



# CONFRONTING OUR BIASES: A GLIMPSE INTO ISLAMOPHOBIA

10<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk With Me

St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership

October 1, 2021

Abd Alfatah Twakkal



# What is Islam?

س-ل-م s-l-m

Islam = Submission

Muslim = one who submits [to God]

Salam = Peace

“Who is more beautiful in speech than one who calls unto God, works righteousness, and says, "Truly, I am among those who submit"? (I am of the Muslims) [Qur'an 41:33]

Muslim greeting: Assalamu Alaikum  
Peace be with you



# Islam in Canada



## A NEW LIFE IN A NEW LAND: THE MUSLIM EXPERIENCE IN CANADA

- <http://www.anewlife.ca>
- 1991: 253,265
- 2001: 579,640 (129% increase)
- 2011: 1,053,945 (over 90% increase)
- **2019: 1,499,660 – 1,687,118 (based on projected 4.0-4.5% +)**
- 2036: 2,520,000 – 3,240,000 (based on 5.6-7.2% + @ 45,000,000)

# Islam in London, ON



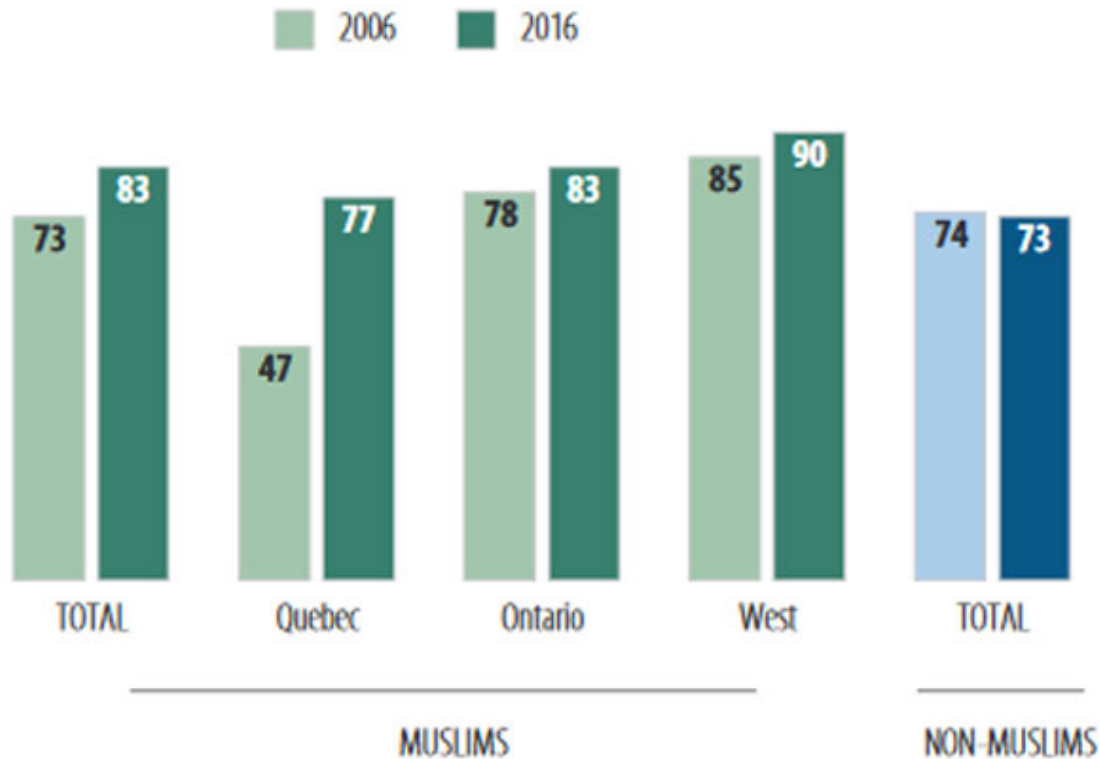
London Muslim Mosque, 1964

London Muslim Mosque, today



# Canadian Muslims

Very proud to be Canadian



Source:  
*Survey of  
Muslims in  
Canada 2016,*  
Final Report,  
Environics  
Institute

Q.3/FC Q.3

Would you say you are very, somewhat, not very, or not at all proud to be a Canadian?



