



**Tribute to Our
Abbu (Zia Uddin)**

Bismillah.

We buried our beloved Abbu (father) yesterday.

The eyes are still tearing.

The hearts are still grieving.

**But we will only say to Allah (God Almighty) that
which is pleasing.**

Abbu's name was Zia Uddin Malick.



Abbu in Madinah (2019)

He was a Zia (sunlight) for us.

This light was extinguished on the 24th night of Ramadan and buried on the 25th, but it will be rekindled through his legacy.

Ramadan is the month of dua.

The greatest dua that has ever been recorded is in the very first chapter of the Quran (Surat al-Fatiha).

In Surat al-Fatiha, Allah teaches us several etiquettes of making dua.

One of the etiquettes of dua that we learn is that we should find a way to praise Him (madh) and thank (shukr) Him.

Ya Muhyiy, O The Giver of Life, we praise You for giving us life even though none of us asked to be born.

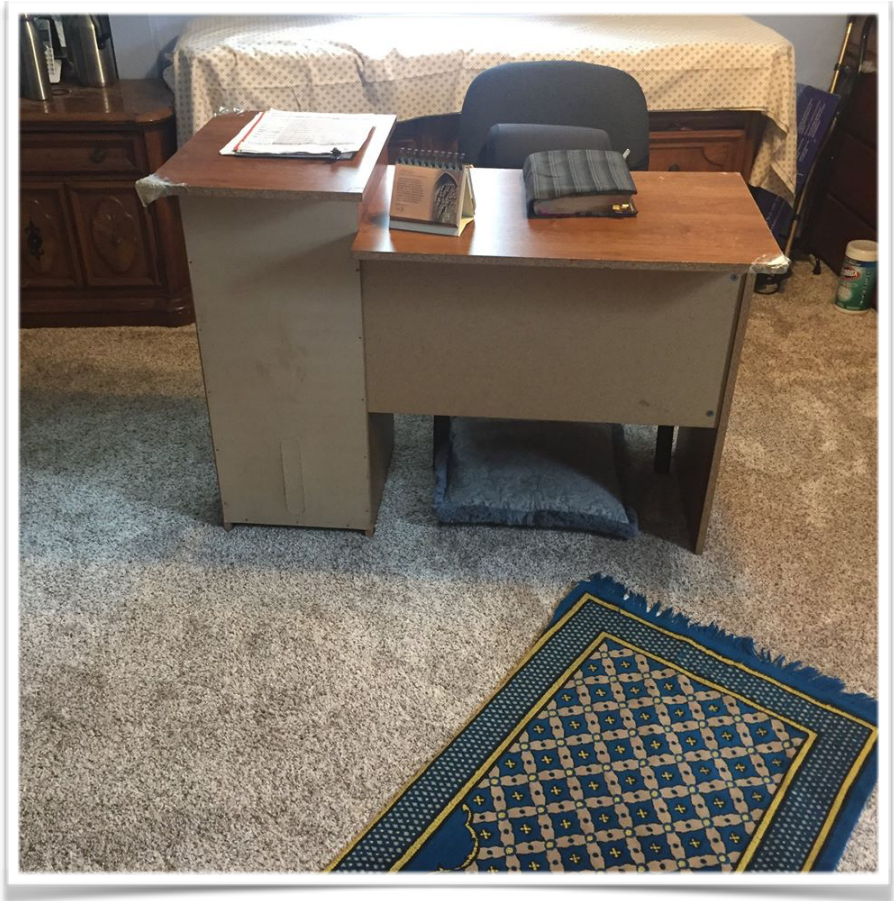
Thank you, O Allah, for granting us a noble father from whom we learned at least 24 lessons.

We are taught to remember the mahasin (praiseworthy qualities) of those who have passed so that we reflect, represent, and rekindle those beautiful practices with ihsan (excellence).

Here are 24 lessons from our Abbu Jaan.

1. Extremely organized

His suitcase, desks, cabinets were always arranged in a systematic way. This helped him manage many activities and deadlines more efficiently.



Abbu's simple but organized desk



Abbu's legendary briefcase of over 30 years

2. Honorably clean

He always wore clean clothes in and outside the house.

