

# Br. Farook Mohammed

Interviewed by: Abdulaziz Mian.

***Q. Even though I have known you for over seventeen years, can you tell our readers a bit about your background?***

***Br. Farook:*** I was born in a family of nine kids. I have four brothers and four sisters. I am the only Muslim in my family. My mom said that I was born on Jan 19, 1967 but my birth certificate shows Feb 12, 1967. That still makes me 40 year old. I have a wonderful wife named Rabia Aziz. We have a son named Tariq and a daughter named Sarah. Tariq is eight years old and Sarah is seven years old. I also have a daughter from my previous marriage. Her name is Sumayyah Mohammed and she just graduated from grade 12.

I am from Trinidad and Tobago. I moved to Winnipeg on November 29, 1989. I completed my Grade 12 through Winnipeg Adult Education. I worked for Burnabee Farms for few years. Currently, I am working for Cola-Cola in their warehouse operation as a forklift operator.

***Q. What brought you to Winnipeg?***

***Br. Farook:*** Cold breeze and mosquitoes. I am just kidding. I had no plans to come to Winnipeg. My first wife is a Canadian Muslim. We got married in Trinidad and Tobago and I moved here with her.

***Q. How were you treated by Muslims in Winnipeg?***

***Br. Farook:*** I got to know many people such as Dr. Riaz Usmani, Khaled Iqbal late Br. Mirghani, Jawad Shah, Waheed Mustapha, Sr. Yasmin Ali and Br. Ashmede Asgarali. By the way, this is just a partial list. These people were very helpful and encouraged me to stay involved in the community.

***Q. Wow, you picked good mentors. I have known you for seventeen years, how come I am not in that list?***

***Br. Farook:*** Theake ha bhair theake ha (ok brother ok) I will add you to the list. After all, you are my cricket team captain. I do not want to get into trouble on the cricket field.

***Q. I have been watching you work in the background for years. Do you care to explain how you are involved in the community?***

***Br. Farook:*** I just help with few activities to the best of my ability.

***Q. There is no need to be humble. I know your involvements. I like you to tell our readers.***

***Br. Farook:*** I have been helping at the Weekend Islamic School as a Sports Director and member of the Management Team/Parent committee for fifteen (15) years. The Weekend School has had a Kanga Ball Cricket Team whose membership changes annually based on attendance at the school. I also provide help in various operational activities. No matter what the task, I am available to help.

I try to help at every MIA event where my help is needed. Sometimes working as a security, parking lot attendant, inflating balloons for kids and coordinating other activities. I used to borrow brother Yusuf Abdulrehman's lawnmower to cut the grass at Hazelwood. I also used to help with cleaning the Hazelwood Masjid.

I help Manitoba Cricket Association by coaching and umpiring. I coach soccer at Skylight Sports Complex. I volunteer in the Caribbean Pavilion at Folkorama and recently started to volunteer for the Canadian Muslim Women's Institute (CMWI). I help with hot lunch program at my kid's school.

***Q. There is something unique about you. I see you helping in various events even when you are not asked to help. You want to shed some light that observation?***

**Br. Farook:** I am not rich enough to donate thousands of dollars. So, the next best thing is to give my time wherever it is needed. I do not wait for people to tell me. If I see help is needed, I jump right in. Everyone knows that it is our moral responsibility to help. MIA is always in need of volunteers. Why sit on the sideline and criticize when you can be part of the solution.

**Q. Any advise for those who are sitting on the sideline?**

**Br. Farook:** You got me I am not sure. Perhaps you can clone me. Wait, that would be harmful. We have to make this community strong by donating money and our time. Muslims are under attack on a daily basis. We must not be complacent. Our future depends on it. We have to stop criticizing and be part of the solution.