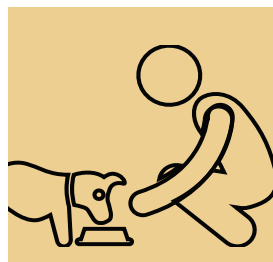
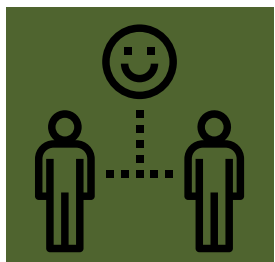
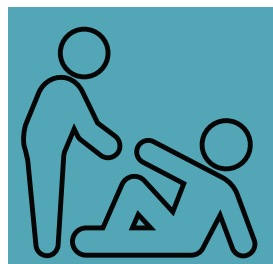
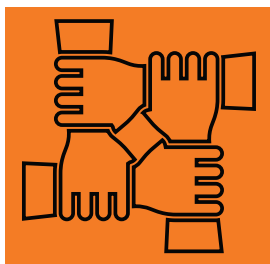


CULTIVATING CHARACTER

An Islamic Lens to the Scout Law

by Younoos Latheef



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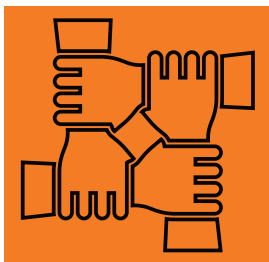
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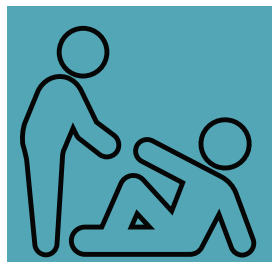
A Scout is ...



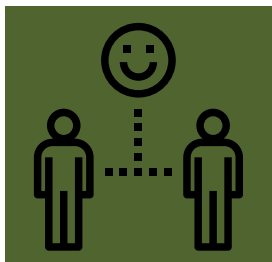
Trustworthy



Loyal



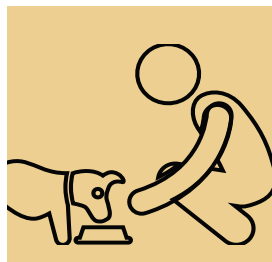
Helpful



Friendly



Courteous



Kind



Obedient



Cheerful



Thriftly



Brave



Clean



Reverent

Purpose

The aim of this book is to help youth leaders develop their youths' Islamic personality while instilling the principles of the BSA Scout Law. Each chapter explores a character trait from the Islamic perspective and is divided into the following sections on the right.

A Scout is...



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1. What do Allah and His Prophet (s) say about being ...?

Used for Leader talk or youth talk

2. What does it mean again?



3. Tell me a story

Inspiring stories to be told around campfires, as Leader talk, youth talk

4. What's in it for me?

Used for Leader talk or youth talk



5. Let's do this

Activities to build character



6. Let's reflect

Thought provoking questions for meetings or campfires



7. Let's make dua

Dua to be memorized or read after meetings or campfires



8. Let's teach it

Suggested curriculum for easy planning

How to use this book

A Scout is Friendly

A Scout is friendly. Be a friend to everyone, even people who are very different from you. A Scout is a friend to all other scouts. A Scout offers friendship to people of all races, religions, and nations, and a Scout respects them even if their beliefs and customs are different. (The Scout Handbook)

Muslims should treat everyone equally and befriend everyone regardless of race and ethnicity, and this can be witnessed during the Hajj when all men wear a white cloth regardless of race or status. The Muslim is friendly and neighborly towards people of all religions, respecting their houses of worship and joining hands with them in good causes.

Allah is Al-Lateef, the Gentle and Benevolent. He knows our thoughts and emotions and deals with us gently through kind, subtle, and friendly ways. When we recognize how Al-Lateef treats us with so much gentleness, that should make us want to be a source of friendliness and kindness to others as a way of being grateful to Him.



A Scout is Friendly 13

Scout is.... The opening paragraph is the character trait's definition from the Scouts Handbook. This is followed by a brief summary of additional aspects from the Islamic perspective. This section concludes with some names or attributes of Allah that are connected with the character trait so that scouts can emulate.

