American English File, Star Educational Society’s new textbook system

The textbooks contain grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation practice in every lesson and allow students to develop a solid foundation for successful speaking. This system is best designed to meet the needs and demands of the young Afghan generation.

The Second Edition is even more student and teacher-friendly, with an updated design and 75% new content for improved visual appeal and topics that will engage and motivate students. With this new system the semesters will be shorter, the tuition fee will be reduced and a student-centered approach of language instruction will be most instrumental. American English File 2nd edition will be applied from our elementary classes through Pre-Advanced Level 2. American English File Starter will be used for Junior Beginner 1 and Junior Beginner 2. American English File Level 1 will be used in Senior Beginner 1 and Senior Beginner 2.

The new system requires professional instructors who are not only trained but possess a higher level of language awareness to be able to apply in their classes. The new system is best designed to meet the needs and demands of the young Afghan generation. American English File is a series of six books – Starter, Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 and Level 5. The books were first used in Kabul by the American University of Afghanistan. Previously the books were not readily available in Kabul book markets but now local bookstores have them available on their shelves. This new system was developed by world-renowned authors Christina Latham-Koenig and Clive Oxenden: language + motivation = opportunity. The textbooks contain grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation practice in every lesson and allow students to develop a solid foundation for successful speaking.

Each book contains a total of seven units and 160 pages divided into two parts. Three to four units will be covered in each 40-day semester. An absolute beginner less than two years to complete the Diploma of English Language and graduate from Star. Our graduates will be capable of taking TOEFL preparation courses and will be ready to attend universities with English as the medium of instruction. Another advantage of this system is that language learners benefit from numerous workbooks which are supported by audio and video CDs aimed at providing students’ command of the topics they study in classes. The new system will be adopted in B-E semester of Star starting from the new classes in A Branch. Books are available both at Star offices and bookstores around the city.

Inside

Eid, Happy moments or nightmares?

Eid days and New Year are supposed to be fun moments. I become happy when I see smiles on the lips of every one, young, child, and old men who enthusiastically await Eid and New Year to hang out with their close friends, go on picnic, swim in pool and fly kite in the free beautiful sky...

Researcher: Why Hazaras Protest

At the NATO summit in Warsaw, there was a victory for Hazara activism. My friend Baziir Ahang, along with two other journalists, went to the press conference which was to be given by Ahmad Ghani...

United Nations report: Iran’s missile program not compatible with the nuclear agreement

The Reuters News Agency has reported that Ban Ki-Moon the Secretary...

Nikki Giovanni

Civil Rights Activist, Poet, Television Personality (1943-)