3. Particular about being on time.

Our youngest brother, Asif, his post wedding party was scheduled to be right after the sunset prayer at 6:59 pm. Abbu made sure to put the start time of the event on the card and we started the event at 6:59 pm on the dot.

A few relatives came up to Abbu and started to complain, “Zia Uncle, let’s start the nasheed, speeches and entire program later when people come. There’s not many people here right now.” Abbu responded by saying, You want me to go against my word? Whoever does not respect time, it’s a sign they do not respect Allah?”

4. Indirect approach is more effective

Growing up, he didn’t force us to pray salah. Rather, he would gently wake us up and say, “Let’s pray Fajr (the morning prayer) together baita (beloved son) and then you can go back to sleep. As we grew older, he would simply model the behavior.

After Fajr, he would recite Quran. Since we all wanted to be like Abbu, we would all recite Quran as well after Fajr from our own personal mushaf (personal copy of the Quran). If he noticed any of us dozing off, he would gently say, “Baita, go to bed.”

When we prayed salah at home, Abbu would lead the prayers. As we grew older and were blessed with the opportunity to study and memorize the Quran, he stopped leading and would instead give adhan and iqamah (calls to prayer), even though we were young. He respected and empowered the people of knowledge knowing they were the inheritors of Prophets and supported them locally and globally.



Abbu giving adhan on the 2nd of Ramadan
1441 (2020)

5. Knew how to give feedback

Whenever we delivered a khutbah or taught a class to the community while Abbu was in the audience, he would elicit a calming presence. Even if the talk was for over an hour, Abbu had the capability to sit in the tashahud position and listen attentively without fidgeting. After the talk, he would provide beneficial feedback that helped us improve our presentation. He would appreciate the amount of time that speakers would put into speech and would often say, “I could tell you put a lot of time and research into your presentation.” This was surprising because usually speakers are the only ones who know how much dedication it takes to give an insightful lecture but Abbu wasn’t a speaker and thus his advice to us came from a place of affection and listener experience.

6. Derived lessons from the dead

Abbu would visit the cemetery to visit his mother frequently even though her grave is in downtown Chicago and he would take us with him. Then he would mention their legacy to us. Also, when visiting Pakistan, he would first visit the graves of all those who had passed since the last time he visited before accepting any dawats (invitations).

7. A great grandfather

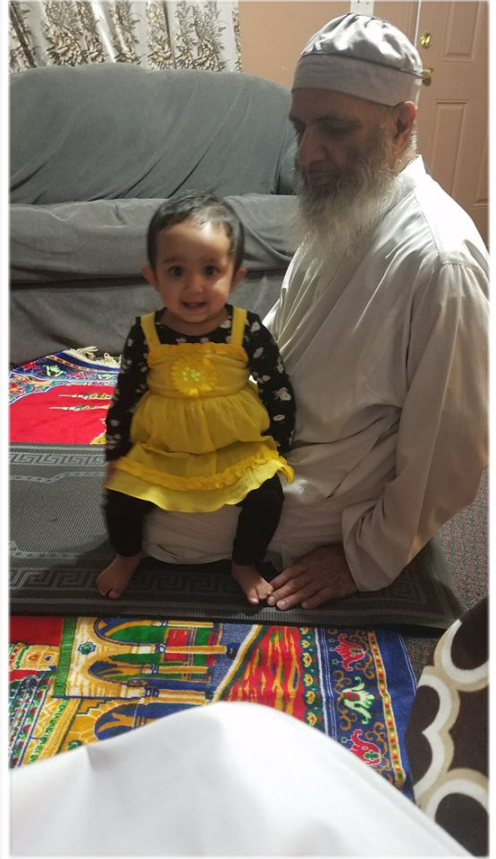
Abbu’s grandkids said the following:

- “Dada would give me nutritious snacks whenever I came over”
- “Dada encouraged me to do nazirah of the entire Quran, and I did it!”
- “Dada listened to me recite two complete ajza of the Quran in Ramadan.”
- “Dada was an empathetic listener.”
- “I wanted to read the Quran after watching Dada read so much.”

