



**YOUNG MUSLIMS**  
BROTHERS

Project  
Postman

# YM as a *Service*



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Young Muslims seeks the pleasure of Allah (SWT) by empowering Muslim youth through companionship, mentorship, education, and service.

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# YM as a *Service*

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## Purpose and Origins

The idea of documenting YM's complete process has been thrown around. There have been isolated efforts to document YM's core operations, but none have really taken off or have been consolidated to such a great extent. At the same time, our organization has always wanted to invest in "YM As A Service". For communities that may not have the resources to setup or background, this package provides our operations and ideology in an accessible way, so we can ensure Muslim youth efforts are amplified across the United States.

With this in mind, under the direction of the National Shura, the Project Postman Commission was established in June 2024. Their goal would be to consolidate, document, and comb through all of YM's resources at the Neighbor-Net level to then compile this package.

Following a thorough review, a draft of this package was made in Ramadan 2025 and published in April 2025.

## YM As A Service - *The Postman*

As with the Postman, we envision this message to be shared near and far. Journey with us through valleys, cities, and masjid parking lots to share this resource and help shape the next generation of Muslim Youth.

## Author's Note

As you read the package, understand the information is tiered out and to understand the next set, you have to understand the first set. All are equally important.

This project is an incredible sadaqa-jariyah for anyone who benefits from it. We are honored for the opportunity to contribute.

May Allah (swt) accept from those who contributed to this project.



## Who Is This Package For?

### **I am starting a Youth Group, I don't know where to start...**

If you have the intention to start a Youth Group at your masjid and don't know where to start, this package is for you! It goes through all aspects of running a Neighbor-Net with clear steps.

You are also recommended to reach out to our team for additional support and advice!

### **We are already running a successful youth group, but would love to see how we can improve...**

May Allah (swt) accept your efforts in having youth efforts established and consistent in your area! This package will certainly help with making incremental changes in how you operate your group to make it more fruitful and effective.

Even if the incremental change is adding a new agenda point or doing something slightly different, insha'Allah there is benefit and khayr in that.

In our deen, doing things with Ihsan (excellence) is emphasized to a great degree. Any advice we receive and give each other should be a means of increasing our commitment to Ihsan. Ihsan in our homes, communities, and Ummah.

### **Community Members, Parents, and Masjid Board Members interested in understanding how YM operates...**

Aside from the benefit in sharing this resource for individuals and bodies who run their own youth groups, this is also a tremendous resource for parents, communities, and masjid management in understanding how does YM operate at the local level.

This is an effort to further the transparency, trust, and professionalism of YM. While operations vary from different YMs, these are the core foundations found in all our 120+ Neighbor-Nets across the United States.

Reach us at [postman@youngmuslims.com](mailto:postman@youngmuslims.com)

YM  as a  
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What makes   
**YM** different?



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

'IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL'

## What is Young Muslims (YM)?

### *What makes YM different?*

The age-old question, what is YM? What makes YM different from your average Muslim Youth group? What is the manhaj or ideology of YM?

Think of YM as having **three levels or frameworks**, three key aspects to its ideology. Each is incredibly important and essential to the work of YM. And YM as it is cannot survive without any of these three levels.



## LEVEL ONE:

# *The Pleasure of Allah (swt)*

The first level to this work is the pleasure of Allah. This is the mandate that Allah gives us in the Quran. “Say, ‘Surely my prayer, my sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah—Lord of all worlds” [6:162]. **Everything we do, and every moment of our life is for the sake of Allah.** We need to conform every moment of our life and every action that we take needs to be for the sake of Allah and for His pleasure alone.

This means that the work we do in YM, ultimately is just for us to gain Allah’s pleasure and to attain Jannah. Part of obtaining Allah’s pleasure is keeping a strong personal relationship with Him. That means as a part of our YM work, **we need to ensure that our tazkiyah and the spiritual state of our heart is always healthy.** We need to constantly work on the state of our heart by checking on its status, diagnosing its weaknesses, and then seeking to cure those weaknesses. *If our Islamic activism drives us to drain ourselves spiritually, then that means our Islamic work is not healthy.*



## LEVEL TWO:

### *Calling People to the Deen through Brotherhood*

The second level is bringing people to the basics of their deen. Meaning at the minimum they act upon the five pillars.

A bedouin with unkempt hair came to Allah's Messenger, Muhammad (SAW) and said:

*"O Allah's Messenger! Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regards the prayers."*

*He replied: "**You must perform the five obligatory prayers each day and night unless you choose to offer additional voluntary prayers (Nawafil).**"*

*The Bedouin further asked, "Inform me what Allah has made compulsory for me as regards fasting."*

*He replied, "**You must fast during the entire month of Ramadan unless you wish to fast more as Nawafil.**"*

*The Bedouin further asked, "Tell me how much Zakat Allah has enjoined on me." Thus, Allah's Messenger informed him about all the fundamental obligations of Islam.*

*The Bedouin then said, "By Him who has honored you, I will neither perform any Nawafil nor neglect what Allah has enjoined on me."*

*Allah's Messenger said, "**If he is truthful, he will succeed (or he will be granted Paradise).**"*

SAHIH AL-BUKHARI 1891

The basics can be difficult, but they are the basics nonetheless.

**Every single Muslim must be consistent with their 5 pillars.** Our job in YM, at a bare minimum, is to bring the youth to a level where they are fulfilling all of their basic obligations with true understanding.

## LEVEL THREE:

### ***Building Life-long Islamic workers Committed to the Establishment of the Religion***

Finally, the final level is building Islamic workers with a solid grounding in the ideology of the “Islamic Movement.” **The Islamic Movement is the revivalist movement and ideology**, focused on establishing Islam in every aspect of our lives. This includes our social structures, our politics, our educational system, our economic system, our personal relationships, and most importantly our relationship with Allah Himself.

## **ym:** *a holistic approach*

What makes YM different is that it takes a holistic, all-around approach to our work. We meet every single week, rain or shine, which keeps the momentum of our Islamic work strong and in a presentable manner, is what consistency looks like in practice. Within this, it includes building sustainable leadership. With a sharp cut off at 26, we are constantly finding young leaders from amongst the youth to replace ourselves with. We are not just a dawah organization focused on a particular age group. Rather, we see ourselves as serving one important piece in the struggle of Islamic revival. **That piece is developing and building the youth to become the torchbearers of the Islamic Revival for the decades to come.**

Our ideology is focused on the establishment of the Deen. This means that **we do not divide ourselves into groups** within Ahl Al Sunnah Wal Jama’ah. Rather our goal is to build a large coalition of sincere and practicing Muslims dedicated to raising the cause of Islam within society.

In these trying times that the Ummah faces, **Muslim youth are a key tool in our repository.** We cannot fail to invest in them.



**YM** as a  
*Service*

What makes  **YM** different?

WHAT IS THE  
**Islamic**  
**Movement?**  
*Tying it to our Vision and Mission*

WHAT IS THE  
**Islamic  
Movement?**

*Tying it to our Vision and Mission*

As a preliminary matter, we need to understand what the Islamic Movement means.

A great scholar and ideological leader of the modern Islamic Movement succinctly defined the Islamic Movement as:

**“[the] organized, collective work, undertaken by the people, to restore Islam to the leadership of society, and to the helm of all walks of life.”**

What that means is that every aspect of our society and life, from the way we conduct ourselves in the privacy of our homes, to how we run our political and economic systems, **must all be in conformity with the Islamic Values of Justice and Dignity. We do our best to apply this as we know Allah rewards the effort, and it's not results centered.** Allah is the One who created us. He is the One that understands us best. **No one can understand the creation better than the Creator,** and on that premise, it becomes clear that in our case, no one can understand us better than Allah (swt). No one can understand our society, and the best way to order our society, better than Allah (swt).

Allah (swt) did not leave us empty-handed in our endeavor in this worldly life. He gave us the Shariah, this Islamic system that governs every aspect of our lives. **YM, through its Vision and Mission statement, is trying to shape society through its work with the Youth.**



WHAT IS THE

# Islamic Movement?

*Tying it to our Vision and Mission*

*continued.*

The Vision Statement means that YM is trying to change society for the better by shaping it to be in conformity with Allah's commands. The method of YM in accomplishing this is young people. **By training them, and instilling in them a drive to change the world now**, the hope is that not only do they try to do so while in YM, but will go on to spend the rest of their lives doing so. It may be that the big impact a YM member or leader has will not even be in their time in YM, but rather years later through the skills and training they received through YM.

YM's Vision Statement is:

**“American Muslim youth collectively contributing to society's betterment with God-consciousness and a firm understanding of their Muslim identity.”**

YM's Mission Statement is:

**“Young Muslims seeks the pleasure of Allah (SWT) by empowering Muslim youth through companionship, mentorship, education, and service.”**

The question is then, how do we engage and train these young people? That is YM's Mission Statement! Muslim youth are struggling, and what they need is positive social company and Islamic brotherhood. Muslim youth need good role models, positive peer pressure, and education as to the basics of their Deen and their obligations to Allah and to the Ummah.

In conclusion, **the Islamic Movement is a methodology within the Muslim Ummah focused on shaping society to become more God-conscious and closer to that which God loves.** Our method is through developing and training young people to carry on this task.

