

kuwait digest

OBESITY MESSAGE

By Dr Ahmad Al-Saleh

Countries are keen on being advanced in the fields of science, literature and arts. The news item that we received from health organizations was that Kuwait topped in obesity rates, and this was not something we are keen to receive. Kuwait was number one with 42.8 percent, which means that 4 out of 10 Kuwaitis suffer from some form of obesity. We hoped to top in science, intellect, literature or art, but to the contrary we stood first in laziness.

Obesity is stored energy inside our bodies, and truthfully reflects the extent of our laziness, and this is what we were warned against for a long time. The welfare country is no longer good in the civilization race. It is no longer useful for the newborn Kuwaiti to be wrapped in a blanket provided by the government, and for a Kuwaiti to be buried in a shroud also provided by the government. It is time that we burn the accumulated fats and make the people of Kuwait taste work instead of sitting on chairs.

Kuwaitis complain about the increase of expats, and also complain about street congestions due to competition in health, jobs and even education. The arrival of most workers was to fill a void that was to be filled by Kuwaitis themselves. If we go 100 years back in history, we would find that the people of Kuwait, who did not have oil, used to practice all types of jobs, as there was no one to compete with, yet today, the bounty of oil became an indignation that we won't discover until we go through financial crises or shrinking of oil production. That's when Kuwaitis will discover that they are unable to swim in the global sea where people compete to get an opportunity.

Obesity does not only cause diseases, but is also responsible for the spread of diabetes, cancer, heart disease and others, it is also a strong indicator for our need for work and exerting efforts, and it should not annoy any of us about the marketplace not employing Kuwaitis, as the government is full of citizen workers and has not succeeded in dispensing expats, because Kuwaitis have become obese, with great regret.

If the government pledges to fight obesity to reduce the burden of diseases, then it must evaluate the work systems and change the civil service laws that prevent the Kuwaitis from working. Solutions must not be far from reality, and our reality says most of our problems today, even the political ones, are because of less work.

People talk, discuss, visit diwanis and move from one gathering to another, but regretfully they do not work. Our throats got stronger and fat accumulated in our bodies. We succeeded in disputes, criticism and ideologies. If everyone believes in working seriously to develop our country, we might reduce the fat in our bodies. This is the message of obesity - I hope it is clear to all.

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DON'T CATCH FIRE!

By Dr Ahmad Meshari Hamada*

On the 15th of July, around 11:15 pm, social media worked its magic, and news of the attempted coup d'État started to mushroom around the digital aether. As is customary with unofficial news sources manned and circulated by the thumb, the situation did not fully crystallize until much later in the evening. The black mirrors on our phones started pasting together Frankenstein-esque half stories about low flying military jets, the sound of gun shots, and the closure of the Bosphorus Bridge.

I was working on my next lecture when my fingers froze on the keyboard, and my mind drifted towards my family, who were spending their summer vacation in Turkey. Ironically, they were in the exact same position when the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait twenty six years ago, isolated either within the chaos or away from it, but always in Turkey.

I made several phone calls with various degrees of success in connectivity, while my overly stimulated imagination was filling up the gaps regarding what would happen to them? Will they avoid the line of fire? Or, in a more docile scenario, are they going to run out of food? I went home and phoned a Turkish friend, who answered the call from his Harvard campus in Boston. I asked him what could happen to my family, and saw my own image on the videophone screen shaking due to my inability to control my hand. He was in utter disbelief. "Although it is a liberal coup" he said, "it's still not the answer." Throughout the years I've known him in grad school, he openly discussed his dissatisfaction with the Islamic surge that Turkey has been witnessing. I contacted another friend from Turkey, whom I met in Mecca during a pilgrimage trip, and his main concern was sympathizing with Erdogan. Between two polarized views, the Turks were haunted by anticipation.