What does Allah and His Prophet (s) say about being...? This section highlights what Allah says in the Holy Quran about a certain character trait. Some or all of these verses can be read along with their translation at the start of a meeting. They can also be the subject of a short talk presented by a scout leader or scout. In addition, each section lists authentic hadiths on what the Prophet Muhammad (s) said or how he modeled the behavior trait. These sayings can also be used as topics for short talks.

What does Allah and the Prophet say about being friendly?



In the Quran

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

People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another. In God's eyes, the most honored of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all knowing, all aware. (49:13)

وَصَبِّرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدْوَةِ وَالْعَصَىٰ وَيُحِبُّونَ وُجْهَهُ وَلَا تُعَدِّ عَيْنَكَ عَنْهُمْ رَبُّهُ رَبُّهُنَّ الْخَلْقِ الْإِنْسَانِ

Content yourself with those who pray to their Lord morning and evening, seeking His approval, and do not let your eyes turn away from them out of desire for the attractions of this worldly life... (18:28)

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ ظَلَمًا فَلْيَقِ ظِلْمَكَ لَأَغْضَبُوا مِنْ حَرْفِكَ

By an act of mercy from God, you [Prophet] were gentle in your dealings with them- had you been harsh, or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed and left you- so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. (3:159)

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1. "And My love is for each other for My sake." (Al-Albani)
2. "When you smile in the face of your brother, it is charity..." (Tirmithi)
3. "Being kind and friendly to people is a charity." (Ibn Hibban)

A Scout is Friendly 15

What does it mean again?

A Scout is friendly with everyone. A scout is neither rude nor disrespectful towards others. He or she gets to know others and behaves in the best possible manner towards everyone, regardless of faith, race, ethnicity.

Initiate friendships! Go out of your way to make friends with people who are different from you and who are not in your clique.

Muslims have a special bond. In Islam, that special bond is one of brotherhood and sisterhood based on faith, good character, and treating others the way they want to be treated. True friends keep us attached to Allah and His religion.

A Scout is Friendly 17

What does it mean again?

Summarizes the Islamic perspective in a few brief points which can be used to introduce the character in a short talk.

Tell me a story Inspirational stories found in the Islamic tradition that can be shared around a campfire or short talk. Stories give life and meaning to the traits and should be retold with enthusiasm. Many of the stories can be used to exemplify multiple character traits, as represented by the icons next to each story title. We have compiled the stories at the end of the book to moderate the length of each chapter.



Tell Me A Story

- • • **Three Best Friends**
Three friends do their best to help each other, with surprising results [Read more](#).
- • • **The Traveling Friend**
Allah sent an angel to ask what his motives were, [Read more](#).
- • • **Abu Bakr, True Friend and Supporter**
No friend like Abu Bakr [Read more](#).

What's in it for me?

Safe from the Hellfire. The Prophet (s) taught us that the Hellfire is forbidden to touch a person who is polite and kind-natured.

Sound heart, improved mood and reduced tension. Having a friendly attitude towards others keeps you at peace with yourself.

Diversity of ideas. Being open to others from different backgrounds leads to different ideas.

Support through tough times. Good friends help you cope through challenges you may face in life. They may help you study for a difficult exam, cope with a loss of a loved one or solve problems you encounter.

Helps you stay on track. A good friend will encourage you to do good deeds, give you good advice, and keep you from doing wrong.

18 Cultivating Character: An Islamic Lens to the Scout Law

What's in it for me?

All behavior change is a result of motivation. This section expresses the motivation for a scout to exhibit the behavior. Scouts need to hear that adhering to the scout law will not only benefit him/her in the Hereafter but also in this life.