# Types of Culture

## Individualist Culture:

Individualist cultures, such as those of the United States and Europe, emphasize personal achievement regardless of the expense of group goals.

## Collectivist Culture:

Collectivist cultures emphasize the interdependence of every human in a group and the priority of group goals over individual goals. Collectivists usually focus on community, society or nation.

# Education on Islam: Understanding Islamophobia

- Islamophobia is defined technically as “an irrational fear of Islam and a hatred or extreme dislike of Muslims.”
- However, the term now can also include attacks on Muslims and their faith. Fear has led some to discriminate against, demonize and dehumanize Muslims.
- Political terrorism, globalization and social media have led to negative attitudes, violence, harassment, discrimination and stereotyping of Muslims.

– *NCCM Islamophobia Guide for Educators*

# Education on Islam: Understanding Islamophobia

The Berkley Institute on Racism Studies lists five prevailing beliefs as elements of Islamophobia. They report that Islam is often seen as:

- monolithic and unable adapt to new realities;
- not sharing common values with other major faiths;
- a religion inferior to the West; is archaic, barbaric, and irrational;
- a religion of violence, which supports terrorism; and
- a violent political ideology

– *NCCM Islamophobia Guide for Educators*

# Education on Islam: Misconceptions and Islamophobia



## Fear, Inc.

The Roots of the Islamophobia Network in America

Wajahat Ali, Eli Clifton, Matthew Duss, Lee Fang, Scott Keyes, and Faiz Shakir

August 2011

[WWW.AMERICANPROGRESS.ORG](http://WWW.AMERICANPROGRESS.ORG)

## Countering the Islamophobia Industry Toward More Effective Strategies

May 2018



THE  
CARTER CENTER



# Education on Islam: Dealing with Misconceptions

- What is Shari‘ah?
- “In Arabic, Shar‘iah means the clear, well-trodden path to water. Islamically, it is used to refer to the matters of religion that God has legislated for His servants. The linguistic meaning of Shariah reverberates in its technical usage: just as water is vital to human life so the clarity and uprightness of Shariah is the means of life for souls and minds.”

— Shaykh Faraz Rabbani, What is the Shariah? A Path to God, a Path to Good

[www.seekershub.org](http://www.seekershub.org)

# Education on Islam: Misconceptions in the Media



# Education on Islam: Misconceptions in the Media





# Education on Islam: Misconceptions in the Media



# Education on Islam: Understanding True Meanings

# Impact of Islamophobia

## June 6, 2021

- Created sense of fear
  - Visibly Muslim
  - More hate spread from small minority of population (ex. Harriston resident)
- Increase in mental health issues



# Impact of Islamophobia

## June 6, 2021



We stand with  
#OurLondonFamily



# How Do We Respond?

Interact

Educate

Mercy/Compassion

Be engaged

Reach out

Advocate

Collaborate

Empathy

“There is **only one** way that we can combat and overcome the various forms of hatred that exist within our society – **TOGETHER.**”

(-adapted from Shahina Siddiqui ISSA, Winnipeg, MB)

# Working With Muslim Families: Understanding Their Context

Need to put together various puzzle pieces for each family:

- 1) **Universal Aspects (size of family, ages, etc.)**
- 2) **Role of religion, beliefs and culture in families (ex. level of religiosity)**
- 3) **Migratory experiences:**
  - **Pre-migration stressors**
  - **Post-migration stressors**

# Working With Muslim Clients: Issues to Consider

## 1) Ritual worship:

- Purification
- Prayer
- Fasting in Ramadan

## 2) Gender Sensitivity:

- Male/female interactions and care
- Modesty (dress)

## 3) Dietary Practices:

- Halal food
- Alcohol prohibition



## Intercultural Community Relations Coordinator

Role has three main components:

- i) Public Education: develop awareness and training curriculum for various issues related to family safety
- ii) Cultural Adaptation of programs
  - ex. Caring Dads, Strengthening Families Program
- iii) Clinical (direct) services:
  - marriage/divorce, grief counselling
  - work with other service providers collaboratively (CAS, Vanier, Parole, etc.)
  - spiritual consultations/counselling when required

# Spirit of Islam



“We have sent  
you only as a  
mercy to the  
whole world”

Qur'an 21:107



**Thank you for listening!**