Nikki Giovanni was born on June 7, 1943. She published her first book of poems, Black Feeling, Black Talk in 1968. Giovanni is a prominent poet and writer who first caught the public’s attention as part of the Black Arts movement of the late 1960s. In 1967, she returned to...
are starting to consider plant - excess pollutant and, in return, trees rid the environment of an absorbing carbon dioxide, the tree into the atmosphere. So by oxygen, which is released by the tree for nutrients. The process. Photosynthesis con - sun to fuel photosynthesis. Think pounds of small particulate mat- five tons of carbon dioxide, and branches. Trapped and filtered by leaves particulate matter such as pol- dust, smoke and ash are trapped and filtered by leaves and branches. Some estimates conclude that 100 trees remove up to five tons of carbon dioxide, 400 pounds of ozone, and 300 pounds of small particulate mat- ter. Trees use energy from the sun to fuel photosynthesis. Think of it as a tree’s food production process. Photosynthesis con- verts water and carbon dioxide absorbed from the atmosphere into carbohydrates that are used by the tree for nutrients. The by-product of photosynthesis is oxygen, which is released by the tree into the atmosphere. So by absorbing carbon dioxide, the trees rid the environment of an excess pollutant and, in return, they give us oxygen to breathe. In fact, some governments are starting to consider plant- ing trees to address air quality and global warming issues. The Kyoto Protocol, the international treaty whose goal is to reduce global warming by decreasing the emission of greenhouse gas- ses, allows countries that have signed the treaty to meet their carbon emission targets by cut- ting emissions or by planting forests. Trees keep us cooler, which means that less energy is used, fewer emissions are created, and pollutant levels are reduced. Shaded areas are naturally cool- er, and trees also keep us cool through a process called tran- spiration that releases moisture into the air. In the transpiration process, water is absorbed by tree roots and moves through its trunk, branches, and leaves, where it evaporates into the at- mosphere. Urban areas experience a phenomenon that scientists call the urban heat island. The tem- peratures of urban areas are 2-10 degrees warmer than surround- ing areas. This is due to the prev- alence of concrete, asphalt and tall buildings, and the absence of vegetation, including trees. The goal of many urban tree plant- ings is to reduce the urban heat island effect. Trees also do a lot of heavy lifting when it comes to keeping water quality high. Water runoff in forested areas is much less than in developed areas. That’s because tree roots help keep soil in place, preventing the erosion of soil and hills in severe storms. And trees slow water runoff by holding rainfall on their leaves and branches and storing water in their roots. This helps replen- ish the groundwater supply and decreases flood potential. One hundred mature trees catch ap- proximately 250,000 gallons of rainwater each year. In addition, trees actually clean water as it passes through their roots on its way into the groundwater supply. And shady lawns conserve water because they need less irrigation, which also helps homeowners save money. It’s interesting to think about how many different jobs that trees have. Everything in nature is interrelated. In this way all the parts of an ecosystem serve mul- tiple purposes that aren’t always immediately visible to humans. That’s why so many problems create chain reactions which re- ally happen when humans alter the ecosystem. The positive environmental impact of trees

About the author: Assadullah Allahyari is a Star teacher and alliuma. He plans to study stomato- logy and become a dentist.

Scientists have learned a lot about how trees improve air and water quality. Here’s a look at how trees help us have a healthier environment. Trees have a tremendous effect on air quality. Through the pores of leaf surfaces, trees absorb harmful pollutants pro- duced by humans, including nitrogen dioxide (NO2), sulfur dioxide (SO2), ozone (O3), and carbon monoxide (CO). Small particulate matter such as pol- len, dust, smoke and ash are trapped and filtered by leaves and branches. Some estimates conclude that 100 trees remove up to five tons of carbon dioxide, 400 pounds of ozone, and 300 pounds of small particulate matter. Trees use energy from the sun to fuel photosynthesis. Think of it as a tree’s food production process. Photosynthesis converts water and carbon dioxide absorbed from the atmosphere into carbohydrates that are used by the tree for nutrients. The by-product of photosynthesis is oxygen, which is released by the tree into the atmosphere. So by absorbing carbon dioxide, the trees rid the environment of an excess pollutant and, in return, they give us oxygen to breathe. In fact, some governments are starting to consider planting trees to address air quality and global warming issues. The Kyoto Protocol, the international treaty whose goal is to reduce global warming by decreasing the emission of greenhouse gases, allows countries that have signed the treaty to meet their carbon emission targets by cutting emissions or by planting forests. Trees keep us cooler, which means that less energy is used, fewer emissions are created, and pollutant levels are reduced. Shaded areas are naturally cooler, and trees also keep us cool through a process called transpiration that releases moisture into the air. In the transpiration process, water is absorbed by tree roots and moves through its trunk, branches, and leaves, where it evaporates into the atmosphere. Urban areas experience a phenomenon that scientists call the urban heat island. The temperatures of urban areas are 2-10 degrees warmer than surrounding areas. This is due to the prevalence of concrete, asphalt and tall buildings, and the absence of vegetation, including trees. The goal of many urban tree plantings is to reduce the urban heat island effect. Trees also do a lot of heavy lifting when it comes to keeping water quality high. Water runoff in forested areas is much less than in developed areas. That’s because tree roots help keep soil in place, preventing the erosion of soil and hills in severe storms. And trees slow water runoff by holding rainfall on their leaves and branches and storing water in their roots. This helps replenish the groundwater supply and decreases flood potential. One hundred mature trees catch approximately 250,000 gallons of rainwater each year. In addition, trees actually clean water as it passes through their roots on its way into the groundwater supply. And shady lawns conserve water because they need less irrigation, which also helps homeowners save money. It’s interesting to think about how many different jobs that trees have. Everything in nature is interrelated. In this way all the parts of an ecosystem serve multiple purposes that aren’t always immediately visible to humans. That’s why so many problems create chain reactions which really happen when humans alter the ecosystem.

