Manner of speech

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| IN order to ensure peace and tranquillity in one`s family or in society, one of the fundamental requirements is the scrupulous use of the tongue. Islam emphasises the correct way of speech in its teachings but many of us are unaware of its importance. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) says that when a person gets up in the morning, all the limbs humble themselves before the tongue and say: `Fear Allah for our sake because we are with you: ie, we will be rewarded or punished as a result of what you do, if you are straight, we will be straight; and if you are crooked, we will become crooked` [Al Tirmidhi].  In spiritual life, the tongue takes us close to our divine centre. When we utter a holy word, it flies. Allah says: `...To Him ascends (all) goodly words. ... (35:10).` In social or family life, our speech is a doorway to connect us with other members of the family. We reveal ourselves through our manner of speaking. The softness or harshness of our observations indicates our nature and thus makes us appear lovable or scornful in family or society.  A person had two daughters; both were different in temperament. The younger one was argumentative so she often tried to create problems for the family through the improper use of her tongue. Once the elder sister inadvertently misplaced her mobile set somewhere in the room and was searching for it. She asked her younger sister to help locate her mobile phone. But her younger sister misconstrued this requestfor help and started arguing that she was being blamed for misplacing her sibling`s mobile phone. This example shows that if a single family member behaves inappropriately, the entire family suffers and the peace of the family is shattered. Family elders must advise the younger ones in an affectionate manner to always remain cool and calm.  Relations between family members depend in large part on how they speak to one another. This is the key to family harmony and happiness. Similarly, the success in dialogue, negotiations and all professions also depends on a positive manner of speaking and making observations.  During job applications, the hiring authorities usually measure a candidate`s competency in interviews by weighing his or her words. Every word, phrase or sentence uttered is a clue to one`s calibre. In some training institutes, candidates are examined through the activity of sentencemaking. Each candidate is shown a word to make a sentence in 10 seconds.  Thereaf ter, every word used in a sentence is examined to gauge the candidate`s personality. If he has used positive words inthe sentence, he or she is taken accordingly.  Biologically, the tongue seemingly the most used muscle of our body has the power to conquer the minds and hearts of others. It can bring peace and enhance respect and nobility in society.  But at the same time, it can prove to be hurtful to others. It can ruin life, upset the peace and create animosity in society.  Therefore, in all religions, especially in Islam, every adherent of faith has been warned over time to be careful in using his or her tongue. Allah says that He `does notlike that the evilshould be utteredin public except by one who has been wronged. ...` (4:148) Proper use of the tongue can be a source of Allah`s blessing.  It paves the way for success in the present and the life hereafter. Whosoever keeps his tongue, keeps himself out of trouble.  One can renect on nature that has provided humans many organs in pairs like ears, eyes, hands and feet etc. But thetongue is single.  This means one has to speak less and listen more.  The careful use of words is important and one should avoid becoming unnecessarily talkative.  The tongue has the power to make a person `eternal`.If a person wants to be remembered even after death, he should use his powers of speech to win the hearts of others.  However, it can also throw one into a deep pit. Therefore every word must be weighe d before it is uttered, as it is like an arrow.  Unfortunately, our society lacks decency when it comes to speech. We often see heated debates and fruitless arguments on TV talk shows, or on roads where the traf fic is in a disorderly state, as well as in bustling markets which often become places of friction. This reflects the overall nature of our society and the mindset of the general public. It badly affects people`s health and makes them depressed.  One needs to be mindful of the use of one`s tongue. Special efforts are required to change the nature of peoplein the light of holy guidance. The Quran enjoins believers to say things straight (33:70).  This needs to be made a part of life. The writer is an educationist with an interest in religion.  valianiamin@gmail.com |  |