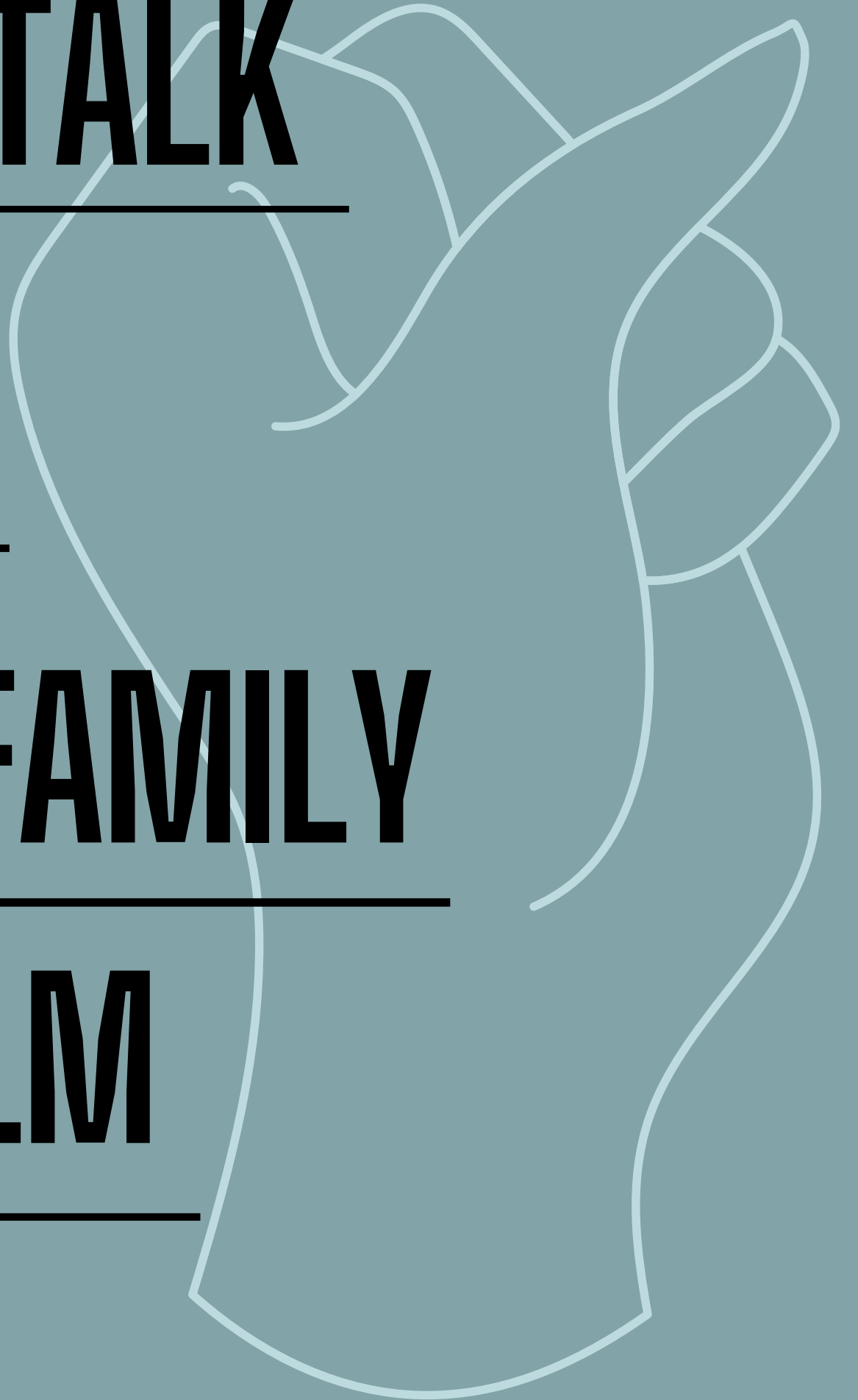


HOW TO TALK

TO YOUR

ISMAILI FAMILY

ABOUT BLM



IMPORTANCE

The ethics of pluralism, inclusion, and dignity for life are at the very core of the Ismaili faith. These values urge us to do our part and use our privilege to listen, learn, take action, and even dismantle our own subconscious anti-blackness. We can enact these values first by initiating conversations with our own families to build a more just and inclusive society.