Let's do this

• • • Not So Friendly Feelings

An activity to help scouts empathize with those who may not have as many friends. Create a "person" container, such as a bucket with a face on it. Give each patrol sticky notes or index cards (different color for each patrol). As you read out each scenario, each patrol should write down expressions describing how the person might feel in each situation and add them to the container. Read the sticky notes and discuss. Example of scenarios:

1. Being the last to be chosen for a team
2. Not finding a partner for a classroom activity
3. You see your friend but he is busy, doesn't smile, and doesn't seem to notice you.
4. Telling a joke or doing a stunt and no one laughs or seems interested
5. Sitting in the mosque gym where a lot of kids are playing but no one invites you to join their game
6. Saying salam but no one responds

• • • Speed Chatting

An activity to help scouts empathize. Make a list of a few prompts and opening lines you can use to strike up a conversation with a stranger or new friend. The goal is to develop skill in striking conversation with someone they

A Scout is Friendly 19

Let's do this Scouts learn best by doing. Hence, this section presents activities that foster the moral values intended by the Scout Law. Most activities can be conducted during a scout meeting or campout. Others are for scouts to do on their own. Regardless, to maximize effectiveness, the activities should be followed by a debrief with the scouts to reflect on their learnings. We have included sufficient activities to provide variety that can span several scout seasons.

Let's reflect To deeply appreciate a character trait, scouts need opportunities to think and discuss the trait with their fellow scouts and leaders. In this section, you will find stimulating questions that challenge a scout's understanding and which can be used around a campfire or in a meeting. Additionally, the last question of this section asks the scout to reflect on the character with respect to Allah's names and attributes.



Let's reflect

1. Reflect on your friends and those you hang out with. Do you have a diverse group of friends from different ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds? Why or why not?
2. What are some positive characteristics of good friends? Bad friends?
3. Is it better to be alone or to mix with the people? Explain.
4. In your opinion, what tears apart friendships? Explain.
5. Name some practical actions you can do to be friendly to all.
6. What is the difference between acquaintances, friends, and true friends?
7. When might you feel uncomfortable befriending someone? Explain.
8. What names and attributes of Allah remind us of the importance of being helpful to others? Discuss how Allah is *Al-Lateef* (The Gentle and Friendly), *Al-Wali* (The Protector), *Al-Wali* (The Guardian), *An-Naseer* (The Helpful) and how we can channel those names of Allah in our daily lives.

22 Cultivating Character: An Islamic Lens to the Scout Law



Let's make dua

1. "O Allah! Bring our hearts together, reconcile our differences, guide us to the ways of peace, take us out of darkness into light, and keep us away from sins, the apparent and the hidden." (Abu Dawud)

اللَّهُمَّ اِنْفِ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِنَا وَاصْلِحْ ذَاتَ بَيْنِنَا وَاهْدِنَا سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَخُجِّتْنَا مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَجَنِّبْنَا الْفَرَاسِخَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ

2. "O Allah, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You, and love for the actions that will lead me to Your love." (Tirmithi)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ وَالْعَمَلَ الَّذِي يُلْقِي بِكَ

Let's make dua

Imagine a scout reciting daily supplications to be granted the character traits of the Scout Law. The intent of this section is to connect scouts to Allah through *dua* (supplications). My recommendation is to focus on learning one supplication a month which should be recited aloud at the end of each meeting or after each prayer. Encourage your scouts to recite the *dua* on their own after each prayer so it becomes a habit.

Let's teach it The content for each trait can easily span 2-3 months but I suggest focusing on a trait for each month. In the appendix, I have included a 1-page curriculum for each character to simplify your preparation. The curriculum outlines week by week how each section can be incorporated into your meetings or campouts.



Let's teach it

A Scout is Friendly

Suggested Curriculum



The content included for each characteristic can span several scouting seasons. In this section, we have included a suggested curriculum for an entire month to simplify your planning. On week 4, we assumed the troop/youth group would participate in a campout or outdoor activity. The next page is a blank curriculum for you to design your own.

Week 1: Introduction to Friendly

Open with Quran	49:13 18:28
Youth Talk	Hadith #2
Leader Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scout Law definition and Islamic perspective What does it mean again? What's in it for me?
Activity	
Closing Dua	Dua #1

● ● ● **A Youth-Led Approach**

I realize that each troop has varying degrees of what it means to be boy- or girl-led. However, we all know that scouting is most effective when it is youth-led. I encourage troops to have their scout chaplains and senior patrol leader lead the implementation of this curriculum.