**YM** as a  
*Service*

**ROLES** AND   
**EXPECTATIONS**

*the burden of leadership.*

## Neighbor-Net - (NN): *Network of Neighbors*

Within YM terminology, we refer to the YM Chapter as “Neighbor-Net”, which is a group of local YM members that meet together on a weekly basis for the sake of pleasing Allah (swt). Every Neighbor-Net consists of an activity to engage everyone, a halaqah or an interactive discussion on an Islamic topic, and food.

## Core-Team - (CT):

This is the Shura of the NN, which is a team effort of a variety of members within the NN, generally chosen by their NNC (Neighbor-Net Coordinator). After being onboarded to the CT, they need to have a basic understanding that what CT does transcends beyond the NN, that is that the work that is done is for their own betterment and for the pleasure of Allah (SWT) through serving their local NN.

## Core-Team Responsibilities:

- To support the NNC in decision-making, event planning
- To attend NN weekly and actively engage with NN attendees
- To actively participate in local community events & build personal relationships with NN attendees
- To invite brothers to attend the NN in a welcoming manner (at least 5-10 individuals each week)
- To remain vigilant of any issues that may arise
  - Threats to NN (Masjid board, Informants, etc)
  - NN members (family problems, drug abuse, sexual abuse, etc)
- To attend SC (Study circle) on a consistent basis to gain Islamic knowledge and understanding (Tarbiyah)

Note that this is only a bite-size summary of what the responsibilities are. However within the CT there are other roles that could be delegated to allow it to perform as a cross-functional team. Typically people are added to CT **after** they've already been fulfilling most CT responsibilities without the title to ensure they are sincere in their position once they're onboarded. It is also important for **the role of a CT member to remain a secret within the NN** as it can lead to disagreements and arguments within the NN. Some members may feel that they deserve to hold that position compared to the CT member and while they may or may not, **one of the biggest fundamentals in YM is that no one should seek out leadership as that is what would cause faultiness within the organization.**

## What is Study Circle?

Study circle is a weekly study group that focuses on developing the leadership's base knowledge and understanding of Islamic work. It serves as an anchor to guide the individual and providing all the tools and knowledge to be a strong Islamic worker, while also guiding him through the situations he may face in YM., all led by role-model figure known as the Murabbi.

## Neighbor-Net Coordinator - (NNC):

Commonly referred to as the NNC, this is one of the most important roles within the organization of YM. This position is responsible for multiple things however their sole responsibility is facilitating the NN. Building relationships with NN members, community members, as well as the leaders of the community. They are also the decision makers within the local NN, deciding what activity to do, where to eat, who does halaqa, etc.

## Neighbor-Net Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Work with the Core-Team to decide the plans of the weekly NN, assign who will give the halaqa, attend NN on a consistent basis, be actively engaged with their community, attend SC (Study Circle)
- To be aware of any ongoing issues within the NN
  - Members suffering from any substance abuse, family trouble, etc
  - Masjid “politics”
- To be mentors towards NN members
- Developing CT members to be capable of leading the NN in the future as well as developing them into NNCs
- To be receiving Islamic guidance
  - Through their murrabi, local imam, etc
- To stay in close contact with their superior (Sub-regional Coordinator, Regional Coordinator, Or National shura representative) explaining ongoing issues, events, as well NN activities

This is just an overview of the responsibilities of the NNC, however, a lot more goes on behind the scenes of planning the NN as well as the day of the NN.

**Mentorship is the most important aspect of this role** as the NN members now see them as their respective leader so it's important that the NNC is being the best of mentors they can be by following the Quran and Sunnah to the best of their abilities.

## Murabbi:

This position operates outside of the NN and CT. It may be held by a former YM leader or a local imam/Sheikh who is inclusive of all Sunni backgrounds. Being able to play in an active role in mentorship and youth development are essentials while also having an understanding of the Islamic Movement, which is recommended.

## Murabbi Responsibilities:

- To be active members of the community to where they are seen as leaders within the community
- To conduct Study Circle on a consistent basis
- To be aware of NN issues
  - Politics, NN guys, disagreements within the shura
- To be direct mentors to the leadership
- To be capable of explaining the Islamic Movement as well as explaining the CT and NNC their purpose within YM as leaders

# TARBIYYAH LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Although we have mentioned some components to YM's Tarbiyyah on a local level, it is important to recognize that our personal Tarbiyyah and development is truly at the heart of we go about our Islamic work.

## So, what is Tarbiyyah?

Linguistically, tarbiyyah means increase or growth and is often referred to as the upbringing of children in their physical, educational, spiritual, and moral aspects. In YM specifically, we use this term to categorize the enhancement of our membership in furthering their knowledge, vision, leadership skills, and spirituality to become the best representatives of Islam in America.

## Why Tarbiyyah?

Being a Muslim in America, it is very easy to feel disconnected from the Islamic tradition, which is found in the Quran and the Sunnah, especially growing up as youth in environments that are very much dissociated from Islam. As leaders and peers of those who we try to call to the remembrance of Allah (SWT) via NeighborNet, we need to be able to maintain a very relatable face so they may be comfortable to accepting that call but also representing strong characteristics as Muslims that gives others an example to follow - especially in a time where youth may have never interacted or spoke to an Imam or scholar.

While Tarbiyyah may seem vast and daunting, YM, as an organization, has structured the Tarbiyyah model to simplify the approach and make the path of self-development clearer and more grounded. **Within Tarbiyyah, we focus on a few core components—vision instillment, mentorship, tazkiyyah, leadership development, and knowledge base—each contributing to the overall development of the Islamic worker and leader in America.**

It is important to recognize that when the core responsibilities of facilitating the weekly NeighborNets, managing the Core Team, and attending the Study Circle are fulfilled with sincerity and Ihsaan, they directly contribute to your personal Tarbiyyah.

**The lessons extracted from both successes and failures help build a stronger vision,** sharpen management skills, and deepen your Islamic knowledge base.



# TARBIYYAH LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

continued.

However, alongside our responsibilities within YM, **we also carry core responsibilities to Allah (SWT) in our day-to-day lives.** This dimension can be categorized as **spirituality** within Tarbiyyah—our relationship with Allah (SWT) is what guides and beautifies the work we do weekly. Our worship to Allah (SWT) comes before everything else and is, in reality, **a means of serving ourselves.** We cannot serve others if we are not first serving ourselves by fulfilling our duties to Allah (SWT).

YM encourages a systemized approach to our spirituality and personal Tarbiyyah through the **Personal Development Plan (PDP)**. The PDP helps us train, maintain, and grow consistent habits in returning to Allah ﷻ and fulfilling the responsibilities He has placed upon us. It includes daily acts such as performing the five **Salah** punctually, reading a minimum amount of **Qur'an**, and reciting **Adhkar**. The PDP also goes beyond the basics, such as developing our actions in accordance with the Sunnah, increasing our Islamic knowledge base, and engaging ourselves intellectually through reading books on topics like Islamic history, societal issues, tazkiyyah, etc. The PDP is implemented through a daily tracker system of any format, to monitor one's acts of worship and personal goals. The value of this systemized approach is in building **intentional accountability**, as it's easy to get caught up in the demands of work, school, and family life—often neglecting the obligations we have to Allah (SWT), which must always come first. Through both the PDP and our weekly YM responsibilities, the path of personal Tarbiyyah becomes much more clear and structured, allowing us to grow as individuals who are spiritually grounded, intellectually equipped, and capable of leading with sincerity and purpose in service to Allah swt and the community around us.



YM  as a  
*Service*

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HOW  
TO'S

GROUND  
**ZERO**

*Community Dynamics, Starting a Neighbor-  
Net, Building a Core-Team, Pitching YM, and  
Media Practices*

# GROUND ZERO

Start with *Renewing Intentions*

Understand that everything you do is to please Allah (SWT), that the role you have is a sacred Amanah (Trust), and you will be held accountable. Find time to reflect and ask, are you upholding the rights of those you are responsible for?

**“Oh People!** I have been put in authority over you, and I am not the best of you. If I do the right thing, then help me. **If I do wrong, then set me straight.** Truthfulness is a **sacred trust** and lying is a betrayal... **As long as I obey Allah and His messenger, you should obey me,** and *if I do not obey Allah and His messenger, then obedience to me is not incumbent upon you.* **Now stand for the prayer.”**

ABU BAKR AS-SIDDEEQ (RA)  
ON HIS ADDRESS TO THE MUSLIMS WHEN BEING MADE KHALIFAH.



# Community Dynamics

## *How do you gauge the **dynamic** of a community?*

Gauging the dynamic of a community is important before determining whether to create a YM. You need to understand the key factors of the masjid and the community.

