

Grounded in RIDHA

An aid for Self-Determination and Healthy Sexual Relationships (Fullness of Choice)

RIDHA at the core

We believe that centering the concept of ridha -- fullness of choice -- is the best way to honor a Muslim's right to fully consent and be in control of their sexual health decision-making.

"Ridha" is also reminiscent of the self determination that women practiced during Prophetic times. The RIDHA framework as a useful aid to identify healthy (sexual) relationships that are rooted in choice, consent, pleasure, communication, and spiritual well-being. Indeed, many Qur'anic verses and Prophetic hadith emphasize these values as central to ethical human interaction. We hope that this framework will inspire an approach to decision-making that will help guide you in your intimate relationships.

RIDHA Principles

The spirit of this self-determination to some degree remains in today's Islamic marriage contract - which usually has the woman offering herself to the groom - and yet, the reality is that Muslim women rarely experience this self-determination in most daily experiences. It is with this spirit of self-determination in mind, that ridha is the core principle of our framework for healthy sexual relationships, through the acronym RIDHA:

RIDHA stands for:

- R**ooted in compassion and mutual pleasure
- I**nformed by communication and knowledge
- D**riven by equity and fairness
- H**oused in safety and security
- A**ffirmed in commitment and fidelity



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To create this framework, we drew upon these core Islamic values: rahma (compassion), 'ilm (knowledge), karamah (dignity), hurma (sacred inviolability), adalah (equity and fairness), and our general commitment to promoting healthy, thriving partnerships. We believe these Islamic values can form the foundation of healthy, ethical, and mutually fulfilling relationships.

R (Rahma)	Rooted in compassion (“rahma”) and mutual pleasure. The Quran speaks of how God has created people in pairs, putting love and compassion between them, so that they may find tranquility in each other. This means that intimate relationships, and the physical, spiritual, and emotional intimacy and gratification people find in them, are a divine gift – a mercy (“rahma”) – to be cherished and nourished.
I (‘ilm)	Informed by communication and knowledge (“‘ilm”). Open, honest dialogue and seeking knowledge (‘ilm) is key between partners to uphold informed consent, build trust, facilitate an ongoing connection and communicate boundaries, needs and desires.
D (aDalah)	Driven by equity and fairness (“adalah”). All people are created equal and have integrity before God. A relationship which reflects this equality in shared power and privilege by both partners will help create a healthy partnership rooted in fairness (‘adalah).
H (Hurma)	Housed in safety and security (“hurma”). A relationship should provide each partner with a sense of safety and security (hurma). Any threat, or actual acts, of any kind of violence, abuse, or coercion is in conflict with the Islamic ideal of love and mercy between partners.
A (‘Aqd)	Affirmed in commitment (“‘aqd”) and fidelity. Sexual intimacy in Islam is preceded by a clear agreement (‘aqd) between the partners, thus affirming their commitment to each other and honoring the reality of sex as a sacred, spiritual, and mutually beneficial experience.