● ● ● **We would love to hear from you!**

If you would like to schedule a training session with the author on how best to use this book, would like to share your feedback, or if you found any errors with the text, feel free to contact us at character@muslimamericansociety.org.

Glossary

Allah: the Arabic name for God

Ayah: a verse of the Quran

Companions: Those who converted to Islam and lived alongside Prophet Muhammad (s)

Dua: a supplication or prayer that calls upon Allah and asks of Him

Hadith: a saying of Prophet Muhammad (s) transmitted through a chain of narrators. The sayings and traditions of the Prophet were meticulously recorded and verified after his death.

Quran: the final revelation from God to all of mankind, sent through Prophet Muhammad (s)

Salah: prayer; the fifth pillar of Islam

(s): this signifies, “May God’s peace and blessings be upon him,” (Salla Allah wa alaihi wa sallam) which is a prayer said whenever Prophet Muhammad is mentioned.

Sunnah: the example set by Prophet Muhammad which all Muslims should strive to follow as best as they can.

Surah: a chapter of the Quran

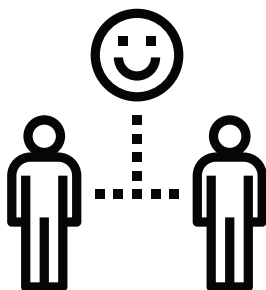
Wudu: a ritual washing before prayer

A Scout is Friendly

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Muslims should treat everyone equally and befriend everyone regardless of race and ethnicity, and this can be witnessed during the Hajj when all men wear a white cloth regardless of race or status. The Muslim is friendly and neighborly towards people of all religions, respecting their houses of worship and joining hands with them in good causes.

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What does Allah and the Prophet say about being friendly?



In the Quran

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وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

Content yourself with those who pray to their Lord morning and evening, seeking His approval, and do not let your eyes turn away from them out of desire for the attractions of this worldly life... (18:28)

فِيمَا رَحِمَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَأْمُرْ لَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

By an act of mercy from God, you [Prophet] were gentle in your dealings with them- had you been harsh, or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed and left you- so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. (3:159)

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ^ج وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ○

The believers are brothers, so make peace between your two brothers and be mindful of God, so that you may be given mercy. (49:10)

يَوَيْلَ لِّیَ لِّیَ لِّیَ لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا ○

Woe to me! I wish I had never taken so-and-so as a close friend. (25:28)

● ● ● In the Hadith

1. “There is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, nor of a non-Arab over an Arab, and no superiority of a white person over a black person, nor of a black person over a white person, except on the basis of *taqwa* [God-mindfulness]. All are from Adam, and Adam is from dust.” (Ahmad)
2. “Allah Almighty said: My love is a right upon those who befriend each other for my sake. My love is a right upon those who remain connected for My sake. My love is a right upon those who visit each other for My sake. And My love is a right upon those who sacrifice for each other for My sake.” (Al-Albani)
3. “When you smile in the face of your brother, it is charity...” (Tirmithi)
4. “Being kind and friendly to people is a charity.” (Ibn Hibban)

5. “The believer is friendly and befriended, for there is no goodness in one who is neither friendly nor befriended. The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people.” (al-Albani)
6. The Messenger of Allah would meet even the worst people with eye contact and speak at their level, by which he would show friendliness to them. The Prophet would meet me with eye contact and speak at my level, until I thought that I was the best of people. (al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah)
7. “None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” (Bukhari & Muslim)
8. “The example of a good companion and a bad companion is like that of the seller of musk and the blacksmith So as for the seller of musk then either he will grant you some, or you buy some from him, or at least you enjoy a pleasant smell from him. As for the one who blows the blacksmith's bellows then either he will burn your clothes or you will get an offensive smell from him.” (Bukhari & Muslim)
9. “The Muslim is a brother to another Muslim. He does not wrong him, nor surrender him. Whoever fulfills the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs. Whoever relieves a Muslim from distress, Allah will relieve him from distress on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever covers the faults of a Muslim, Allah will cover his faults on the Day of Resurrection.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

What does it mean again?

A Scout is friendly with everyone. A scout is neither rude nor disrespectful towards others. He or she gets to know others and behaves in the best possible manner towards everyone, regardless of faith, race, ethnicity.