**This includes:** Utilizing existing Community Surveys, Informal Interviews with Community Leadership, and more.

- **How was this community built?** Was it developed recently, migration of Muslims, 1-2 stakeholders
- **What are the different spaces that make up the community?**
  - Masjid
  - How do people reach here - by walking or driving?
  - What are the nearby school systems? Does a school exist in the masjid? Where do people go for college (nearby or far away)? Is there a youth presence in the community?
  - Different Social Circles & Gatherings: Family Friend Dinners, Ethnic Student Associations on Campus, Sport Leagues, etc.
  - What is the “islamic-demographic” of the community?
- **What different organizations are already involved in the community?**
  - This gives you an idea of the level of islamic work that goes on in the community already along with the “types” of islamic work that a certain community lean towards - whether being very activist-based, relief based, dawah based, etc.
- **Who are the key or influential people that drive the direction of the community?**
  - Who are the Imams, masjid board, big-stake volunteers and what is their mentality.
  - Certain aspects to look out for is whether the Imam/board prefers that they have a certain level of autonomy over youth work as this will play out how a NN may operate in the community and the type of support the NN will receive from its community leaders.
- **What are the demographics?**
  - Types: Ethnicity/Race, Age, Gender, Economic class, Islamic literacy level.
  - This should influence who you need to work with to get the base of a NN to start along with the level of investment that will require going into this NN - whether financially or even socially.

# Community Dynamics cont.

## What does **gauging the community** provide to me?

- Allows you to understand how Islam is being practiced in the community and what is the level of “output” that is needed to pull the youth into the NN dynamic.
- Allows you to understand what kind of activities you can effectively engage with the community to receive proper traction.
- Allows you to assess what level of NN is needed there - whether it is done in its traditional format or that it needs to be approached differently.
  - Examples such as a non-weekend NN or a collaboration with an existing youth group
- Allows you to understand how much support or opposition you will receive from the masjid and its leadership (if you plan to work with them from the beginning).

## How do you assess if **YM** is needed there?

### WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF YOUTH WORK?

- The frequency and quality of youth work that occurs in the community.
- Is this operating independent of the masjid authority.
- Does this reach the majority (50-75%) of the youth from all different spaces that exist within the locality.

*\*\*\*The points above are also very relevant and play a factor but this simply refers to the level of youth work there are (if there are any)\*\*\**

# STARTING A NEIGHBOR-NET

This is assuming you evaluated your communities needs, and see YM fitting a niche for it.

Assuming someone has accepted the responsibility of starting a chapter and serving as the point person, in other words, the NNC, there needs to be an initial conversation to plan for the first NeighborNet. To begin, YM is built on bringing people to the masjid. As a result, the first priority is compiling a list of people.

## Organic Outreach

The first task for the NNC is to write down a list of brothers between the ages of 13 and 25 who live within the vicinity of the NN center, i.e., the masjid. They can also start with their immediate friends and peers. It is essential to call individual brothers to invite them to the NN, as personal phone calls help build stronger interpersonal relationships compared to basic texts or group chat announcements. The philosophy we operate on is that brothers will continue attending NN regularly only after they've developed emotional bonds or friendships with the attendees, and a significant part of that development stems from meaningful invitations and personal outreach. Ideally, the list should contain 25 to 50 people. Some key trends to look for include diversity in friend groups, schools, and age groups represented on the list, as well as identifying individuals with more friends who are not yet reachable by the NNC. The ultimate goal is to convert this list into a tight-knit group of friends who meet weekly.

## Planning the Logistics of the Neighbor-Net

After the list is compiled, the logistics of the NN need to be planned, specifically the activity and the food arrangements. To begin, the NNC should prepare a table of four potential activities with their locations and four food outing options. To ensure their viability, these options should have a low barrier to entry. In other words, the activity should be affordable or free, not dependent on weather, not require extensive or inaccessible equipment, not demand advanced skills or significant time investment to enjoy, not pose significant safety risks, not have complex rules, not have strict group size limitations, and should be engaging. Additionally, the activity should be near the masjid or center point. Examples of unsuitable activities for an early NN include hiking, paintball, laser tag, scuba diving, bowling, amusement parks, movies, museum tours, and shopping.

## Arranging the Food

As for food arrangements, the selected option should also have a low barrier to entry. This means it should not be expensive (preferably no more than \$10 per person), have halal options, be close to the center point, accommodate the entire NN group inside, provide seating, be open during the NN, and not require complicated arrangements like to-go orders. A huge philosophy when it comes to food is being able to go out to a restaurant as a group to bring more informality to the NN and a chance in demonstrating a level of activism, even at a very basic and simple level. If someone cannot afford food at the NeighborNet, do not hesitate to offer to cover for them. Some NNs have specific funds dedicated to this. Examples of unsuitable food choices include fancy restaurants, take-out Chinese food with pervasive pork usage, BBQing food for everyone at NN, food trucks without nearby seating, buffets, potlucks, and ordering pizza to the masjid.

## STARTING A NEIGHBOR-NET

# The Logistics

After creating a list of potential options for planning the NN, the next step is to finalize the plan for the first NN. This involves making decisions that will set general precedents for the future. One of the most relevant decisions is determining the day and time for NN during the week. Across the country, YM gatherings are typically held on Friday nights or Saturday late afternoons/early evenings. This timing aligns with when YM-age brothers, especially high schoolers, are already socializing within their own groups. To ensure maximum availability for the community, the general recommendation is to schedule YM on Friday or Saturday. Sunday is generally not ideal because most people use the day to focus on school or other work, and late Saturday nights can be challenging due to family commitments. Selecting a time that maximizes availability and committing to that schedule weekly is critical for building a strong NN.

**Note:**

Another important consideration is avoiding reliance on existing events or programming. For example, if the masjid hosts a program after Isha, do not try to schedule YM immediately before or after that event to attract attendees who are already present. **You can use this time slot to possibly start off, but consider branching off once you build up a certain consistency.** Similarly, avoid scheduling YM after Jummah or Sunday school. The reasoning is that YM should be something people are motivated to attend exclusively for its purpose, rather than as an add-on to an event they are already attending out of obligation, such as Jummah or Sunday school. If YM becomes associated with another program, **it risks losing momentum when that program pauses or stops altogether.**

## Timeline of Events at a Neighbor-Net

Once a time and day are chosen for the first NN, the expectation is that NN will occur at the same time every week moving forward. After settling on the schedule, planning out the day of NN itself is necessary. A typical NN includes a combination of halaqa, activity, food, and salah. The halaqa should occur during a natural transition between two events, such as after salah but before going out to eat or starting an activity. It should not take place at the beginning of YM since people often arrive late. Although it can be scheduled at the end of YM, this is not ideal because some people may leave early or rush through it to go home. Typically, the activity takes place before the food outing. The activity should be scheduled at a time that allows for at least an hour of participation and accommodates any required equipment, such as field lights. For outdoor activities, they should start before Maghrib unless lighting is guaranteed. The food outing should be planned when the chosen venue is open and should ideally align with normal mealtimes. It is also important to avoid inconveniences, such as scheduling the food outing too early if people have just eaten at home or if they will engage in physical activities afterward, like wrestling (it is flexible).

NN Name	Activity	Halaqa	Food Arrangement
<b>Bear Creek</b>	Football after Asr Salah at nearby football field within walking distance (under 5 minute drive)	Halaqa after Maghrib inside Masjid Musalah	Go out for boba after halaqa and make it back in time for Isha Salah at the masjid
<b>Pearland</b>	Play basketball at masjid courts after maghrib	After Isha do a short halaqa	Go to DQ Ice cream after halaqa

STARTING A NEIGHBOR-NET

Tying it Together

After the plan has been finalized, the NNC can begin a formal approach to outreach. The first step is to create a group chat including everyone from the contact list compiled earlier, along with the relevant expansion lead(s)(someone who will be your point of contact in helping you start a NN). In this group chat, the plan should be shared in an informal and casual manner. Avoid mentioning that this is a YM event or that there will be a halaqa. The announcement should resemble the way a casual friend hangout would be promoted, focusing on the activity and the food outing. It is also fine to omit specific details about the food outing in the initial announcement. Always follow up the announcement with a private message to everyone to build a personal relationship.

EXAMPLE:

“Salam boys. Lets run up some soccer after maghrib iA and after isha we go out for some ice cream at Andy's Custard. Who tryna pull through?”

Setting The Time

When deciding on the time, place, activity, and food outing for NN, it is important to avoid polling the general group. Polling can lead to conflicting opinions, and when the final decision doesn't align with everyone's preferences, it may discourage participation. This doesn't mean that consultation (mashura) isn't essential in Islamic work, but it should take place between the "expansion lead" and the "NNC," not through polling in the general group. Similarly, avoid using group chat polls to ask who is planning to attend, as external factors that might discourage attendance need to be mitigated.

The Call

When inviting people to the first NN, the individual outreach should be casual and focus on the activity and food outing, just like the group chat announcement. However, the phone call should not solely revolve around the invitation. Instead, the invitation should be one part of a broader, friendly conversation that includes small talk and relationship-building. This ensures the call feels meaningful and personal, rather than a transactional request to attend. Building interpersonal bonds during these calls is key to fostering engagement. More detailed outreach strategies will be outlined later in this document.



Communications & Outreach

While creating the group chat is essential to establish a centralized communication channel, the group announcement and social media posts alone is unlikely to be the most effective way to encourage attendance. Ideally, the group chat should be active, but even so, announcements may get lost in the chatter, especially since many members might mute the group. This highlights the need for individual outreach as the primary method of encouraging attendance, consistent with YM's methodology.



# recruiting for core-team

This section outlines qualities that make a CT Member and what should be taken into account when making a decision. Each individual who is added to core team has the opportunity to change their trajectory for the rest of their life in pleasing Allah swt, while also making significant impacts on the youth in the community. The decision should be made through Shura and deliberation.

