

ISLA Workshop

**Working
towards
Principles on
Islamic Sexual
Ethics and
Homosexuality**

Working towards Principles (1)

- **Strongly and confidently establish Islamic gender and sexuality paradigm**
 - Gender is binary, gender differences are real and God-given
 - Sexual expression is legitimate only in the context of (heterosexual) marriage
 - Actively critique and deconstruct Western paradigm post-Sexual Revolution: show why it's wrong
- **Rejection of sexual identity paradigm**
 - Must once again separate desires, actions, and identity
 - Terminological implications → avoid identity-laden vocab: gay, LGBT, dignifying “who people are,” etc.
 - Use descriptive terms instead, and *adjectives* not nouns: “has homosexual feelings,” “experiences SSA”, “trans-identifying”
- **No gay exceptionalism! (either positive or negative)**
 - Pushing LGBT in an Islamic environment just as unacceptable as pushing drinking, zina, etc.
 - Merely having – and faithfully struggling with – same-sex desires merits no particular stigma or singling out

Working towards Principles (2)

□ **Balancing individual and community, subjective feelings vs. objective truths / right and wrong**

- Individuals dealing with same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria issues should be supported in their efforts to figure out their lives and live according to the deen
- *Private* support and consultation as opposed to *public* “accommodation” or “inclusion”
- Defiant activist types should not be allowed to disrupt Islamic school/community settings

□ **Supporting the faithful struggler**

- Show empathy and understanding for what is often a very difficult and emotionally taxing issue
- Support the person in general spiritual/other ways: mentorship, general advice, listening ear, shoulder to cry on
- Know your limits: you are not a professional psychologist or spiritual guide and don't know the details of this issue, so . . .
- Direct the person to resources, particularly A Way Beyond the Rainbow, and maybe offer to discuss

□ **Maintaining the Straight Path: Clarity, Conviction, Compassion**

- You are not more merciful than Allah. True compassion is guiding to the truth and what pleases the Creator.
- Be humble and kind, but never apologetic about Islamic beliefs.
- Islamic teachings on sexual ethics are not an embarrassment or a “problem”; they are the only *solution!*