Eid, Happy moments or nightmares?

Eid days and New Year are supposed to be fun moments. I become happy when I see smiles on the lips of every one, young, child, and old men who enthusiastically await Eid and New Year to hang out with their close friends, go on picnic, swim in pool and fly kite in the free beautiful sky. Boys and men already prepare fashionable new clothes before Eid so that in greeting with friends or relative, they should look gorgeous and impress others with their looks. I enjoy and feel happy because I see my brothers and my father smile and are standing by my side and we still enjoy the warm atmosphere of the family. However, there is still a void in my heart that I have not been able to fill. That is the sense of inferiority. What I sense from the absence of girls and women on the street and their illogical pretext they present me as to why they have failed to pay me a visit in person at our home. On the other hand, I sound silly too in coun- ter when I am asked for not seeing them in person or not planning to go on picnic or go amusement park or fail to plan to go sightseeing at Eid. We all intuitively understand each other’s untold story buried deep in our hearts. Untold words, stories and hopes which are brighter than day but are neglected by you who unin- tentionally or who deliberately ignore our rights and our existence. Why should we, girls, endure the house drudgery during Eid or even other times while boys are steeped in their enjoyment and we have to clean their mess? That is why I have mixed feelings about ar- rival Eid. I obtain joy and pleasure as I see my family members and my country men are enjoy- ing themselves and after long period of civil war in which people endured too much pain, sorrow and humiliation. On the other hand, I loathe Eid or New Year arrival for it obstructs people of my gender, girls, to be deprived and confined in home to wine and dine the guest, clean the house, prepare tea and cook.

Eid and New year turn out to be our disastrous nightmares as it compounds our irrelevant re- sponsibilities before Eid we have to wash the carpets, clean the windows and change the house decoration while boys, so-called princes of families, have to enjoy their moments and prepare themselves new clothes which girls do like more. It is not fair one in pain and another in joy. Eid would mean more and we can add more to its concept if we start to bring pleasure and happiness in our family first, look after our fam- ily members and greet our family members if they are internally pleased with our behavior instead of extending our relations with other people and use Eid to strengthen our friendship. First, satisfy people in the same house living with you, hanging up with and looking for you for their whole life time; that should be your first priority.
At the NATO summit in Warsaw, there was a victory for Hazara activism. My friend Basir Ahang, along with two other journalists, went to the press conference which was to be given by Ashraf Ghani. When Ghani saw them there, he left and did not give the press conference. I had met Basir in Rome several weeks ago, and he was unsure whether the protest would be successful. Now, it seems the protesters have shown the president that when they raise their voices they, too, are powerful.

Perhaps Ghani remembered the recent incident when a Hazara protester in London, Jafar Ataye, was beaten by his security guards and did not want to add to the embarrassment this (should have) caused. Basir and many Hazara activists living throughout Europe traveled to Warsaw for the sake of peaceful protest. In a speech given earlier, Basir expressed his appreciation to NATO countries for pledging support to Afghanistan (and in fact, Hazaras have gained much since 2001, are extremely appreciative of NATO actions in Afghanistan, and in no way support the insurgency). However, he asked that, while giving this support, NATO pressure the Afghan government to recognize and take action against ongoing discrimination against Hazaras.