## Identifying and Making a Decision

- Qualities to Look For:
  - Skills to supplement CT growth, demographic outreach, and personal development.
  - Attends NN on time and attends on a consistent basis
  - Potential for Tarbiyah and long-term growth as an Islamic worker (Holds an emotional investment towards YM).
  - Role model qualities (consider public flaws and red flags carefully)
    - Consider public flaws and red flags carefully
    - Has a connection with NN guys (Outside their own inner circle)
  - Has fulfilled tasks previously assigned by the NNC/CT and has fulfilled them (This can be a trial for many months with small or even major tasks)
- Decision Process:
  - Use *Shura* (consultation) and deliberate.
  - Think big picture and long term.
  - No one will be perfect—focus on potential and personal growth.
  - If deciding between multiple candidates, maintain good relationships with others for future opportunities.
  - CT members should be practicing Muslims but not free from flaws. Discuss any concerns with leadership before finalizing.

## The Meeting

- Start with general conversation about their life and commitments.
- Gauge their interest and availability.
- Explain YM, its planning CT's expectations, and CT's role as a "behind-the-scenes" team.
- Highlight the impact of YM (local and national) and the growth of past CT members.
- Encourage them to pray Istikhara and take Shura with their family.
- Set a one-week timeline for a decision and answer all questions

## The Decision

- **If They Accept:**
  - Announce to the CT and give thanks to Allah.
  - Share next steps with the new member.
- **If They Decline:**
  - Understand their reasoning and see if you can help address concerns.
  - Accept their decision if it's final—maintain a strong brotherhood.

## Documentation and Integration

- Add them to:
  - CT group chat.
  - Google Group and Shared Drive (if applicable).
- Introduce them properly to the team.

## Follow-Up and Development

- **Mentorship and Companionship:** Meet weekly outside NeighborNet to build rapport. Ensure attendance at Study Circle (non-attendance is grounds for removal).
- **Tarbiyah Development:** Check on their Salah, spiritual health, and relationship with Allah. Plan development based on interests (e.g., Logistics, Media, Tarbiyah).
- **Responsibilities:** Assign roles that help them grow while contributing to CT.

# HOW TO market

## Pitching YM

### Selling the “Why”

*understanding community dynamics*

- “Why Anything”
  - You need to be explaining to your audience the importance of a certain issue, the need for it to change, and the end result of what we should want to see after that change.
  - An example you may mention is how within the community, a pool of youth are heavily exposed to at least one major taboo of society that causes them a detachment from the religion and the masjid. You can even bring personal experiences into this where growing up, you see other individuals who have changed negatively after being exposed to such things.

WHY?

- “Why YM”
  - This is where you will explain how YM is THE solution to these problems. This will require you to explain how YM is both unique and effective in its model to be able to address the issues in society today.
  - Selling points include: consistency, peer-to-peer mentorship, different ways of investment outside of the weekly meetings, programming, network of the national organization, youth-led, independent.
- “Why Now”
  - This piece will be crucial to pull in your audience to understand the urgency behind the issue and that, if delayed any further without support, the issues will continue to worsen, new issues may arise, and a strong future of the masjid may be lost forever.
  - To add on, you may also emphasize that the fact that it is “youth-led” allows there to be easier access to the youth, what problems they are going through, and how only they know how to connect with the youth effectively.

# HOW TO market

## Pitching YM *cont.*

### Gauging The “Idea” of YM

Whether 1-on-1 or to a group of individuals, you should gauge how someone may react to the idea of YM as this will impact the conversation you take:

- Parent
  - The goal of speaking with a parent is usually to bring their child to YM - which requires a certain level of care to show that you are ready to invest in their child, be their brother, and most importantly keep them safe as they attend NN. The conversation will require you to address their child as their number one priority and how they are the product of the NN, and the community ultimately.
- Board Member
  - It is usually sufficient to go through the “Why” but throughout this conversation, a regular emphasis on how the presence of youth at the masjid is within the best interests of the community as they will ultimately shape how the family system and the community dynamic will look like in the future.
- “After Salah” Pitch
  - When it is an audience composed of youth to elders in the community, a general message, whether it is in a large group setting or small group setting, explaining what is YM and what it does on a weekly basis is usually sufficient - but it is crucial you make the NN sound very welcoming so it does not turn away anyone. Whether for it being too young or old for the youth, not attractive enough, or not appropriate for the elders who may be uneasy already about an independent group.
- Youth
  - It is very important that the way YM is pitch to an adult is not pitched the same way to a peer. YM needs to be explained in a manner where it is informal like a “hangout” rather than phrasing it as a formal meeting.
  - In addition, it is beneficial to highlight the activities the NN does and the food arrangements in a way that makes it seem like it is not a heavy operation or burden at all.
  - The halaqah or islamic discussion is something that can be mentioned to portray it as a fun gathering to be a part of. It is important the way you explain the halaqa that it does not come off as a class lecture as it deters away from the concept of a “hangout”.

# HOW TO market

## Social Media

Remember, your social media pages are the faces of your NN, and can be the first impression of YM to someone. It's important to be conscious of this and deliberate when posting.

While Marketing is important, this should **not** be the sole method of doing outreach for Neighbor-Net. Try not to rely on social media until you have at least 3 months of weekly guys coming. This will really push you on your personal outreach with your brothers.

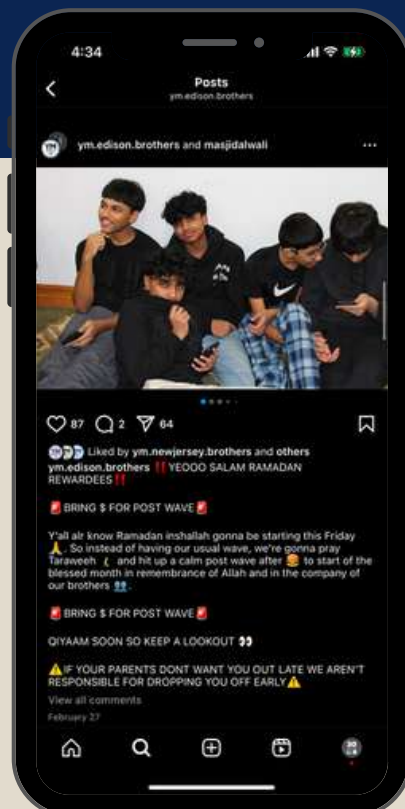
### Examples of posts can include:

**Weekly NN summary:** include a brief description of the NN, and highlight the halaqah topic and activities. Include high-quality photos and videos of both.

**Event Flyers:** make an attractive flyer with enough details included; use the caption space to provide a more detailed description

**Spotlights:** highlight a past event or NN member and ask them what they enjoy / why they come to NN (Humans of New York style)

Muslim youth and teens are the primary target for your page. Your goal is to try to attract and engage the youth to your NeighborNet while also keeping a professional image.



# HOW TO market

## Captions

Captions should have the following general format:

INTRO

DESCRIPTION

CALL TO ACTION

Examples of intros can be...

“Alhamdulillah...”, “MashAllah, this weekend...”, or “Reminder:...”

The description of the post should be concise, but informational.

Examples of call to actions can be

“See you again next week!”, “inshAllah we hope...”, or “Don’t forget to...”

ym.atlanta.brothers Assalamualaikum everyone,

Alhamdulillah, our first Qiyam Night this Ramadan at Masjid Maryam last Saturday was truly unforgettable! 🙏🏽

We kicked things off with an insightful halaqah from Br. Faheem !!

The brothers then dove into some epic action with intense rounds of kabaddi, thrilling mini soccer matches, and even some wrestling fun 🥊🏈

After all the excitement, we gathered for Qiyam salah, followed by a late-night suhoor run, with the brothers splitting up between IHOP and Waffle House 🍩

We returned to the masjid for Fajr prayer, completing our first Qiyam Night of this Ramadan, and couldn't have asked for a better start! 🌙

Inshallah, we'll see you at the next three 🙏🏽 expecting even better moments to come!

Captions should be grammatically correct and have a positive tone.

Use emojis! (based on your audience)

After creating a post, it is beneficial to share the post to your story, as it may be missed in the feed. You can also share the link of the post in your YM chat to showcase your activeness and engagement on the page.

YM  as a  
*Service*

YIM

HOW  
TO'S

*Getting  
Established*

*Running a Halaqa, Halaqa Template, Running  
a CT Meeting, How to Run an Event*

## RUNNING A HALAQA

When it comes to the YM Halaqah, its form and function are very different from any masjid halaqah or Khutbah. The YM halaqah is designed to inspire an open space where youth can feel involved and comfortable to open up and add on with their reflections and own personal anecdotes. The main intention behind it is to drive engagement, interaction, and relatability.

At its core, the YM halaqah is a reminder and not a scholarly lecture. As such, the halaqa generally avoids heavy academic topics such as fiqh or jurisprudence and focuses more so on topics that will raise the Imaan and belief of the average youth, such as stories of the Prophets, the Akhirah, or God's attributes.

