



How to save Pakistan in 5 Easy steps: (If you don't do it, no one else will.)

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The ideas presented here are transnational, multi-cultural and prehistoric. Although I put this piece together I do not claim originality. The ideas apply as much to me as to you. These can be used by members of any society or citizens of any state or followers of any religion. Nothing advocated in these ideas is against any religion. Religious affiliation of the reader is immaterial. Good ideas belong to those who seek them and put them to service for their own ends. Who may benefit from great ideas is not circumscribed by national borders, geographic regions, cultures or languages.

You have been in countless discussions about the state of our nation, Pakistan, causes for the current state of affairs and how to change it. According to popular culture the dismal state we are in is caused by:

- Terrible political leadership we have had since the founding of the nation.
- Lack of Islamic laws and sharia
- Nearly one hundred years of colonial rule.
- The machinations of the great Satan the United States of America.
- Wrath of God on Muslims.
- And many other combination and permutations of the preceding.

The one thing that is common to all of these causes of national disgrace is that they lie beyond the capability of the individual to change. So we keep talking and no one does anything practical to improve our future prospects. Perhaps we just like talking about these things so we would appear to our peers and friends as an intellectually alive and moral person, and that certainly makes each of us feel good, although it does not change reality of our existence.

THE 5 STEPS

These are things within reach of every citizen of Pakistan regardless of age, religion, sex, language or wealth that can be done to save this country over a generation or two. It requires no heroic measures just doing what is our duty and no more. It is all about self reformation not reforming others which is much more difficult. You may be able to

influence some around you by the example you set. Let us be honest you can't get your wife or kids to do what you want. Neither do you have any influence on your associates, neighbours or strangers. The only one you have at your command is you. Fortunately our only responsibility is "I". So here is what each of us needs to do every day, all the time, even if we think no one else will join us. And keep doing it for the rest of our lives even if we fail sometimes.

Step1 :

Tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, all the time. Of course we are human so telling truth as often as you can will suffice. But effort must not be discontinued on any account. Even if you think it won't make a difference, even if you can't do it every day, just do it and keep doing it as often as possible. Not telling the truth is the root of most evils. Unfortunately we lie too much we lie because we need to, we have to, we do it socially, do it for fun and for profit, there is no end. Our culture and poetry is full of it.

Step 2:

A. Learn the truth: You can only tell the truth if you know it yourself. How do you tell if you know the truth of any matter, idea or question? Assume that you know nothing and what you know is subject to revision based on methods of scientific enquiry. Educate yourself about everything, particularly the humanities psychology, sociology, economics, anthropology, political science, and most of all Philosophy. Learn and think for yourself. Keep asking questions until you reach incontrovertible answers. **Never mistake an opinion for a fact or vice versa. You have a right to an opinion** of your own but **you also have an obligation to ascertain the facts.**

B. *Educate Your Future: Through your elected representatives work for a modern secular curriculum of education for grades 1 thru 10. Historically accurate and scientifically valid curriculum designed to cultivate good citizens, devoid of indoctrination. We can then hope to have better citizens in half a generation.

Step 3:

***Separation of Religion and State**

First and foremost agenda in Pakistan's politics should be complete, uncompromising and irreversible separation of religion and state. The foundation of present day progress and prosperity of European states sits on dichotomy of church and state and universal public education. Citizens remain free to practice and preach their religion whatever it is. Science and reason must reign supreme in matters of law and public policy. This is how Kamal Atatürk changed the fate of his nation too.

Step 4:

A. Follow the law. Starting tomorrow (today will be better) abide by every law. Good laws, bad laws, new laws, old laws, federal laws, provincial laws, local laws. Bad laws can be revised or deleted but as long as they are on the books we need to follow them. (Even if you think this won't work, or if you can't do it every day, just do it and keep doing it.)

B. *Overhaul of Laws: In the public domain press for a complete overhaul of all the laws. Removing obsolete laws, modify other laws to make them relevant and just.

Step 5:

Self Accountability: Question your beliefs and examine your actions every day at least once a day. Examine your thoughts and actions once a day everyday at minimum. Most fundamental unit of society is the family and families consist of individuals. Your actions may inspire your kids, neighbors, associates to be upright but you can't give up being upright if they can't or won't follow your example. Perhaps my words will have greater credibility with you the reader if I tell you what your national poet said:

**Afrad kay hathon mein hay aquam ki taqdeer
Her fard hay millat kay muquddar ka sitra**

Practice of these ideas is neither going to reform you instantly, nor turn around the country or society overnight. Neither paradise nor nirvana can be promised to you as a reward for following these principles. It won't make you wealthy, or more loved with your family or peers. You will get no medals or a mention in the history books. The only satisfaction you may rightly claim would be that you fulfilled your personal obligations and no part of society or country's ills may be laid on your shoulders. You will have started a process of positive change in society that will be unstoppable. The process will continue long after your death, it will be your legacy to your children and grand children and many generations to come.

Your burden and mine is only that of reforming ourselves, nothing more is required nothing less is acceptable. If you accomplish the above goals with sufficient regularity you will have discharged your responsibility to your country, society and community. It may take a generation or more for the turnaround to happen but it is as assured as tomorrow's sunrise.

Hem and haw all you want my question is will you or won't you. If you choose not to, at least start accepting some of the blame for the mess we are in. The last hope for our nation lies not with God but with you and me. See even God doesn't help those who do not help themselves. Your fellow citizen.

*P.S. I apologize and admit the items with an astrisk aren't entirely in your control. You can push for them, you can hope for them. These items were too important not to be included.

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