For the next three hours or so, I was glued to the

screen, while around me, every social media outlet was teaming with the ideological contributions that Kuwaitis have now decided to bestow on the rest of the world, those who hail the coup, and those who are praying for Erdogan in limbo. Soon afterwards, insults were exchanged in heated debates between those who were listing previous incidents in Turkey's political history, and those who were quoting Qur'anic texts. Melodramatic terms like "heroism", "dignity", and "cowardice" were being tossed around generously in an environment of self-appointed experts who were eager to identify with one camp or the other.

Political inclinations

While I was thinking of my family, it seems that most Kuwaitis received the news with one initial, almost instinctive reaction. "How does it sync with my political inclinations?" "How do these recent events further advance or set my cause back?" "And how to properly and quickly program a response that parallels the rest of my group?"

When the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci theorized the idea of cultural hegemony, he spoke of the way a certain dominant ideology can dominate our perceptions of the world. This is an easy way in which we make sense of world events today, to find personal alliances in them, to create emotional investments out of them, to argue about things we do not fully understand, to identify with geographically distanced regions, to share pictures of the dead elsewhere on social media, to sculpt an identity for one's self through the news. Some Kuwaitis treated it as an attack on Islam, while others saw it as a much needed cry against political oppression.

I look at all that and I envy those who can feel confident about their political or social stance with such ease. I am often plagued by the anxiety of try-

ing to identify with it all on the political spectrum, and coming out of it understanding nothing. I am often guilty of trying to spread myself too thin ideologically, until almost nothing makes sense. In my mind, doubt seems to be the default state when it comes to who's right and who's wrong. I often find myself asking, why do we emotionally invest ourselves in debate so easily? How can we be so sure of what we are so fanatically preaching? When does endorsement become conformity? Why do liberals or conservatives simultaneously agree with their own on the smallest details while situated on different points of the globe? When have we sacrificed our individual perceptions of life, in order to belong to a certain sect?

I have no answers, nor am I eligible to offer advice. But, if I had to, my advice would be to question everything, starting with your own convictions. If you are not daring enough to do so, then at least remember that others are just as afraid to confront their deeply-rooted beliefs as you are, and by respecting that, a more diverse conception of this world will start to form, one that seems to be drifting further and further away recently. While I am indeed aware of the clichéd nature of this statement, it still strikes me as a profound truth, probably the only one that I know for certain. This comes at the risk of being the outcast kid in the school of thought, and at the risk of being labeled as a pacifist. Whatever it takes, when the whole world catches fire, try as hard as you can not to be an inflammable object.

"And We have certainly diversified in this Qur'an for the people from every [kind of] example; but man has ever been, most of anything, [prone to] dispute." The Holy Qur'an, Surat Al-Kahf, Verse 54

*Assistant Professor of Visual Communication
Kuwait University



CEO NAHEDH HONORS KFH VOLUNTARY TEAM

KUWAIT: Group Chief Executive Officer at Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Mazin Saad Al-Nahedh honored KFH voluntary team in recognition of their exerted efforts during the holy month of Ramadan that had been culminated in successfully concluding the Ramadan campaign 2016. This confirms KFH's leadership in achieving the corporate social responsibility, yet reiterates its firm belief in encouraging volunteerism, raising the awareness of philanthropy and charity, while boosting the community-oriented initiatives within society.

KFH organized and participated in a wide range of activities and events tailored to reach out across the community and within the institution. The activities were internal at the level of employees and external to target sev-

eral segments of the society and to confirm the bank's Islamic identity and distinguished social role.

KFH is keen on assuming its corporate social responsibility by focusing on the fields of health, education, sport and the youth in a manner that reflects the bank's endeavors to reinforce communication with all segments of the society, yet to sponsor events and activities, and organize purposeful visits to increase awareness in many fields.

KFH has a proven track record of social responsibility programs. It focuses on improving interaction with the society in many occasions, mainly those of social nature, through the contribution fostering volunteerism and philanthropy at many occasions.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) concluded the first stage of its summer training program for university students, as well as employees' children aged between 15 and 20 years. The program took place at the CBK Academy in the bank's Faiha branch.



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