Hazaras have been persecuted for over 100 years in Afghanistan, and today it seems to them that while the Taliban continues to target them, the government stands by. Hazara majority areas are often extremely underdeveloped, and yet the government has done little to promote development in these areas, as evidenced by the decision to direct the TUTAP power transit line through a route that would not include Bamiyan, the heart of the Hazara homeland.

I write this post from Athens, Greece, where I am doing research with Hazara asylum seekers. It is estimated that 60% of Afghan asylum seekers in Greece are Hazaras, while they make up 20% of the population in Afghanistan. I am here with people who have risked their lives and taken their children on a dangerous boat crossing through the Aegean Sea, who know that it will be difficult to adjust to Europe, but who do it all the same because it is very difficult for them to imagine a good life, a safe life where they will not be judged and possibly kidnapped or killed because of the way they look or the way they pray, in their homeland.

People like Basir and his colleagues are fortunate in that Europe has welcomed them, but they continue to fight for the rights of Hazaras in Afghanistan, and hope that perhaps one day the day will come when they too can return in safety to their homeland.

About the author: Melissa Kerr Chiovenda will finish her PhD in anthropology about Hazara civil society activists in Bamyan, Afghanistan in September. She teaches anthropology at Emerson College in Boston, United States.

### Broken...

Afghanistan,
The land of warriors’ battlefields
A historical ground for defeat and victory
Every particle of its soil
Is a recollection of enemies’ residue
Brick and mud houses yet breathe
The history of its destruction
Gray wooden doors, hanging open
To welcome the handicapped resident
Collapsed walls still reside
To stand back as peace shelters
In that playground, march the symbols of strength
Those injured heavy tanks
No more can they kill enemies
Have now become toys of joyless children
Children discover remnants of war
Hidden in huge pile of junk
My white-haired grandmother
Tells me stories like horror movies
She left her decades old house
All was lost but her children

No walls around, and open ground
No chairs, students with books under trees
The ruined map of my homeland
Tells me stories of bleeding corners
Reminisce of old folks
Traces the hostile beauty of war
Today is another reflection
Of my land’s red painted history!

About the author: Mursal Koshani volunteers with Star Educational Society’s partner ROA-Resources of Young Afghans. She will be starting her sophomore year at Berea College in the fall majoring in psychology.
Millions of England residents went to vote and decide whether to remain in European Union or not. The probable withdrawal of Britain from the European Union would be a great occurrence in the sixty years of this Union’s history, and it will have different effects on both England and the Union.

Since the establishment of the European Union and England’s membership, the agreements and disagreements about England’s membership in the Union have been the main concern until its withdrawal on 24th June, 2016.

The anticipated consequences of England’s withdrawal from the Union:

• Decline of labor force: by dropping British out of European Union, the refugees that came to England from European Union would extremely decrease work force in constructions and building services.

• Decrease of economic growth: England’s withdrawal would greatly decrease her economic dynamism. The director of World Trade Organization during his trip to Landon warned that if England leaves European Union, its competition efficiency would suffer.

• Decrease of money value: The rate of Euro decreased 3 percent against the US dollar. The rate of England Pound decreased 10 percent and each Pound was exchanged for 1.33 dollars. It was the first time that Pound valued less than US dollars, either 1883.

• Decrease in the prices of petroleum: After the withdrawal of England from European Union was announced, the prices of petroleum decreased more than 6 percent by the following Friday. The prices of unprocessed petroleum of America declined from $52 to $48 and 85 Cents. The Prices of Bahrain petroleum, with a $3 and 9 Cents decrease, reached $47 and 82 Cents.

• Fall of the Union: The withdrawal of Britain from European Union can deteriorate the situation for the other members of this Union. There is a probability for the rest of the member nations to ask for renegotiations with the European Union about their membership conditions.