**The following guidelines are to be followed in the event that you are assigned to support the halaqah giver during the week leading up to NeighborNet.**

### Timeline:

- **Sunday**

- Halaqah giver should be decided and informed that he is giving Halaqah.
- Once the Halaqa giver has confirmed, its important for them to decide by the end of the day or tomorrow (Monday) that they have a topic in mind. Generally, a topic that the halaqa giver is comfortable with or believes is an important issue that needs to be spoken about is best as this is a subject the halaqa giver may be passionate about.

- **Monday**

- Check in with the halaqah giver in the beginning, middle, and end of the day until a topic is decided.
- If by the middle of the day a topic is not decided, set aside 20-30 mins where you can help the halaqah giver brainstorm potential topics
  - While ideally this step would be done in person or over the phone, it can be done via text messaging.
  - This step is not to create the halaqah, but rather to help the Halaqah giver decide on a topic he would like to address.
- Once the topic is decided, communicate this information to the rest of the core team. Tell the Halaqah giver to spend tomorrow (Tuesday) breaking up the Major Topic into 2-3 subtopics that they would like to discuss.
  - Remind them that each subtopic should relate directly to the overall topic, and the entire halaqah should be directed towards the proper audience. (YM guys)

- **Tuesday**

- Remind the halaqa giver at the beginning of the day that they should spend the day breaking up the Major Topic into 2-3 subtopics. Inform them that you will check in on their progress towards the end of the day (give them a specific time)
- By the end of Tuesday, an outline of the Halaqah should be created.
  - Note: This day begins the drafting process of the halaqa. It would be wise for the halaqa giver to begin the drafting process on a shared document to give visibility in real time.
  - You should be aware of the halaqa giver's thought progress at all times.
- Inform them that they should spend tomorrow (Wednesday) breaking up each subtopic into roughly 1-3 points. These should be smaller points that will help guide the discussion of the Halaqah. In addition, an intro and conclusion should be formulated and incorporated into the outline of the Halaqah.

## CONDUCTING A HALAQA

### Timeline: *cont.*

- **Wednesday**

- Remind the Halaqah giver at the beginning of the day that he should spend the day breaking up subtopics into points as well as creating his conclusion. Inform them that you will check in on their progress towards the end of the day (give them a specific time)
  - Note: You should set aside a time slot of roughly 30 mins at the end of the day to go through the entire halaqah with the halaqah giver. This is less formal than a “mock halaqa”, but is necessary to ensure the mock is effective. In essence, you have them walk you through the outline of their halaqah without actually delving into any specific points. This is where you will gauge a few things:
    - If the person has made good progress and is ready for the mock.
    - If the halaqa is cohesive and if each part of the halaqa is relevant.
  - Note: This step is ideally done via chatting on Google docs in real time.
- In summary, the entire outline of the Halaqah should be done and reviewed (at least basically) by the end of the day (Wednesday).

- **Thursday**

- At the beginning of the day you should schedule a meeting with the halaqah giver for a mock halaqa.
  - Set up time, location, etc and immediately communicate this information with the rest of the Core Team. Confirm which members of CT (ideally 2) will be able to assist you during mock.
  - Ideally, a mock is done in person. If this is not possible, then the mock halaqa should be facilitated over an online meeting. Mocks via phone call/text message are generally ineffective and should be avoided.

- **Mock**

- Explain to the Halaqah giver what the purpose of the mock is and how it will run.
- Some Pointers:
  - Keep track of time. A mock halaqah without interruptions should be around 15-20 mins
  - Try not to give feedback DURING his presentation. Take note of your feedback while he is speaking, and address them at the end of the mock.
  - Separate your feedback into content-related feedback and general feedback. See example below
    - Content related: “I don’t think the hadith you quoted related to your topic”
    - General: “Try to speak louder and avoid reading off the paper”
- Make genuine suggestions. Don’t tell them what to do. It’s their halaqah, not yours.
- At the end of the mock, encourage the person to create the revisions necessary for a better delivery. Additionally, encourage him to practice as much as possible. Let them know they can reach out to you if they have any further questions.

- **Friday**

- Send a text message to the Halaqah giver towards the beginning of the day to ensure they have made the revisions necessary and to see if they have any last minute questions/concerns.
- Once the halaqa is given at NN, be sure to give feedback once it is discussed with the CT how it went.

# HALAQA OUTLINE

Within the template there are opportunities to make the halaqa engaging. It is important to do so because then the halaqa will be disengaging and members won't be paying attention. This outline is a means to help format your halaqa, not necessary but a helpful guideline and recommended to follow.

## • Introduction

- The hook
  - Personal story, describing a scenario, something to grab people's attention
- Introducing the topic
  - It doesn't have to be explicit but leading people along to understand what your topic is and what they should be understanding
  - Keep in mind that the way you introduce your topic is important. You should not start off by saying "I will talk about this topic today". You want to pull in the audience with a question or story so the audience can come to the conclusion on their own.

## • The problem

- What is the problem
  - Introduce the concept of the problem by making it engaging (Engaging moment)
  - Breakdown the problem and introduce the problem
  - Use Islamic evidence
- Why it's a problem
  - Once again an opportunity to make the halaqa engaging (engaging moment)
  - Explain why an action or idea in question is problematic
  - Use Islamic evidence
- Examples of the problem
  - Either list or ask the nn to list the problems (engaging moment)

## • The solution

- What is the solution
  - Explain what can be done to solve the problem
  - Use Islamic evidence - try to guide it in a discussion
- Why should I do the solution?
  - Explain why the solution will save you and the reasoning why it is the solution
  - Use Islamic evidence

- Evidences can comprise of, but are not limited to:
  - Ayah
  - Hadith
  - Story from the Seerah
  - Incident/Saying of the Sahaba or scholars
  - Personal Story/Experience

- Joke/Funny story
- Current Events
- History
- Islamic
- General

## • Conclusion

- Recap
  - Quick recap of the points for emphasis
    - Ask the nn to recap (engaging moment)
- Highlight takeaways
  - Mention main points and ideas that you want people to really take from the Halaqah
- Action items
  - Give at least 3 action points that people can do NOW
- Discussion question/ Engaging moment
  - End the halaqa with a question or something each and every nn member in the halaqa can do
    - (engaging moment)

**It is important to note:** *If the halaqa is meant to be very engaging, ensure you have very thoughtful discussion questions. Be ready to facilitate meaningful discourse that turns into tangible action items. Good discussions pose questions that may revolve around a scenario or situation. Try to go over these with another person.*



**HALAQA**  **RUBRIC**

*This may be helpful to benchmark how the Mock went, but should not be used strictly.*

	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	Points
<b>Organization &amp; Preparation</b>	Audience cannot understand presentation because of poor organization; introduction is undeveloped or irrelevant; main points and conclusion are unclear;	Audience has difficulty following presentation because of some abrupt jumps; some of the main points are unclear or not sufficient stressed;	Satisfactory organization; clear introduction; main points are well stated, even if some transitions are somewhat sudden; clear conclusion;	Superb organization; clear introduction; main points well stated and argued, with each leading to the next point of the talk; clear summary and conclusion.	
<b>Content</b>	No examples and not many hadith, stories, or Quranic references. Inaccurate references.	Some examples, some hadith, and stories however not well researched.	Mostly good examples, and good mix of references with Quranic references, hadith, etc.	Kept audience interested with solid examples, references and stories. Very informative and interesting.	
<b>Delivery</b>	Mumbles the words, audience members in the back can't hear anything; too many filler words; distracting gestures;	Low voice, occasionally inaudible; some distracting filler words and gestures; articulation mostly, but not always, clear;	Clear voice, generally effective delivery; minimal distracting gestures, etc., but somewhat monotone;	Natural, confident delivery that does not just convey the message but enhances it; excellent use of volume, pace etc.	
<b>Relating to audience</b>	Reads most of the presentation from the slides or notes with no eye contact with audience members; seems unaware of audience reactions;	Occasional eye contact with audience but mostly reads the presentation; some awareness of at least a portion of the audience; only brief responses to audience questions;	Generally aware of the audience reactions; maintains good eye contact when speaking and when answering questions;	Keeps the audience engaged throughout the presentation; modifies material on-the-fly based on audience questions and comments; keenly aware of audience reactions.	
<b>Total:</b>					/20

# CORE-TEAM MEETINGS

## why even meet?

The CT meeting is designed to **address the challenges faced by the community** and find effective solutions. Discussions should focus on the issues impacting NN attendees as well as the broader community, recognizing that NN serves as merely the entry point. The True growth and Tarbiyah must extend beyond NN itself. While the CT meeting facilitates this initial engagement, the focus must also be on what happens outside of NN.

**“You can’t change someone in 4 hours/week, but these 4 hours can make him enter the door to change, you need to be waiting for him after the door”**

Therefore, CT meetings should address the CT shortcomings, the NN and the rest of the week, ensuring long-term community development. A structured approach is necessary, categorizing individuals into three groups:

- Masjid attendees who don’t come to NN
- NN members who only attend NN
- NN members who engage with both NN and the masjid.
- NN members who comes to **neither** the NN or the masjid
- Did the CT show up to NN on time? Is everyone pulling their weight?
- Was their outreach minimal or doing whats needed (texted a GC VS indivually texting guys, ETC

**The goal should be to transition all individuals toward deeper community involvement.**

**NOTE:** CT meetings should not only focus on running a successful NN but also on **maintaining strong connections between CT, NNC, and the wider community.** Encouraging regular masjid attendance—particularly for Isha and Fajr, when youth participation is high—is essential.