Initiate friendships! Go out of your way to make friends with people who are different from you and who are not in your clique.

Muslims have a special bond. In Islam, that special bond is one of brotherhood and sisterhood based on faith, good character, and treating others the way they want to be treated. True friends keep us attached to Allah and His religion.



Tell Me A Story

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Three friends do their best to help each other, with surprising results [Read more.](#)

● ● ● **The Traveling Friend**

Allah sent an angel to ask what his motives were, [Read more.](#)

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No friend like Abu Bakr [Read more.](#)

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Safe from the Hellfire. The Prophet (s) taught us that the Hellfire is forbidden to touch a person who is polite and kind-natured.

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Helps you stay on track. A good friend will encourage you to do good deeds, give you good advice, and keep you from doing wrong.



Let's do this

● ● ● **Not So Friendly Feelings**

An activity to help scouts empathize with those who may not have as many friends. Create a “person” container, such as a bucket with a face on it. Give each patrol sticky notes or index cards (different color for each patrol). As you read out each scenario, each patrol should write down expressions describing how the person might feel in each situation and add them to the container. Read the sticky notes and discuss. Example of scenarios:

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5. Sitting in the mosque gym where a lot of kids are playing but no one invites you to join their game
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● ● ● **Speed Chatting**

An activity to help scouts empathize Make a list of a few prompts and opening lines you can use to strike up a conversation with a stranger or new friend. The goal is to develop skill in striking conversation with someone they

don't know. Set a timer for 90 seconds, have scouts match up with a random partner, announce the opening line, and have them talk to each other for 90 seconds. Do several rounds of the activity, with a different prompt each time, and then discuss. What made the interactions easier or harder? What topics were difficult to talk about? Did anyone observe some extra friendly gestures? Unfriendly gestures? Troubleshoot any difficulties in a cooperative and friendly manner. Some conversation starters:

- Start with a Compliment
- Start with something obvious you have in common
- What movies do you like?
- What brought you here today?
- What did you think of lunch/snack today?

● ● ● **Control Tower Friend**

Play the Control Tower game which sees one member of the group blindfolded and their partner guiding them through an obstacle course. When they have successfully reached the end of the course, roles are swapped, and the course changed. This is very good for establishing communication and friendship, as well as creating a fun and competitive atmosphere. Be sure to pair scouts up with others they don't know as well. Play again with someone they know very well. Debrief on the different experiences.

● ● ● Whodunit?

Ask each student to write down on an index card something interesting she has done. Collect the cards and shuffle, then return cards to the participants. Have participants read aloud their cards and guess whose fact they have read. The guessed person simply says “Yes” or “No.” If the guess is correct, the guessed person may briefly explain her experience. Ask participants to discuss what details, such as background, demeanor, or personality, they considered in making their guess. Discuss the way we attribute (or don’t attribute) particular traits, actions or stories to the people we know. [Read more.](#)

● ● ● Create a World Map

Spend time creating a world map that explores the family origins of each scout. Have each scout research the following:

- Where did their family come from?
- What is their native language?
- What food did they enjoy?
- What was life like in their native land?

[Read more.](#)



Let's reflect

1. Reflect on your friends and those you hang out with.
Do you have a diverse group of friends from different ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds? Why or why not?
2. What are some positive characteristics of good friends?
Bad friends?
3. Is it better to be alone or to mix with the people? Explain.
4. In your opinion, what tears apart friendships? Explain.
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8. What names and attributes of Allah remind us of the importance of being helpful to others? Discuss how Allah is *Al-Lateef* (The Gentle and Friendly), *Al-Waali* (The Protector), *Al-Waliy* (The Guardian), *An-Naseer* (The Helpful) and how we can channel those names of Allah in our daily lives.