• Decrease in security and power: England and France are the only countries that have the longtime membership of the Security Alumni, and it gave more power to the Union in its international role to impact international peace and security. Because of the above reasons, England’s withdrawal from the European Union may have destructive impacts on foreign policy and security of the European Union. European Union may encounter the main problems of Terrorists, Euro, conflicts with Russia, crisis of Ukraine, Identity, Unemployment, and Refugees that can damage the convergence of the European Union, and finally it may become a great threat to the security and stability of Europe. Therefore, 2016 is going to be full of problems for the European Union. Transiting from this crisis only depends on the Futuristic and realistic view of European politics.

In this situation two scenarios can be predicted about England:

The First Scenario: The internal total products of Britain will decrease. It is 1.7 percent this year and it will be 1.4 percent in 2017 if it continues to be as it is. The increase of internal total product of England this year is 1.9 percent, and 2.2 percent is predicted for the next year. According to this scenario, the rate of unemployment for 2016 is predicted to be about 5 percent. According to the first scenario 5.3 percent in 2017, and according to the second scenario, it will increase up to 6.5 percent.

Second Scenario: The Britain’s Economic growth rate will be 8 percent in 2017, and will gradually increase and reach 8.8 percent in 2018. Also, according to the second scenario, the unemployment rate will be 4 percent by 2016.

According to the specialists of International Monetary Fund, in long run, withdrawal of Britain from European Union, will adversely affect productions and incomes in the country, because new obstacles will adversely affect businesses, enterprises and the production capacity of this country.

Amnesty International concerns internal displacements increase

Based on recently published report of Amnesty International, the number of internal displaced people in Afghanistan have reached to 1.2 million.

This organization has published its report with the title: “My Children Are Going to Die This Winter”. The reason why people are escaping from their homeland has been stated war and increasing violence.

In this report, the situation of displaced people have been stated as bad as they even do not have access to drinking water, food, education or health clinics.

Champa Patel, the CEO of Amnesty International for NA of Asia, said, “Though it seems like the international community has lost interest in Afghanistan’s affairs, we are endangering the people who are suffering violence and will forget them.” He also added: “Though they have left their homes for a safer place, their current situation is horrible and they struggle for survival.”

The recent report of Amnesty International has been prepared in one past year. In this report, the government of Afghanistan has been blamed for not implementing its duty and to prepare a better life facilities for internal displaced people.

Brexit Economic consequences

Translated by: Esmee Poya  
Source: Hashil-e-Subh

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  6. Decrease in security and power: England and France are the only countries that have the longtime membership of the Security Alumni, and it gave more power to the Union in its international role to impact international peace and security. Because of the above reasons, England’s withdrawal from the European Union may have destructive impacts on foreign policy and security of the European Union. European Union may encounter the main problems of Terrorists, Euro, conflicts with Russia, crisis of Ukraine, Identity, Unemployment, and Refugees that can damage the convergence of the European Union, and finally it may become a great threat to the security and stability of Europe. Therefore, 2016 is going to be full of problems for the European Union. Transiting from this crisis only depends on the Futuristic and realistic view of European politics.

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The First Scenario: The internal total products of Britain will decrease. It is 1.7 percent this year and it will be 1.4 percent in 2017 if it continues to be as it is. The increase of internal total product of England this year is 1.9 percent, and 2.2 percent is predicted for the next year. According to this scenario, the rate of unemployment for 2016 is predicted to be about 5 percent. According to the first scenario 5.3 percent in 2017, and according to the second scenario, it will increase up to 6.5 percent.

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According to the specialists of International Monetary Fund, in long run, withdrawal of Britain from European Union, will adversely affect productions and incomes in the country, because new obstacles will adversely affect businesses, enterprises and the production capacity of this country.
During the three times that he regretfuclly could not make it to the most important Championship Cups, but the flashes the journalists’ cameras that were continuously winking to record his endless grief and to tell that he is the person who has lost, and simply count him responsible for all the faults; whereas they were not mentioning that Hegsoan missed a goal, and Lucas Ellya lost a penalty as well.

