it" *(Bukhari)*

Islam provides our youth a comprehensive mechanism to be able to deal with every difficulty they will encounter. On the one hand acknowledging the difficulties and on the other hand offering them true salvation. We must make our youth understand that Islam is the only true solution for their troubles and we must take it upon ourselves to present Islam to the wider society.

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