Let's make dua

1. "O Allah! Bring our hearts together, reconcile our differences, guide us to the ways of peace, take us out of darkness into light, and keep us away from sins, the apparent and the hidden." (Abu Dawud)

اللَّهُمَّ اَلْفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِنَا وَاَصْلَحْ ذَاتَ بَيْنِنَا وَاَهْدِنَا سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَنَجِّنَا مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ
إِلَى النُّورِ وَجَنِّبْنَا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ

2. "O Allah, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You, and love for the actions that will lead me to Your love." (Tirmithi)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ وَالْعَمَلَ الَّذِي يَبْلُغُنِي حُبَّكَ



Let's teach it

A Scout is Friendly

Suggested Curriculum



The content included for each characteristic can span several scouting seasons. In this section, we have included a suggested curriculum for an entire month to simplify your planning. On week 4, we assumed the troop/youth group would participate in a campout or outdoor activity. The next page is a blank curriculum for you to design your own.

Week 1: Introduction to Friendly

Open with Quran	49:13 18:28
Youth Talk	Hadith #2
Leader Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scout Law definition and Islamic perspective• What does it mean again?• What's in it for me?
Activity	
Closing Dua	Dua #1

Week 2: Friendly to all

Open with Quran	49:13
Youth Talk	Hadith #1
Leader Talk	Hadith #8
Activity	Create a World Map
Closing Dua	Dua #1

Week 3: True Friendship

Open with Quran	3:159
Youth Talk	Hadith #9
Leader Talk	Abu Bakr, True Friend and Supporter
Activity	Control Tower Friend
Closing Dua	Dua #1

Week 4: Bringing it All Together

Open with Quran	49:13 3:159
Youth Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadith #3, 4 • Let's Reflect #8
Leader Talk	Three Best Friends
Activity	Whodunit?
Closing Dua	Dua #1 (After each prayer)
Campfire	Let's Reflect #1, 2, 3, 4



Let's teach it

A Scout is Friendly

Design your own Curriculum

Week 1:

Open with Quran	
Youth Talk	
Leader Talk	
Activity	
Closing Dua	

Week 2:

Open with Quran	
Youth Talk	
Leader Talk	
Activity	
Closing Dua	

Week 3:

Open with Quran	
Youth Talk	
Leader Talk	
Activity	
Closing Dua	

Week 4:

Open with Quran	
Youth Talk	
Leader Talk	
Activity	
Closing Dua	
Campfire	

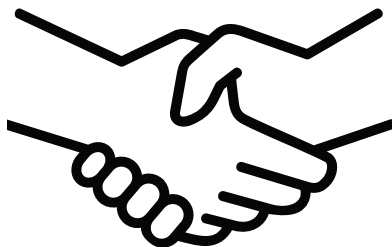


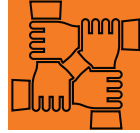
A Scout is Courteous

A Scout is courteous. A Scout is polite to people of all ages and positions. A Scout understands that using good manners makes it easier for people to get along. Being courteous shows that you are aware of the feelings of others. The habits of courtesy that you practice as a scout will stay with you throughout your life. (The Scout Handbook)

The Prophet (s) teaches us that he was sent to perfect good moral character. As he is our role model, we aim to follow his practice and demonstrate his gentle and polite demeanor with others. He (s) took great care in ensuring those he interacted with felt his love and care.

Allah is *al-Haleem*, The Forbearing. He is tolerant and gentle with us, giving us many second chances, even when we make mistakes and disobey Him. Allah is also *as-Salaam*, the Source of peace and safety. We seek peace and security from Allah which enables us to be at peace with others. When we greet each other with *as-salam alaikum*, it is as if we are saying, "I place you in the security of God's name, *Al-Salam*."





Three Best Friends

There once lived three men who were the very best of friends. They enjoyed each other's company and told one another their deepest secrets. Even better, their friendship was based on seeking the pleasure of Allah and competing in doing good. One of the three friends, al-Waqidi was a great scholar at the time of the Abbasid Caliph Mamun Rashid. He narrates this incredible story about the three best friends:

I had two friends, one of whom was from the tribe of Banu Hashim. Our friendship was so sincere that it was as though we were three bodies with one soul! One year, as Eid approached, I had no money at all. My wife said to me, "You and I can tolerate not having money. But our kids - they see other children wearing new clothes and receiving gifts, while they get nothing. See if you can get some money so that I can make new clothes for them."