After the third failure the tears coming down from his eyes irrigating his face to show that a Martian can also love his ing down from his eyes irrigating his face.

Everyone wants to make him a consolation, all right Leo; all the heroes had such days. Do you remember Franco? It is said that humans become dear after their death, and the heroes die two times. But right now even the most formidable enemies of Martian wizard weep for him. They cannot believe his absence, and he was the person who was the reason of all these motivations and efforts.

"Claudio Bravo” captain of the winning team was the first person who reacted. He said, “I went to him and gave him consolation of 30 seconds, I’m sorry that he could not hear even one word from me.”

The people are all just shocked what to do on what to say. Even his major critic is shocked, asking him not to leave the team by God, and do not leave them. “We are nothing without you”.

No one is so famous and talked about these days. Google and the news sites just exploded as so many people searched his name, and for the pictures of pearls falling down from his face.

Everyone wants to love him. Everyone wants to make him a consolation, all right Leo; all the heroes had such days. Do you remember Franco? It is said that humans become dear after their death, and the heroes die two times. But right now even the most formidable enemies of Martian wizard weep for him. They cannot believe his absence, and he was the person who was the reason of all these motivations and efforts.

Don’t lose, but if you do, lose in a way that there will not remain anything for the rival team to be happy for.

“Obama Demand UK to Maintain their Role in Europe Security”

Barack Obama, who travelled to Poland to attend the UK summit in Warsaw, had an exclusive interview with Financial Times, London’s daily newspaper. He wrote that he expects the United Kingdom to maintain their role in Europe security despite voting for Brexit.

On Friday and Saturday, 8 and 9 July 2016, NATO leaders and allied countries met in Warsaw in order to intensify the power and security of this coalition and even strengthen the stability of countries outside the borders of NATO.

NATO leaders are to formally agree to deploy four thousand forces in Baltic States; including Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Eastern Poland.

BBC Persian reporter in Warsaw reports that security experts described the security measures “very high.” According to him, a large part of downtown is closed to public traffic and many other parts where foreign delegations are located are being highly controlled by the Police. This week’s NATO summit in Warsaw will be the most important summit since the end of the Cold War. “The cold war is only in history now, and we should not return to that era,” Jamal Mosawi.

The cold war is only in history now . . .

Following the annexation of Crimean Peninsula to Russia in Ukraine and Russia’s support for rebels in Eastern Ukraine, the Baltic States are worried about repetition of such events and one of NATO’s goals is to assure these countries of their security. But United Kingdom’s vote to Brexit has created a concern that Western defensive solidarity may be weakened.

“Right now, the meeting’s atmosphere is affected by UK’s Brexit and the US’s Louisiana accidents,” said Jamal Mosawi. Barack Obama confirms that the US has a special relationship with Britain and says Britain will remain an active and effective member of NATO. David Cameron is also expected to deploy 600 forces in Baltic States.

In addition, NATO leaders want to assure members, especially Eastern European countries want that in case Russia attacks them, they will face UK, USA, Germany and Canada’s opposition.

“The main contents of this meeting are strengthening NATO in eastern borders of this coalition, Middle East development in opposing ISIS, and maintaining assistance to Afghanistan,” Jamal Mosawi added.

“United Nations report: Iran’s missile program not compatible with the nuclear agreement soul”

The Reuters News Agency has reported that Iran Ki-Moon has asked Iran not to have a movement regarding the ballistic missiles that are able carry nuclear warheads, but no punishment is considered if Iran refuses this agreement.

According to Reuters report, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon has asked Iran to withdraw any kind of ballistic missile experiments, because this act will cause a major concern in the region.

Iran and World powers agreed with Iran’s withdrawal from a big portion of its nuclear activities; in return, the international boycott against this country will be removed.

The nuclear agreement’s implementation started at the end of December last year, six months after its agreement declaration and Iran’s adherence endorsement to this agreement. Meanwhile, the Iran’s missile experiments are followed by criticism of west for opposing the agreement.