TIPS FOR MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION

- Remember that you will not be able to change internalized anti-black racism in one conversation. The goal of every conversation is to **make progress**.
- *Discuss intent vs. impact. Your family might not **intend** to be racist, but the **impact** of our actions and thoughts can still be harmful.
- Remain **calm and compassionate**. Try to be non-accusatory in your tone, even if you are frustrated, in order to have a productive conversation.

TIPS FOR MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION

(CONT.)

- *Educate them without invalidating their own intelligence and lived experience. Avoid using overly academic language so your message is easy to understand.
- Listen, be open to questions, and follow up with more resources. The intention is for this to be a catalyst for normalizing open dialogues about anti-black racism within your home consistently.

*adapted from resource written by Krithika Rao and Manu Kondapi

MAWLANA HAZAR IMAM'S GUIDANCE

- "Faith does not remove Muslims – or their Imams – from daily, practical matters in family life, in business, in community affairs. Faith, rather, is a force that should deepen our concern for our worldly habitat, for embracing its challenges, and for improving the quality of human life."
-**Address to both Houses of the Parliament of Canada in the House of Commons Chamber, 27 Feb 2014**
- "We often determine "who we are"—by determining who we are against... But the human inclination to divisiveness is accompanied, I deeply believe, by a profound human impulse to bridge divisions."
-**Speech upon receiving the Tolerance Award, 20 May 2006**
- "The search for justice and security, the struggle for equality of opportunity, the quest for tolerance and harmony, the pursuit of human dignity – these are moral imperatives which we must work towards and think about on a daily basis."
-**Speech at the International Symposium at the University of Evora, 12 Feb 2006**

OTHER TEACHINGS OF OUR FAITH

- “O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, though it may be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives...if you swerve or turn aside, then surely Allah is all-aware of what you do”
- **Surah an-Nisa 4:135**
- “Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory.”
- **Surah al-Haj 22:39**
- “And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the differences of your tongues and colors. Surely in that are indeed signs for knowledgeable men.”
- **Surah Ar-Rum 30:22**
- “All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action.” - **Prophet Mohammed's Last Sermon**

ADDRESSING FAQs FROM FAMILY

"I support Black Lives Matter, but looting and violence are wrong."

- Black people have been betrayed by an institution that is supposed to protect them - they have protested peacefully for years and there has been minimal change
- Stay focused on the root of the protests
- The media is focusing heavily on the riots and not showing the peaceful protests and the police brutality at protests
- We are conditioned to think that the destruction of property is more immoral than the unjust murders of Black people

"We worked so hard to get where we are today, why can't Black people do the same?"

- Reference the Model Minority Myth (for South Asian Jamat)
- It's not that Black people don't work hard, they face inherently racist and violent systemic barriers that make it difficult for them to succeed

(MORE COMPREHENSIVE FAQs IN RESOURCE DOC)

ADDRESSING FAQS FROM FAMILY

(CONT.)

"Ismailis face so many problems too -- why should we care about this?"

- Yes, we also face barriers, and that is part of why we should support and stand up for other oppressed communities, regardless of if they are Ismaili. Our faith demands this, and Hazar Imam has served as an amazing role model by exemplifying this in the work of AKDN.
- Much of the South Asian jamat owes our success in America to the Civil Rights Movement led by the Black community. It is our responsibility to return the favor and fight for their rights.
- Ismailis are a very diverse community, ethnically and racially. Our jamat also consists of Black Ismailis, and while the Midwest jamat is predominantly South Asian, let's not forget that different parts of the jamat have different amounts of privilege.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CONVERSATIONS

<https://tinyurl.com/IsmailisforBLM>

NOTE:

We are not associated with any official Jamati Institutions. These are our own views, and we sincerely hope this can serve as a resource to other Ismailis who are navigating discussions about Black Lives Matter with their families. We also recognize that this post has only grazed the surface of this topic, and we highly encourage looking at the additional resources we have compiled.

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