# CORE-TEAM MEETINGS AGENDA

- Intentions Reminder
- Any Important Announcements
- Last Week Review
  - Halaqa critiques
  - Moderator critique
  - Talk about activities/problems within NN
- Next week
  - Halaqa topic, activity, who doing what tasks, and food
- Miscellaneous
  - Next events
  - General updates
  - Mini Muhasabah
  - Study Circle reminder
- Neighbor-Net status/ Problems
- Personal Development Goals / Islamic Gems

**Take time** to review who came and who did not, how are **outreach efforts** are going, and what personal relationships are being built.  
**Reflection** is needed!

**This can be adjusted based on the workflow of your core-team and current priorities, but you should spend time on discussion and advancing conversation, not being stuck focusing on logistics.**

# CORE-TEAM MEETINGS

## how to run a meeting?

PREFACE:

**CT meetings should prioritize vision, discussion, and Islamic work over logistics.** Early on, locking in the Logistics can serve to be critical as well. Focus on YM's mission and long-term growth while fostering engagement through interactive discussions. Encourage CT members to lead by questioning their decisions ("be the dumb guy") and assigning a devil's advocate to challenge perspectives. The facilitator should speak the least, ensuring the team drives the conversation.

*For a CT meeting to run effectively, we can go all over how important it is to run the NN and crucial what game/food/halaqa we will be working on, but this should be at most 20 minutes (Last week and next week).*

## The rest of the time outside of Review should be focused on Discussion and Tarbiyah Issues

Examples of issues: Issues at Home, Smoking, Addiction, and so on. You are discussing these with the intent to bring betterment to the situation, and community, with the understanding everything you know about your Neighbor-Net members is an immense Amanah (trust).

# CORE-TEAM MEETINGS

## BREAKING DOWN THE AGENDA

### Last Week:

- Should spend at least 7-10 minutes discussing how the halaqa went
- Best time and place to improve person's halaqa quality by talking about his halaqa and what he needs to improve in the delivery and the info
  - To do this, assign a CT to take rough notes of the halaqa so when the meeting comes everyone don't just say "I don't remember" or "oh, yeah, yeah, it was a good halaqa"
  - *This part is really crucial for the success of any meeting and public speaking skills. Most improvement happens in it.*
- Everyone in the meeting needs to comment about three things
  - The moderator, and how did he moderate the halaqa and run the discussion
  - How was the content of the halaqa
  - *How was the delivery (Most Important)*

### Next Week: *Be ready to make changes on the fly based on the community.*

- It's important to have a plan for each month if not 2 months - high-level.
- Create a plan that shows the halaqas for the next 2-3 months
  - Have the person giving it assigned so he has more than enough time to prepare
  - Have the halaqas connect (Maybe have a series like Akhlaq for example)
  - Tackle different problems and dates (Like a problem happened in NN) (Prom, Christmas, etc.)

Date	Activity	Halaqa Topic	Halaqa Giver	Moderator
8/27/2022	Dodgeball/Basketball	Etiquettes of Talking	Musab Shahid	Maulana Mir
9/3/2022	Football	Leadership in Islam	Moawaz Hassan	Ahmad Mansour
9/10/2022	Basketball	Etiquettes of a Muslim Man Pt.2	Amr Khalifa	Moaz
9/17/2022	Volleyball	Relationship with the other gender	Mohammed Elsayed	Abdulrahman

### Gem:

- Every meeting, someone new gives a reminder from something they learned.
- **Use it to encourage CT members to seek Islamic Knowledge and tie themselves to it.**

CT meetings should help bring more youth to the masjid beyond NN and strengthen CT-NNC ties. *Keep logistics to 30%, with 70% focused on solving issues*—even if one meeting is spent on a single problem. Always share beneficial knowledge and discuss how YM serves the wider community.

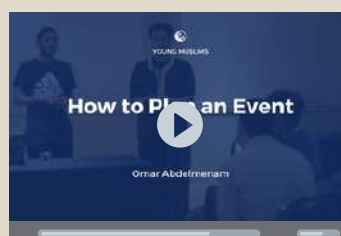
# ORGANIZING AN EVENT

Put in brief with bullet points. Watch the video for additional context.

## General Responsibilities and Coordination

- Decide/Confirm all team members with the respective stakeholders.
- Explain the overall goal of the team to all the members and set up roles for each person to their strengths. This should be documented in a central drive. Delegate.
- Set up a weekly conference call, an iMessage GC (or whatever communication method) with everyone on the team to stay in contact and keep them active (add supervising leadership to both, and sisters if its a co-ed event). Communication is key.
- Sometimes Google meets and physical meetings work much better, especially if you're concerned with lack of communication. Motivate them by telling them how important the project is for others and for them, as far as reward.
- Have an agenda for each call and set deadlines. These calls would follow the timeline and parameters set by the lead from the initiation of the team.
- Make sure to assign someone on the team to take notes for every call and to forward those notes to SR.
- Weekly update from each member.
- Figure out logistics for the day of the event. Make sure pictures, or any marketing material, is taken for social media.
- Clean up after the event with the team and volunteers.
- After the event is over, be sure to meet or have a call for a Muhasabah (evaluation of team and event) ASAP. Make sure notes are taken, and send to SR.
- If working with YM Sisters, be sure to cc YM protocol (NC and SG of both organizations) to all of the email threads.
- If working with sisters in general, be sure to follow proper Islamic guidelines and that all communications are public, purposeful, and limited.

**NOTE: Large events only “help” once you’ve shown consistent attendance for 4-6 months through smaller, chill NN gatherings. Jumping straight into big events can backfire and ruin the long-term goal of producing Islamic workers. Use them with discretion and great intention.**



[bit.ly/ymhtpevent](https://bit.ly/ymhtpevent)

YM as a  
*Service*

YMM

HOW  
TO'S

TAKING THE  
NEXT *STEP*

*Financial Practices, Annual Planning,  
Muhasabah, and Developing Leaders*

# THE \$ WORLD OF FINANCE

Effective financial practices are essential for the success of any growing Neighbor-Net. **While running a YM doesn't necessarily require money, having financial resources can significantly enhance the experience and expand what can be achieved.** Any funds for YM are an amanah (trust), so it's crucial to manage them responsibly and account for every dollar. To ensure proper financial management, maintain a profit and loss (P/L) sheet to track funds and, most importantly, create annual budgets to guide your spending and planning.



# Creating a P/L

General Template



NEIGHBOR-NET PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT				
DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	INCOME/EXPENSE	CATEGORY
1/10/2022	ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING	\$ 75.00	EXPENSE	ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING
4/13/2022	RAMADAN DONATION	\$ 500.00	INCOME	DONATIONS
4/13/2022	RAMADAN DONATION	\$ 500.00	EXPENSE	DONATIONS
	MASJID BUDGET	\$ 2,000.00	INCOME	NATIONAL BUDGET
	STARTING BALANCE	\$ 500.00	INCOME	STARTING BALANCE
	FOOD SPONSORSHIP (MARCH)	\$ 250.00	INCOME	

*Use AI Models and ask finance-savvy people to help you!*

## Steps to Create a P/L

### Gather Financial Data

- Collect all financial records for the period, such as income statements, receipts, and donations. Access any leadership about how expenses have gone.

### Create and Organize a Spreadsheet

- Open a new Spreadsheet. Name it appropriately (e.g., "P/L Sheet YYYY-MM").
- In the first row, add column headers: "Category," "Income," "Expenses," and "Net Income."
- Format the header row for clarity (e.g., bold text, distinct color).
- Under "Category," list revenue sources (e.g., "Donations") and expense categories (e.g., "Food," "Financial Aid").

### Input Data

- Enter revenue amounts under the "Income" column for each category.
- Add expense amounts under the "Expenses" column for each expense category.

### Calculate Net Income

- In the "Net Income" column, calculate the difference between total income and total expenses using a formula (e.g., =SUM(B2:B)-SUM(C2:C) if income is in column B and expenses are in column C).
- Adjust the formula as needed for your sheet layout.

### Review and Share

- Double-check all data for accuracy.
- Verify the "Net Income" calculation matches your financial records.
- Save the spreadsheet in your preferred format and share it with your team in your Google Folder.

# Creating a Budget

General Template



NEIGHBOR-NET ANNUAL BUDGET					
CATEGORY/ DESCRIPTION	BUDGET AMOUNT	ACTUAL AMOUNT	BUDGET VS ACTUALS	BUDGET COMMENTS	ACTUALS COMMENTS
ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING	\$ 100.00		\$ 100.00	DESCRIBE WHAT LED YOU TO THE AMOUNT YOU ARE BUDGETING FOR	DESCRIBE WHAT LED TO THE AMOUNT YOU ACTUALLY SPENT
COURT BOOKINGS	\$ 100.00		\$ 100.00	DESCRIBE WHAT LED YOU TO THE AMOUNT YOU ARE BUDGETING FOR	DESCRIBE WHAT LED TO THE AMOUNT YOU ACTUALLY SPENT

*Use AI Models and other finance-savvy people to help you!*

***All you're doing is projecting expenses!***

## Steps to Create a Budget

- **Review Past Neighbor-Net Expenses**
  - Examine past NN financial data to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.
  - Align the budget with the fiscal year (January–December).
- **Set Goals**
  - Define objectives that align with NN’s mission, such as allocating funds for financial aid, food, or booking courts/parks.
  - Also, ensure there is a cushion amount for unexpected expenses.
- **Identify Revenue and Expenses**
  - List income sources like donations, sponsors, and fees. Estimate expenses based on historical data, including food, equipment, and court fees.
- **Draft the Budget**
  - Create a balanced budget that aligns revenue and expenses while supporting NN’s goals.
- **Review and Approve**
  - Adjust for accuracy and seek approval from the Core Team or Masjid Board.
  - It does not hurt to have an extra set of eyes to look at it.
- **Monitor and Adjust**
  - Regularly track financial activity and compare it with projections, making adjustments during periodic reviews like Muhasabah.