Al-Waqidi wasn't sure what to do, but decided to try writing a letter to his beloved friend from Banu Hashim, asking for some money. The response was quick - the friend from Banu Hashim sent a letter with a sealed bag containing a generous 1,000 dirhams. But before al-Waqidi could open the bag, he received news that the third friend had so much financial difficulty and was in need of help. Without hesitation and before he even laid eyes on the money sent to him from his

Banu Hashim friend, al-Waqidi forwarded the sealed bag of 1,000 dirhams to the third friend.

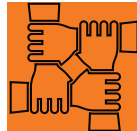
Al-Waqidi went to the mosque with a heavy heart, wondering what he would say to his wife. Ashamed to face her empty-handed, he spent the night in the mosque. He went home in the morning and told his wife what happened. She smiled gently, telling her husband that she was proud of him for putting his friends' needs above his own. Later that day, the friend from Banu Hashim arrived at al-Waqidi's house. Something was troubling him. He asked curiously, "Tell me the truth, al-Waqidi. What did you really do with the bag of money I sent you?" Al-Waqidi told him the whole story.

The friend from Banu Hashim bowed his head for a moment, then explained that yesterday he had sent his final remaining 1,000 dirhams to al-Waqidi to help him. Left with no money himself, he requested money from their third friend. "Imagine my surprise when I received the exact sealed bag I had sent earlier to you!" Realizing together that they were all in need and the same bag of money had passed between all three of their hands, the friends divided the 1,000 dirhams equally between them, and al-Waqidi gave his wife 100 dirhams to make clothing for their children. This incredible story reached the Abbasid Caliph Mamun Rashid, who sent 2,000 gold dinars to each friend, with an extra 1,000 gold dinars as a gift to al-Waqidi's wife.



The Traveling Friend

In a hadith, Prophet Muhammad (s) told us a story about a man who went on a trip. He traveled through the desert, making his way towards another town. Allah sent an angel to question the traveler. The angel asked, “Where are you going?” The man answered, “I am going to visit my brother in another town.” The angel asked, “Did you do something for your brother for which you expect some kind of repayment for it?” “No. I am going because I love him for the sake of Allah, The Exalted.” Upon these words, the angel announced, “I am a messenger to you from God, to inform you that God loves you as you love him.” (based on a hadith in Muslim)



Abu Bakr, True Friend and Supporter

When Prophet Muhammad (s) was a young man, before he became a prophet, he married Khadijah and became neighbors with Abu Bakr. Muhammad (s) and Abu Bakr quickly became close friends, finding that they shared many commonalities. Both were traders, and both were exceedingly honest and kind.

Both felt revulsion toward the corruption and cruelty that took place in Makkan society, and both avoided worshiping idols. Their friendship would last a lifetime and would sustain the rise of Islam.

When Prophet Muhammad (s) received the first revelation at the age of 40, Abu Bakr, his best friend of many years, was the first adult man to accept Islam. He had no reservations and trusted Muhammad (s) completely. Everyone else had questions and doubts, but not Abu Bakr. He knew in an instant that Muhammad (s) was indeed God's prophet. He had interacted with Muhammad (s) for the past 15 years and knew his honesty and integrity. Eventually Abu Bakr would be given the name as-Siddeeq, man of truth, for his instant belief and trust of the Prophet (s).

Abu Bakr immediately got to work. He met with his circle of friends, and started to spread the message of Islam. Some of the strongest and noblest Companions accepted Islam at the hand of Abu Bakr in those early days. Prophet Muhammad's message was spread at first in secret, by word of mouth only, because any news of the new religion would enrage the leaders of Makkah. The Prophet (s) hoped to build a base of followers first so that they could support each other and withstand the difficulties ahead. After some time had passed, and almost 40 people had accepted Islam, Abu Bakr asked

the Prophet (s) for permission to make the call to Islam public. Prophet Muhammad (s) was reluctant, but Abu Bakr insisted. Finally, Allah revealed the command to make the call to Islam public. Together, the two friends made their way to the Kabah. Abu Bakr stood up and called out in his loudest voice, “There is none worthy of worship but God, and Muhammad is his slave and messenger!” In this way, Abu Bakr became the first public speaker for Islam.