8. Man of Quran

Abbu spent close to 10 hours everyday reciting the Quran (Abbu was not a hafiz nor an alim but he was from the people of the Quran). Whether we were in a car or a plane, he always kept a small mushaf with him. Abbu returned to Allah in the blessed month of the Quran. What better way to continue his legacy than by completing the recitations of the Quran just as he would have completed if he was here today. Let's accomplish something that will be advantageous for our

beloved Abbu's akirah for which you will also be rewarded inshaAllah. Our goal is to complete 100 khatams. Sign up below.
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Gya0WSDw0Nwrqkky3YxtbMBgYpQLxKzOiGicL8YBv0/edit?usp=sharing>



Abbu with some of his grandchildren

9. Man of usul (Principles)

Power did not sway him.

Politics did not sway him.

Money did not sway him.

Abbu always did the right thing as he was a principle oriented man.

If he noticed a musalli (congregant) coming late for the salah (prayer), and that congregant parked incorrectly (handicap section) because he wanted to catch the prayer, Abbu would take that brother to the side and say, “Brother, the purpose of salah is to get closer to Allah. Do you think you're getting closer to Allah if you are not following the law of the land?”



Abbu receiving one of many awards for his exemplary work at Montgomery Wards

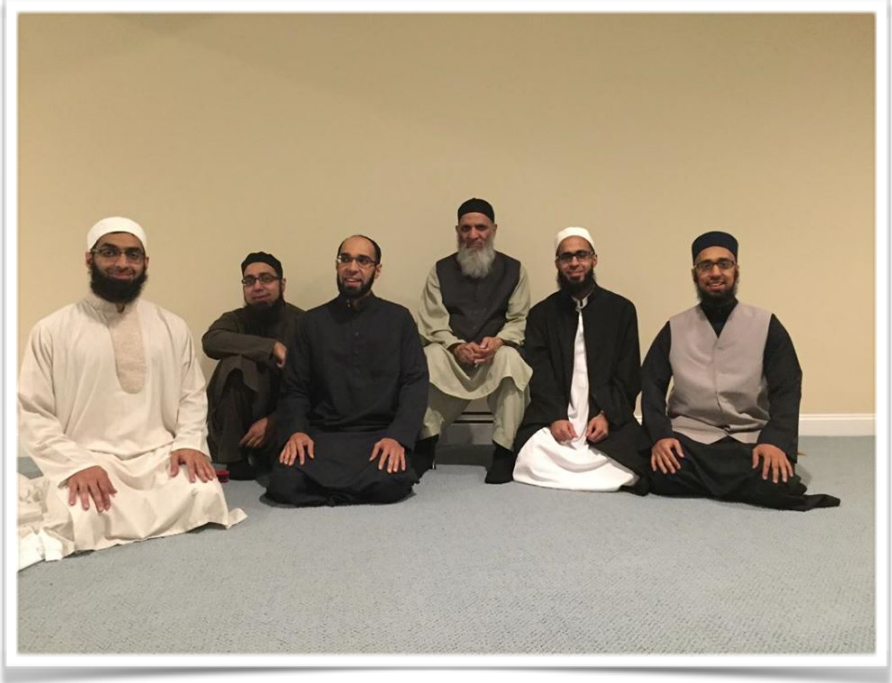
10. Visionary

Abbu's last will (wasiyyah) contains gems for us as a family. One of those gems we can share is "I advise my family, as our Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and Prophet Yaqub (Jacob), peace be on them, advised their families, saying, "Allah has chosen the faith for you; then die not except in the faith of Islam.

Abbu was inspired by the farewell words given by the visionary Prophet Yaqub (Jacob) to his sons.

When we would feel down, Abbu encouraged us to step back and look at the big picture.

