Tea & Chat Report

Mothers & Daughters: The Bond That Shapes Us – Part 2



Date: 14 October 2026

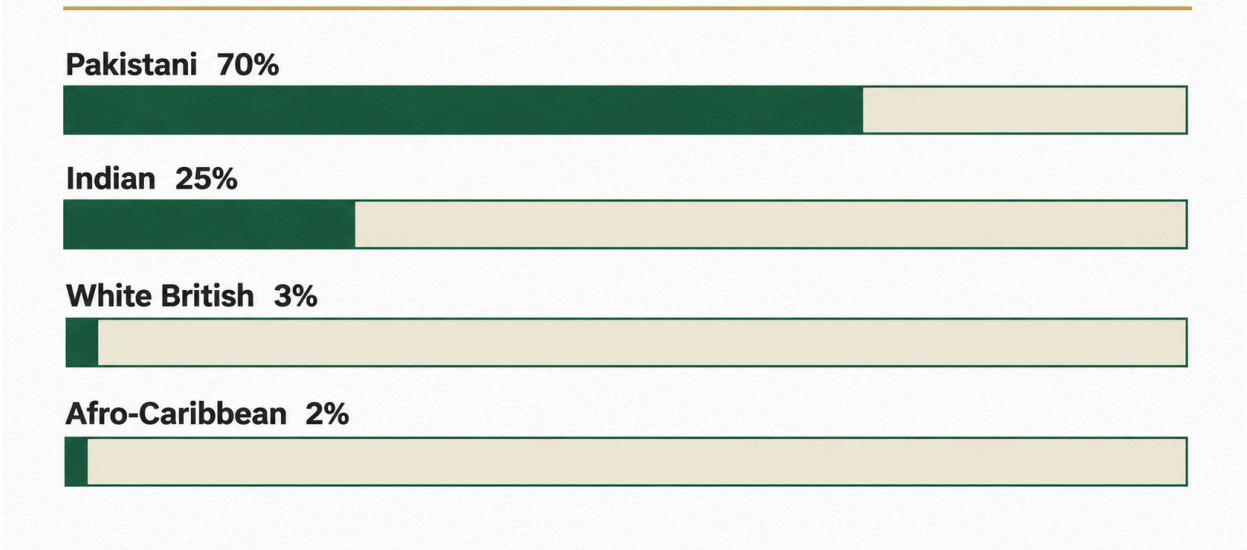
Time: 12:00pm – 2:30pm

Location: Kunafa Tea

Facilitator: Urfana Ayub

Attendance: 80 women

Ethnicity of Attendees



About the Session

The October Tea & Chat session explored the complex and powerful relationship between mothers and daughters. Led by Urfana Ayub, the session encouraged women to reflect on their own relationships, understand the experiences and needs of one another, and consider how family relationships can shape emotional wellbeing, confidence, behaviour and future relationships.

The session built on the theme of “Mothers & Daughters: The Bond That Shapes Us”, looking at both the beauty and challenges of this unique relationship. Attendees were encouraged to consider what they could take away from the session and, where needed, make a personal decision or commitment to improve their relationship with their mother or daughter.

Urfana highlighted that while the mother-daughter relationship can be incredibly close and loving, it can also involve hurt, disagreements, expectations, misunderstandings and emotional distance. She emphasised that not everyone is fortunate enough to have a positive relationship with their mother or daughter, and that relationships can be complicated by different life experiences, expectations and generational differences.

About Urfana Ayub

Urfana Ayub is a qualified Social Worker, BACP Registered Counsellor and Clinical Supervisor. She has more than 25 years of experience working across a range of professional settings and is also an author, speaker, teacher, trainer and qualified Law/Health Interpreter and Translator.

Originally from Karachi, Pakistan, Urfana is a mother of four children. Following the devastating loss of her eldest son, Adam, at the age of 18, she began writing as part of her own journey through grief and loss.

She is the author of After You Were Gone, My Letters to You and Sentiments, all of which are also available in Urdu. The proceeds from her books are donated to charitable causes as Sadaqah Jariyah for her son Adam. Her books are also made available to charities and organisations to support fundraising, while free copies are offered to those experiencing bereavement who may not be able to afford them.

Urfana has a particular interest in mental health and wellbeing, grief, loss and bereavement, early attachment, relationships, self-awareness, self-care, purpose and our connection with Allah.