Iran says that its missile’s program is not part of the nuclear agreement and emphasized several times that they will not withhold from their defense programs under any circumstances.
About English and Its Realm of Awkward Complexity

If Zis Mad You Smil, Pleas Pas On to Oza Pepl
Reprinted from the Brussels Journal http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/1606

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby Eng-
lish will be the official language of the Eu-
ropean Union rather than German, which
was the other possibility.

As part of the negotiations, the British
Government conceded that English spell-
ing had some room for improvement and
has accepted a 5-year phase-in plan that
would become known as “Euro-English.”

In the first year, “s” will replace the
soft “c.” Sertainly, this will make the sivil
servants jump with joy.

The hard “c” will be dropped in fa-
vour of “k.” This should klear up konfu-
sion, and keyboards kan have one less
letter.

There will be growing publik enthusi-
asm in the sekond year when the trouble-
some “ph” will be replaced with “f.” This
will make words like fotograf 20% shorter.

The Story of UP
Author unknown

If you are UP to it, you might try
building UP a list of the many ways UP is
used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but
if you don’t give UP, you may wind UP
with a hundred or more.

When it threatens to rain, we say it is clou-
ding UP. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP. When it rains, it wets
the earth. When it doesn’t rain for a
while, things dry UP.

One could go on and on, but I’ll wrap it
UP, for now my time is UP, so.... Time
to shut UP......!
Stories

My Grandmother Told Me

T here we were, banished, in a small village that was divided into three parts by religion and party loyalty. Our family and the three other banished families from the village formed our own little group, our own little village. The commander's faithful used the main mosque for the commemoration. We, the unfaithful, formed our own at one of the houses. The families in Choona didn't sway either way and formed their own group.

Moharram is a month for charity and nazr. Back in those days the families in the village took turns to make vows, prepare feasts, and organize the rituals for mourning and story-telling. In Moharram that one year we anticipated the families to prepare with the same arrangements as before.

Those of us in the Thayna-Aaghil usually got together for it all. Your father said he was going away to speak to your maternal grandfather, his father-in-law, about the arrangements for the month. He went away for long, and returned appearing quite upset.

I knew something was not right. I let him be at first, and then went to him to ask if the arrangements had been agreed upon. He tried to get away:

The arrangement was the same as before. Nothing had changed.

Her mother picked her up. She cried.

I scolded her, and told her to do exactly as she was told by her family.

That night they went to feast. The village went there. We stayed home, had our meal at home, and we didn't speak much.

The families in Choona didn't sway either way but formed their own group. There we were, banished, in a small village, divided into three groups by religion and party loyalty.


*Nazr = Religious vows
*Thayna = Lower
*Aaghil = Village

Allowables

From the book Chasing Utopia: A Hybrid

I killed a spider
Not a murderous brown recluse
Nor even a black widow
And if the truth were told this
Was only a small
Sort of papery spider
Who should have run
When I picked up the book
But she didn’t
And she scared me
And I smashed her

I don’t think
I’m allowed

To kill something
Because I am

Frightened

Nikki Giovanni Biography

Civil Rights Activist, Poet, Television Personality (1943–)

Nikki Giovanni was born on June 7, 1943. She published her first book of poems, Black Feeling, Black Talk in 1968. Giovanni is a prominent poet and writer who first caught the public’s attention as part of the Black Arts movement of the late 1960s. In 1967, she returned to Cincinnati and established the city’s first Black Arts Festival. She was the first recipient of the Rosa Parks Woman of Courage Award. Her unique and insightful poetry testifies to her own evolving awareness and experiences: from child to young woman, from naive college freshman to seasoned civil rights activist, from daughter to mother. She has been awarded an unprecedented 7 NAACP Image Awards; she has been nominated for a Grammy; has been a finalist for the National Book Award. She has authored three New York Times and Los Angeles Times Best Sellers, highly unusual for a poet, and is a University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech.
Meet Fereshteh Forough, Founder of Code To Inspire