**Remember, running a Neighbor-Net is NOT about turning a profit. If someone is shy to come to NN because there is no financial aid or its too expensive, that is a serious consideration to make.**

# ANNUAL PLANNING

An Annual Planning Meeting is critical for success in the upcoming year, as it provides a roadmap that aligns your Neighbor-Net’s vision, mission, and activities. This meeting offers an invaluable opportunity to pause, step back from day-to-day operations, and think long-term. It helps the team define strategic goals and objectives, ensuring that every decision and program throughout the year is purposeful and goal-oriented. Unlike regular meetings, which focus on the tactical execution of specific tasks, the Annual Planning Meeting takes a broader perspective, setting the foundation for a cohesive year, and keeps things high-level.

This section is a bit long, but arguably one of the most important.

## BASIC EXAMPLE - ANNUAL PLANNING GOALS

Focus Area	Goal	Supporting Strategy
<b>Mentorship &amp; Companionship</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizing older phased out NN guys and connecting them with NN for professional/personal development.</li> <li>Using YM NN teams to develop people in terms of Islamic Leadership <small>2 Guys per 4 Teams</small></li> <li>Diversifying Neighbor-Net</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alumni Night, Making a sheet with names and informal pairings, having outings to foster relationship.</li> <li>Media, Merch, Quran Circle, Fajr Breakfast, etc.</li> <li>Outreach to X, Y, Z schools, collabs with X, Y, Z groups, etc.</li> </ol>
<b>Tarbiyah</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the quality of halaqas.</li> <li>Using knowledge we gain from study circle (SC) to implement in our lives to improve character and give halaqas.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enabling Mock halaqas, establishing a halaqa series.</li> <li>Have outings with the Murabbi, enable SC exams, weekly note-taking assignments.</li> </ol>
<b>Community Service &amp; Involvement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 YM community events in the year</li> <li>Diversifying our volunteering <small>(twice every 3 months)</small></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent’s Night &amp; Community Topic</li> <li>Soup Kitchen, “list Islamic/Charity orgs to collab with</li> </ol>

# ANNUAL PLANNING

## Intentions Renewal and Neighbor-Net Overview

- Begin with a reminder of the intentions behind the upcoming meeting and the work more broadly - to do it all with sincerity to earn the pleasure of Allah (SWT).
- Provide a brief overview of your organization's mission, vision, and values.
  - Note: If your organization has not documented Mission, Vision, or set of Values, now might be a good time to consider doing so!
  - For a local masjid youth group, it is not a necessity to have, but a great guiding force.

## Review of Previous Year Goals and Outcomes

- Summarize the key goals and objectives outlined in the annual plan from previous years, including any notable achievements or challenges that were faced.
  - Note: It is common for meetings to derail during this portion of the meeting as the team may tend to focus too heavily on the previous year which can prevent it from focusing on the upcoming year. To avoid this, try to provide a summary of the key goals and objectives from last year prior to the annual planning meeting, and focus the discussion on major takeaways. Also, be sure to take note of any ideas that are shared for the upcoming year but try to hold off on discussing them until that portion of the meeting later.
- If needed, consider discussing the goals and objectives from last year with former leaders to get their perspective.
- If you're Neighbor-Net is completely new, then maybe highlight the issues and gaps of youth engagement in the community and common struggles.

## Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

- **Define Broad Goals:**
  - Define the top strategic priorities that align with the issues you pointed out.
  - Note: These will serve as the broad, overarching goals that all other sub-goals and objectives will fall under. Prioritize the areas or themes that require focused attention in the coming year.
  - Ensure that the broad goals address critical challenges or opportunities faced by the NN.
- **Define Objectives and Key Strategies:**
  - Determine the objectives that you will aim to achieve in the upcoming year. These should ideally be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic/Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART Goals)
  - Determine the action steps, initiatives, or projects required for each strategy.
- **Performance Indicators:**
  - Define specific, measurable indicators that will be used to monitor progress toward each objective.
  - Identify quantitative or qualitative metrics that demonstrate success or impact.
  - Ensure the indicators are relevant, achievable, and aligned with the NN. They should be easy to understand.
    - Ex. measure attendance by a head count tracker, set a number out of 10 based off a defined rubric for any function, and review that rubric as the goal is implemented.

# ANNUAL PLANNING *cont.*

## Accountability and Adhering to the Plan

*A great plan is only as effective as its execution, which is why accountability and tracking are essential.*

- **Define Roles and Responsibilities for Each Goal/Objective**
  - Assign ownership for each goal or objective. Each core-team member should “own” one goal and be responsible for the follow-up.
  - Document expectations for delivery of the goal including what the deliverables will look like, timelines, etc.
- **Establish a system and process for evaluating progress towards goals and objectives.**
  - Set measurable milestones by dividing each objective into smaller, measurable tasks that can help track progress more effectively.
    - Ex. “create the chat, setup the template, document X process”.
  - Establish recurring checkpoints to review progress on milestones. It is recommended to schedule a formalized checkpoint on annual plan progress at least once a quarter in most cases. This can also be tied into the Muhasabah meeting!
  - Also ensure that AP goals are referenced and integrated into more regular core-team calls/meetings (i.e. Don’t wait until Muhasabah only to review progress).
    - It can be a 5-minute point on the weekly agenda.
- **Hold Regular Accountability Meetings**
  - Conduct recurring check-ins as scheduled above.
  - Discuss challenges faced in making progress on challenges and adjust the strategy accordingly.
  - Acknowledge and celebrate progress to help keep the core-team motivated!
  - If adjustments need to be made, make them and keep it in mind for future Annual Plannings!
- **Create a centralized Tracking System**
  - Choose a platform or tool that can help track progress on tasks, goals, and objectives (Google Sheets, Asana, Etc.)
    - Use dropdown menus to note which goal is pending or behind.

A good Annual Planning is a great asset and guiding force to make for a great year of Neighbor-Net. **It drives success and pushes the core team to challenge themselves to do more and strive for Ihsan.** Remember, that Allah (swt) judges the effort and the intention!

Know your Annual Planning goals like the back of your hand. Be able to describe them succinctly and articulate them well. When talking about your Neighbor-Net’s efforts to the community, parents, and masjid.

# MUHASABAH

*Linguistically, the Arabic term translates to "Reckoning and Accountability." Within the YM framework, it signifies **Individual and Collective Performance Reviews** across YM projects.*

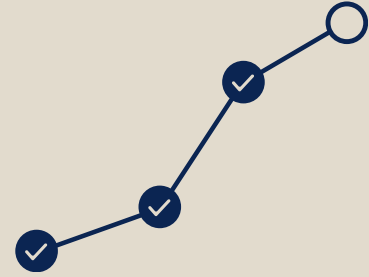
Thabit ibn al-Hajjaj reported: Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, said,

**“Hold yourselves accountable before you are held accountable and evaluate yourselves before you are evaluated, for the Reckoning will be easier upon you tomorrow if you hold yourselves accountable today.”**

In the Quran, the word hisab (حِسَاب) appears 39 times as a verbal noun and is translated as "reckoning" or "accounting".

The emphasis on **“Hisab” is connected to the idea of tracking progress and improving any effort.** Stopping and taking account of our actions presents an opportunity to rectify intentions whilst taking pause from continuing any mistaken evil.

# MUHASABAH



## Organizational Functions

- Progress Tracking, Performance Reviews, and Constructive Criticism are best practices set across organizations globally, and has a strong basis across the Quran and Sunnah as well.
- Having set intervals to properly assess and hold accountable responsible parties is necessary for growth to any organization
- **Without Muhasibat, progress will not be made over time as mistakes will continue to be repeated**
- Speaking within an organizational context, a Muhasabah is a review meeting that covers the applications of a certain subject. Muhasibat should be done after an event has happened, to review a long-term team on a frequent basis (monthly, quarterly, etc.), or to address an immediate issue that is coming in the way of a certain objective.