Key Themes Discussed

1. The complexity of the mother-daughter relationship

Urfana encouraged attendees to recognise that every mother-daughter relationship is different. For some, the relationship may be loving and close, while for others there may be conflict, distance, hurt or unresolved experiences.

She highlighted the importance of acknowledging that love and disagreement can exist at the same time. We can love someone deeply without always agreeing with them.

The session encouraged women to ask themselves: What is the first word or feeling that comes to mind when you think about your mother? Attendees were asked to reflect privately on their answers, whether that feeling was love, support, respect, understanding, closeness, hurt or something else.

2. Attachment and the need for closeness

The session introduced the concept of attachment, highlighting that humans are born with a need to seek closeness and connection.

Urfana explained that early relationships, particularly our relationship with our mother and primary caregivers, can influence how we understand relationships and ourselves later in life.

Difficulties between mothers and daughters can sometimes develop when the expectations each person has of the other do not match. For example, a mother may have a particular idea of how her daughter should behave, while the daughter may have very different expectations of what she needs from her mother. When these expectations are not communicated or understood, feelings of disappointment and hurt can develop.

3. Understanding each other's needs

A key message from the session was that both mothers and daughters have needs. Neither person's needs are automatically more important than the other's.

Urfana stressed that understanding these needs is essential to building healthier relationships. We do not have to agree with one another on everything, but we should aim to understand and respect each other's feelings, individuality and choices.

A major barrier to understanding is a lack of communication. We often want others to understand us without actually explaining what we are feeling or what we need. As Urfana highlighted, we cannot expect someone to know what is happening inside our minds if we never open up.

4. Generational differences

The session explored how mothers and daughters can sometimes feel as though they are living in completely different worlds. Society has changed significantly between generations, particularly around technology, education, relationships, social expectations and mental health.

Urfana encouraged mothers to make an effort to understand the world their daughters are growing up in and the challenges they face. She emphasised the importance of being approachable, so that daughters feel able to talk to their mothers rather than seeking support elsewhere.

She expressed sadness that some young women feel more comfortable speaking to a counsellor or another adult than they do speaking to their own mothers. The message was not about blaming mothers, but about encouraging greater understanding and connection.

5. The role of mothers as role models

Urfana discussed the powerful influence mothers have on their children. Children often learn by watching the adults around them: how mothers manage emotions, communicate, respond to conflict, cope with difficulties and treat other people.

These behaviours can influence a child's self-esteem, emotional regulation, communication style, relationship patterns, values and beliefs, confidence, and understanding of family life.

Urfana highlighted how people sometimes say, “I've become my mum.” This reflects how powerful generational patterns can be. The challenge is to recognise what we have inherited and consciously decide which positive qualities we want to pass on to the next generation.

6. Breaking negative generational patterns

The session encouraged women to think about what has been passed down through their families. Not every mother has had a positive role model herself; a mother may have raised her children based on the knowledge, experiences and circumstances available to her at the time.

This does not mean that mistakes should be ignored, but it encourages us to look at them with greater understanding. Urfana encouraged both mothers and daughters to move away from the “blame game” and instead take responsibility for their own part in improving relationships.

Acknowledging mistakes, apologising and making changes can be powerful steps towards healing.

7. Expectations and control

Unrealistic expectations can cause significant damage to relationships. Urfana encouraged attendees to consider whether they expect their mothers or daughters to behave in a particular way because of an image they have created in their own minds.

Every person is an individual with their own personality, interests, opinions and wishes. We cannot control another person's thoughts, feelings or choices. A healthy relationship allows people to remain individuals while still maintaining love, respect and connection.

8. The impact of damaged relationships

The session highlighted the potential emotional and physical impact that unresolved relationship difficulties can have, including difficulty sleeping, low mood, loss of motivation, emotional distress, physical symptoms, feelings of isolation and anxiety within family relationships.

Urfana emphasised the importance of recognising the root causes of difficulties rather than simply focusing on the symptoms.

9. The emotional inheritance we leave behind

One of the powerful concepts discussed was “inheritance of emotions.” When we think about inheritance, we often think about money, property, jewellery or possessions. However, our greatest inheritance can also be the values, emotional patterns, beliefs, love and lessons we leave behind.