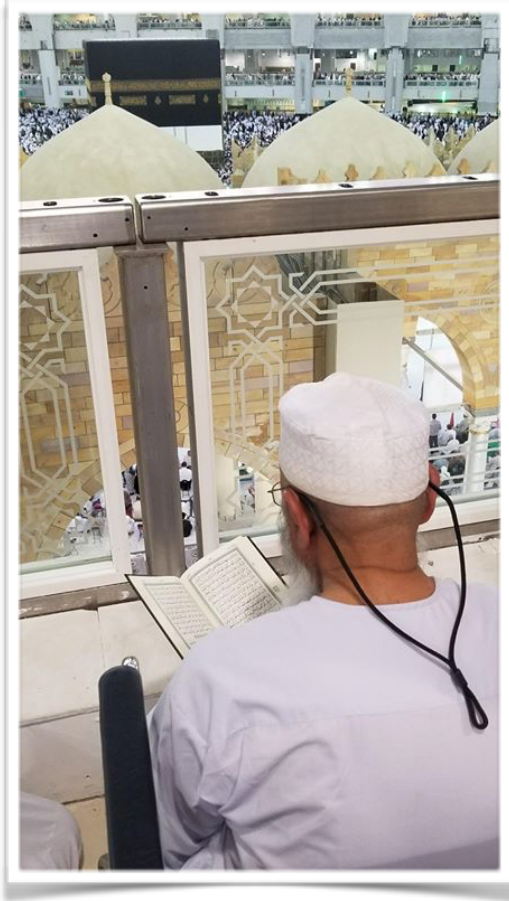
When our eldest brother Haaris was elected as the treasurer at ICW, he informed Abbu expecting a congratulations. Abbu said, “You are in for a lot of work. Be prepared.”



Abbu with us, his five sons, from left: Atif, Kamil, Haaris, Asif, and Azfar

11. Found joy in simplicity, cleanliness and beautiful clothing

His clothing was simple, always ironed, clean and he always had an appropriate topi (cap) to go with his outfit. He would say, “When I stand in front of Allah (God), I have to look good as it makes me feel good.”



Abbu during his final hajj (2019).

12. Always prayed on time

Whether we were traveling on a long road trip or in the middle of watching an intense game together, he would call the adhan, and naturally we pause whatever we were doing and pray. He scheduled his activities around the salah even when he would work full time. Our mother said, “I married him because of his piety and punctuality with salah, his enjoyment for home cooked meals and good looks.”



A younger Abbu with Azfar (the third son)

13. Showed what it takes to have unity

Abbu was the youngest of five brothers. He said that his father, Qamar Uddin, told him and his four brothers “I have five sons,” Then he stuck out his hand. “See these five fingers.” If you stick together, nobody can divide you. “People can do the worst nazar (evil eye) they want, but if we make the choice to stick together, nobody can divide us.”

Ammi (our mother) said, “Before making any major decision, Abbu would always consult with his mom when she was alive.” This helped maintain unity in the family.

14. Tongue moist with constant zikr (remembering Allah)

Abbu had a heart attack on May 7th, 2020. A few hours later he would wake up. It would be one of his last times he woke up. Asif got on the phone with him and asked, Abbu do you need anything? Abbu

said, “Before the ambulance transports me to another hospital, hurry and bring me my tasbih and bring me my topi.”

15. Man of tahajud, sunnah, nafl and congregational prayers

Even before he got married, he was particular about these prayers. Ammi said, “If he was unable to pray one of the five daily prayers due to unknown circumstances, he wrote the missed prayer in his journal and made it up as soon as possible.”

16. A pillar in salah

In salah, he had a pristine focus on prayer. One of the reasons is because of how he prepared for the salah (perfecting his wudu, wearing beautiful clothes, matching topi, and going early to the masjid).

17. “Be good”

Whenever we would go anywhere, he would say two words, “Be good.”

18. Earned the right to be heard

Abbu would show interest in whatever we were interested in (football, karate, and working out).

All of his sons were football fans. Sometimes Abbu would have conversations with us just about sports and would engage in trash talking by saying “Bears are bottom of the piles” and “Cowboys will win the Superbowl.” These actions initiated by him showed us, “I want to be your father and have a relationship with you.”