## Implementation

- **Intention Reminders**
  - Throughout the whole meeting of the Muhsabah, it is important that every aspect of the meeting is tied back to the purpose of the Islamic work.
  - After the reminder, it is essential to tie back certain discussions to the intention of the Muhasabah. This allows the meeting to be healthy, beneficial, and a lot more reflective for the team to use as a source of guidance in their efforts in pleasing Allah swt.
- **Progress Tracking**
  - When coming together as a team, you want to ensure that the objectives set together at the beginning of a term are reviewed thoroughly.
  - Did you achieve the action items set from the last Muhasibat to get you closer to the goal? How far are you from completing the objective?
    - This can be done through the measurable system that was the objective was created.
    - Be sure that there is a format of this tracking so that there is a clear understanding to the rest of the team that the objective is actually being completed, rather than just by assumption.
- **Performance Reviews and Constructive Criticism**
  - Is the objective still achievable or relevant to the overall goal?
    - Sometimes an objective that was planned at the beginning of the term may not be achievable due to unforeseen events that is causing the team to be able to have the bandwidth or causing the objective to be shifted to a lower priority to address those unforeseen events.
  - What factors are preventing us from completing the objective? What steps need to be taken to close out on the objective?
    - If an objective is failing to be completed, it is important to understand what or who may be causing that. This is part of the Muhasabah where accountability should be held to ensure that there is a proper respect given to the objective at hand.
    - If there are other factors outside of who may be causing a certain failure, then a discussion needs to be had on how to address and resolve that factor.
    - Once accountability is held and the next steps are built to close out the objective, it is crucial that these action items are assigned to an individual on the team, to continue a basis of follow-up and future accountability.

# MUHASABAH

## Implementation *cont.*

- **Frequency**

- It is crucial that we set intervals or a certain frequency of how often we hold Muhsibat as a team. The purpose of this is to allow the team to have their action items categorized under a set timeline to prevent any form of loose accountability and ensure benchmarks are being met. This also allows the team to continue to learn from their successes and failures throughout their term as it will allow them to reflect on why they are doing this work and how they can improve themselves so that the team is in the best possible position for success.

- **Personal Muhasabah**

- This may seem a bit similar to the constructive criticism portion earlier but the focus of this section is to assess the individual's performance and character on the team. Assessing their attendance to the commitments agreed upon, communication skills, character traits (if there are any negative ones), and their contribution to the team - whether its nonexistent, minimal, healthy, or overbearing.
- The purpose of this is to allow the individual to understand how he is performing through the Nasihah of his peers and then to course correct for the benefit of the team and the mission.
- It is very possible that there will be positive points to mention for the individual. Although this is good to mention, it is important that the critiques are mentioned first before mentioning the positive items as this can allow the individual to focus on what they need to work.

**These questions are usually done in a natural discussion format but this is to allow the leader of the meeting to have an understanding of how to conduct the meeting effectively.**

**As always, it is important for the sake of the development of the team that the team members are the ones coming to the conclusion of the questions and the lead just facilitates the discussion.**

# MUHASABAH

## SAMPLE AGENDA

- **Neighbor-Net Quality**
  - Are we reaching NN goals from AP?
  - What is our relationship with our members? State of our members over the past few months?
  - Prospective Core Team Members (remembering Diversity of thought)
  - Are NN members on any teams? Are they participating and growing or just attending?
  - Any initiatives (Ex: Quran Circles)
  - Is our NN actually addressing the needs of the Muslim Youth in our area?
  - What can we do to address it if not
- **Core-Team Quality (as a unit)** - can give ratings 1-10 prior to meeting to save time
  - How are we working as a team?
  - Anyone overworked? Underworked?
- **NNC Performance**
  - SC Attendance
  - CT Attendance
  - NN Attendance
  - Strengths? Weaknesses?
  - What should I keep doing? What should I do better?
  - Think about all facets of leadership
- **CT Performance (individually)**
  - SC Attendance
  - NN Attendance
  - CT Attendance
  - Contribution and Outreach
  - Strengths and weaknesses
- **Review CT individual goals to improve ourselves as Muslims (should be from AP)**
- **How can we improve the Study Circle? Are we all benefitting? (Roundtable)**
- **Community Relationship**
  - Are we working with the masjid? How is the relationship with the Board?
  - Are we engaging in work outside of our bubble? How do we do so?
    - Working with other organizations?
    - Getting youth outside of the masjid?
    - High School MSAs doing well? College MSAs?
  - Are the Muslim Youth in the area getting closer to Allah through YM or other means?
- **Budget Check**
  - Discussing Fundraising to support efforts
- **Discussing Events (Examples Below)**
  - Parents Night
  - Mini Golf
  - Beach Trips
  - Community Service Project
  - Olympics Event
  - Back to School Giveaway
  - Hiking Trip
  - New Years and Ramadan Qiyaams



**NOTE THAT THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST AND IT CAN BE ADAPTED TO FIT THE NEEDS OF THE NN.**

# DUA

## Why Duaa?

We can do all the work, but if we are not willing to ask from Allah (SWT) to help us then no one will help us. Take time through your week to reflect, pray Tahajjud, and call upon the One to alleviate all affairs.

## Make me better than what they think of me

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي خَيْرًا مِمَّا يَظُنُّونَ وَاغْفِرْ لِي مَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ وَلَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا يَقُولُونَ

“O Allah, make me better than what they think of me, and forgive me for what they do not know about me, and do not take me to account for what they say about me.”

## Increase in Knowledge

رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

My Lord, increase me in knowledge.

## For Rizq

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ عِلْمًا نَافِعًا وَرِزْقًا طَيِّبًا  
وَعَمَلًا مُتَقَبَّلًا

O Allah, I ask You for knowledge that is of benefit, a good provision, and deeds that will be accepted.

## For Forgiveness

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَشْرِكَ بِكَ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا لَا أَعْلَمُ

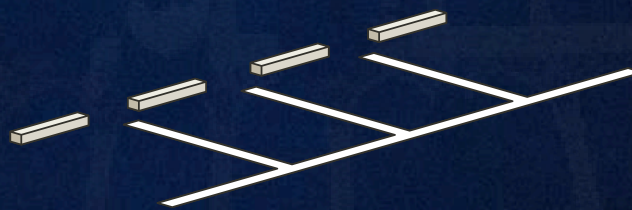
O Allah, I seek refuge in You lest I associate anything with You knowingly, and I seek Your forgiveness for what I know not.

## Making a Hard Decision

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي [mention decision here] وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ

O Allah, I seek Your guidance by virtue of Your knowledge, and I seek ability by virtue of Your power, and I ask You of Your great bounty. You have power; I have none. And You know; I do not know. You are the Knower of the unseen. O Allah, if You know that this matter (**mention your need**) is good for me in my religion, my livelihood, and the end of my affair, or he said in my life and death and in my affairs, in the present and in the future, then ordain it for me, make it easy for me, and bless it for me.

# CONCLUSION





## CONCLUSION

Congratulations on reading to the end of this package, *assuming you read all of it* :). Know that this package has been slimmed down to a great extent in order to make this information accessible to everyone. Should you require more insight and help, reach out anytime.

## WHIMSICAL COMPOSITION

“BLOOD, SWEAT, AND TEARS, YES THERE WAS BLOOD...

**YOU SEE,** THEY DON'T SAY REALLY TALK ABOUT ONE ASPECT OF BEING THE 'AMEER'. AT SOME POINT, IT ISN'T A JOB YOU DO BECAUSE IT WAS HANDED TO YOU, IT ISN'T A CHORE, **NOR IS IT A A LOSS OF TIME.** IT IS AN IDENTITY ROOTED IN HONOR AND COMPASSION, **TRANSFORMING ONE'S WAY OF LIFE FOR THE BETTER.** NO DOUBT, THERE WILL BE DAYS YOU WON'T FIND TIME TO EAT AT NEIGHBORNET, **YOU MAY GIVE YOUR LAST \$10 TO COVER SOMEONE'S FOOD,** AND SOMEONE **MAY SPILL A WAWA MILKSHAKE ON YOUR CAR SEAT...**

**THERE IS A SWEETNESS IN SACRIFICE,** A SWEETNESS IN LOVING FOR YOUR BROTHER WHAT YOU LOVE FOR YOURSELF. YOU WILL HAVE YOUR WINS, **BUT NEVER FORGET** THE LOSSES THAT BROUGHT YOU THERE. AND NEVER **FORGET** THE BROTHERS YOU STARTED WITH.

**SURELY, THERE IS NO PRICE FOR RIGHTEOUS COMPANIONSHIP.”**



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WHAT IS THE

**Islamic  
Movement?**

Tying it to our Vision and Mission

**ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS**  
*the burden of leadership.*

*Getting  
Established*

TARBIYAH LEADERSHIP  
AND DEVELOPMENT

TAKING THE  
NEXT **STEP**

recruiting   
core-team

HOW TO  
market

Community Dynamics 

STARTING A NEIGHBOR-NET

**MUHASABAH**

CORE-TEAM  
MEETINGS

HALAQA 

THE   
WORLD OF  
FINANCE

ANNUAL   
**PLANNING**

ORGANIZING  AN EVENT

WHIMSICAL COMPOSITION





THE PROPHET (PBUH) SAID:

“HE WHO DOES NOT THANK THE PEOPLE IS NOT  
THANKFUL TO ALLAH.”

SUNAN ABI DAWUD 4811



UMAR (RA) SAID:

“O ALLAH, I AM WEAK, SO MAKE ME STRONG.  
I AM HARSH, SO MAKE ME GENTLE.  
I AM MISERLY, SO MAKE ME GENEROUS.”

MUSANNAF IBN ABĪ SHAYBAH 5179

**YM** as a  
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