Urfana encouraged mothers to consider: What am I passing on to my children? And daughters to consider: What have I received from my mother, and what do I want to carry forward?

The session highlighted the responsibility each generation has to pass on positive values while consciously breaking harmful patterns.

10. Forgiveness

Forgiveness was another important theme. Urfana acknowledged that forgiveness can be extremely difficult, particularly when someone has experienced deep hurt. However, holding onto anger and resentment can continue to affect us emotionally.

Forgiveness does not necessarily mean forgetting what happened or accepting harmful behaviour. It can mean finding a way to make peace within ourselves and choosing not to allow past hurt to control our future.

Reflection and Takeaway

The session encouraged every attendee to leave with something meaningful. Rather than simply listening to information, women were encouraged to ask themselves:

- What have I learnt today?
- Is there something I need to change?
- Is there someone I need to speak to?
- Is there an apology I need to make?
- Is there something I need to forgive?
- Can I become more approachable?
- Can I listen more?
- Can I reduce unrealistic expectations?
- What positive qualities do I want to pass to the next generation?

The overall message was that relationships can change. Even when a relationship has become difficult or distant, there can still be an opportunity to listen, understand, communicate, forgive and rebuild.





Islamic Understanding

The Importance of Mothers, Daughters and Family Relationships in Islam

Islam places enormous importance on maintaining family relationships, showing kindness to parents and treating one another with mercy and compassion. Allah reminds us in the Qur'an of the importance of honouring our parents:

"And We have commanded people to be good to their parents." — Qur'an 46:15

The relationship between a mother and daughter can therefore be understood as both a blessing and a responsibility.

Birr – Kindness and Dutifulness

Birr (بِرّ) refers to righteousness, goodness and kindness. In the context of parents, it includes treating them with respect, speaking kindly to them and showing appreciation for their sacrifices. Even when relationships are difficult, Islam encourages us to maintain good character and avoid causing unnecessary hurt. However, showing kindness does not mean that someone must accept harmful behaviour. Islam also recognises the importance of justice, dignity and healthy boundaries.

Rahmah – Mercy and Compassion

Rahmah (رحمة) means mercy, compassion and tenderness. Families need rahmah because people make mistakes. Mothers make mistakes, daughters make mistakes and misunderstandings can happen. Approaching one another with mercy can help replace blame with understanding.

Sabr – Patience

Sabr (صبر) means patience, perseverance and remaining steadfast through difficulty. Family relationships can test our patience. Sabr does not mean ignoring problems; rather, it can mean responding thoughtfully instead of reacting with anger and continuing to work towards what is right.

Afw – Forgiveness

Afw (عفو) refers to pardoning or letting go of resentment. Forgiveness can be difficult, particularly when there has been significant hurt. However, Islam repeatedly encourages forgiveness and reminds believers of the reward associated with it. Forgiveness can be a means of freeing the heart from bitterness while placing the matter in Allah's hands.

Shukr – Gratitude

Shukr (شكر) means gratitude. The session encouraged mothers and daughters to recognise what they appreciate about one another rather than focusing only on what is wrong. Taking a moment to acknowledge someone's efforts, sacrifices or positive qualities can strengthen relationships.

Sadaqah Jariyah – Continuing Charity

Urfana also spoke about her books and the fact that proceeds are used for charitable causes as Sadaqah Jariyah (صدقة جارية) for her late son. Sadaqah Jariyah refers to an ongoing charitable deed whose benefit

continues after it has been given. This provided a beautiful reminder that we can continue to benefit others and leave positive legacies even after we are no longer present.

Final Reflection

The session left attendees with a powerful reminder that our relationships are part of our legacy. As mothers and daughters, we have an opportunity to shape not only our own relationships but also the emotional and spiritual inheritance we pass to future generations.

We may not be able to change the past, but we can choose what we do with the present.

Listen. Understand. Communicate. Forgive. Respect. Love.

Most importantly, we should strive to approach our families with rahmah, sabr and kindness, remembering that every relationship can be an opportunity to grow closer to Allah and to one another.

May Allah place sakinah (سَكِينَة) in our hearts and homes, strengthen the bonds between mothers and daughters, heal relationships where there is hurt, grant forgiveness where it is needed, and allow us to leave behind a legacy of love, faith, compassion and goodness. Ameen.

Report created by the Tea & Chat participants
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