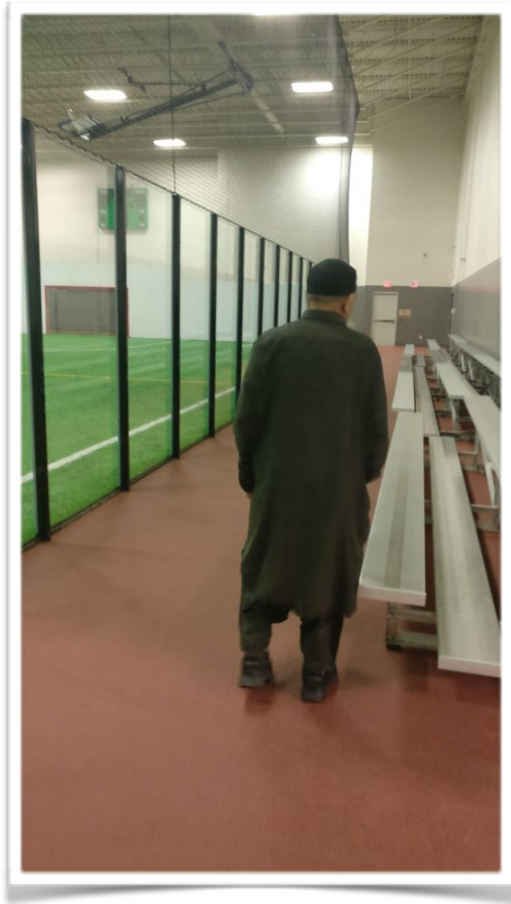
Abbu had conversations with us about important topics when we were very young. This made talking about difficult subjects easier as we got older.

19. Abu spoke with ihsan (excellence) with everyone including telemarketers

As annoying as it would be for others, Abbu even entertained talking with telemarketers. He would actively listen to the telemarketers and not hang up on them. Afterwards he would say, Thank you for the phone call. “I am not interested at this time. I hope you have a great day.”

20. Was willing to try new things

Before getting married, Abbu spent a few years in Germany where he learned fluent German. Upon coming to the States, his first job was working at a donut shop. He did what he could to to support his family.



As Abbu got older, he found different means
by which he stayed active

21. Had a special place in his heart for the orphans, the poor and students of knowledge

Abbu would have sleepless nights and be in deep reflection over the poor. He would visit madaris to support the students who could not afford the tuition.

22. “Work hard at work”

He worked at Montgomery Wards for almost 20 years and would encourage us to work hard at work and complete all tasks on time.

23. Gave undivided attention to whomever he was speaking with

Abbu would face the person he would speak with and listened more than he would speak.

24. Patience

When we were very young, Abbu asked Haaris to lead the rest of the brothers in salah so Abbu could observe and correct any mistakes we may have. One time Haaris’s young mind wandered to football while he was leading, and instead of hearing of Allahu-Akbar (God is the greatest) ...we heard HIKE!

It is hard to express our emotions but we take solace in his mahasin and we hope to live by these twenty- four lessons and many more as we journey through a life without him but not without his life lessons.

Our outlook moving forward

People are trying to console us by saying, “Do not worry. This pain is temporary. Time will heal all wounds.” The thing is, we don’t want a portion of our hearts to heal. A portion of our hearts will always be sad till the day we die and we want it to be like that because the purpose of life is not to be happy 24/7. The purpose of life is to worship Allah and obey Him and obtain contentment through the remembrance of God. We are not asking the Almighty to heal our wounded hearts because we want to use this discomfort to live a legacy for our father. Just as the father of Prophets, Prophet Ibrahim, sought iman (faith) and itminan (peace of the heart), we ask the Almighty to grant us both faith and peace of heart.

A bisharat

The day before Abbu returned to Allah, one of us had a dream. In that dream, we were all sitting in a room in Abbu’s house. Ammi, our mother, was doing zikr. In the dream, we were trying to convince Abbu to stay with us, his response was simply a smile and nothing more. We take this as a bisharat (glad tidings) for him and we hope these words give comfort to you all as well who could not make the janazah (funeral prayer) and whose shoulders we could not lean on to cry for comfort.

May we continue to live the legacy of our beloved Abbu.

Regards,

Haaris Uddin, Atif Uddin, Azfar Uddin, Kamil Uddin and Asif Uddin

26th of Ramadan, 1441

5/18/2020