An interview with Fereshteh Forough, republished from:

How many times have you heard or read the phrase ‘women in tech’ over the past year or so? It’s become a buzz worthy phrase, and for good reason– it’s 2016 and the tech industry is still wildly male-dominated. But for all the coverage the issue gets, the conversation is generally West-centric. Meanwhile, women and girls in Afghanistan who want to break into the industry are facing some unimaginable hurdles. That’s why Fereshteh Forough founded Code to Inspire, an organization that’s teaching females in Afghanistan coding skills, enabling them to pursue their dreams and careers in the tech industry. In a culture where women’s education is still controversial, Fereshteh’s work is subservient, fearless, and undeniably important. This week, we talked to Fereshteh to find out more about what compels her to do what she does.

Introduce yourself! Tell us who you are and what you do. My name is Fereshteh Forough. I am from Herat, Afghanistan. I was born in Iran as an Afghan refugee. I moved to Afghanistan with my family one year after the fall of Taliban. I got my Bachelor’s degree in Computer Science from Herat University and later my Master’s from Technical University of Berlin in Germany. Currently, I am based in New York City and I founded Code to Inspire in January 2015.

Why did you decide to found Code to Inspire? And how does feminism play a part in what you do? During my life journey in education, there were many ups and downs which led me to think about how to improve the status quo of education for women in Afghanistan and specifically in technology. Most of the time when a female student graduated from Computer Science, she couldn’t find the job related to what she studied. Unfortunately there are many factors as to why. Familial and societal limitations towards women’s employment are one aspect. Many families prefer their daughter become a teacher because it is a well respected job in the society. There are many factors as to why. But don’t be afraid of challenges– they make you stronger and give you perspective in life.

As a female graduate in computer science, if you get a job offer outside of your hometown, many families won’t let you leave the city. Safety and security is one reason. Young women can’t travel by ground even if they have a male companion. Sometimes as an outsider, it can be scary to think about programming and coding as potential careers, but when you start learning about it, it really becomes enjoyable and fun. You will understand how it can be so empowering and helpful. You can create and design what you like, and you can change many people’s lives with your work.

Unfortunately, there are many societal, cultural and family issues that are holding women back to join tech world. But don’t be afraid of challenges– they make you stronger and give you perspective in life.

What advice would you have for girls who want to go into programming, but are intimidated by the fact that it’s still so male-dominated, or any other cultural constraints? Just give it a try first. Sometimes as an outsider, it can be scary to think about programming and coding as potential careers, but when you start learning about it, it really becomes enjoyable and fun. You will understand how it can be so empowering and helpful. You can create and design what you like, and you can change many people’s lives with your work.

What have been the most challenging and best parts of your work? There are many challenges that I have faced, starting from the first day I thought about how to make this happen to opening the first coding school that female students in Afghanistan can join without worrying about security and cultural issues. Preparing the right papers and documents here in NYC to operate as a legal 501 (c) (3) non-profit, and to raise the needed funds for our coding school are also big challenges. The best part of my work is that everyday, I learn something new and meet inspiring people who share their knowledge with me. It feels great to know that there are 50 female students who are learning how to code daily to change their lives and Afghanistan’s future.

Any upcoming Code to Inspire initiatives we should know about? Or ways we can get involved and support your amazing organization? We recently organized the first Codefest of women in Afghanistan starting from March 1st through March 8th. Students were being challenged to use what they have learned so far (from education through Code to Inspire) to design websites (using HTML and CSS) and develop a simple game (using Unity technology). There will be a group of judges in Afghanistan and NYC who will select the best projects and the students will be awarded. We are also looking for partners who can help us with designing our curriculum, providing educational and technical consultations to our mentors in Afghanistan, or helping us to raise more awareness and achieve our financial goal to keep our coding school running.

Meet Fereshteh Forough, Founder of Code To Inspire

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