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A Portrait of Talents

«The talent I have requires only very few tools, so I can draw with just a pen and a piece of paper». Those were the words said by Sana Abboud when she told us about her talent of drawing.

Sana, aged 18, is a young woman from the city of Saraqb. She has had passion for colors and painting since she was a child, and this motivated her to improve her skills through self-practice and copying drawings of other people.

Her family and friends have played an important role in motivating her, and whenever she paints or draws a new picture, they immediately encourage her to move on and improve her talent. This has made Sana work harder, and recently she has joined Blue Team, which is a team that consists of many talented young men and women of those who have passion for painting and drawing. They all depend on this passion to shed light on some issues, using only their colors and brushes.

Sana has taken part in three of the art galleries held by Blue Team, the most recent of which was in Aleppo University and it was entitled: (Covid-19 is not the only suffering of the Syrians). Through her paintings, Sana embodied the idea of quarantine and the role played by doctors in Syria during the pandemic.

Sana shared with us her aspirations for the coming 5 years represented by being a professional artist who can paint using oil colors and other techniques of modern art in addition to her ambition of studying media and journalism at university.



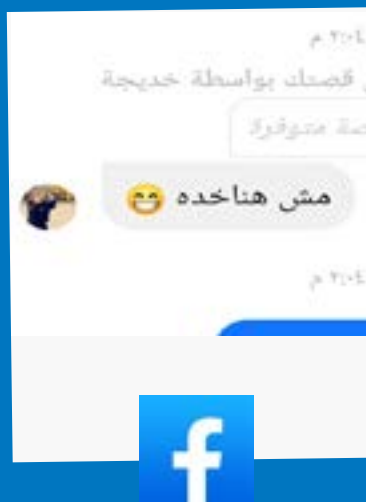
Your Opinions

Covid-19 vaccine with its different types and potential effects has become a matter of concern for all people who are divided according to their opinions into promoters of taking the vaccine and fearful of it. We polled the subject by asking many people a question, (shared with our followers on Facebook,) was as follows: «Have you been vaccinated for Covid-19? If yes, please share with us the symptoms you experienced afterwards. If no, tell us the reasons why.»

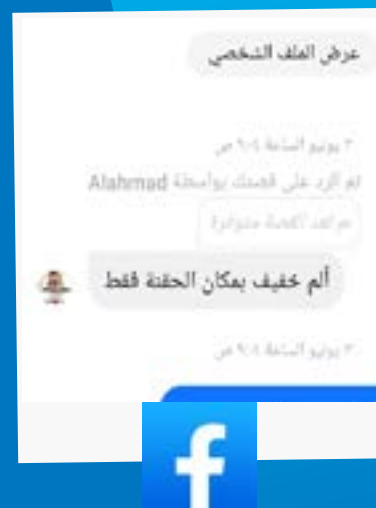
Answers varied between people who don't trust the feasibility of this vaccine and people who took the first dose in addition to other responses like:



I took the vaccination and I was really tired afterwards, but hopefully it will help me stay immunized for the future.



We won't take it.



A little pain in the injected spot only.



// Martial Arts for Women

Judo, karate, and taekwondo are some of the combat skills that have been known for ages. Learning them was only limited to males, but over time and with the change in the roles played by both sexes, acquiring this skill by females have become acceptable.

Women have become more aware of the importance of having physical and psychological power which can help them confront all the challenges that stand against them in practical life. Recently, acquiring self-defense skills and practicing martial arts have become a necessity because they have proved being effective in cases of reacting to sudden attacks or assaults, which is not an incitement of violence but a mean of survival. With the increase of violence against women

and treating them as fragile and weak creatures who can't demand their rights or defend themselves, it has become a must for women all over the world to acquire physical skills and develop martial arts that can protect them from potential assaults and practices of violence whether inside their homes, in their workplaces, or in the street.

Since we live in a country which doesn't prioritize the protection of this other half of the society, it becomes an individual duty of all of us to raise and work on implementing projects which contribute to women's physical empowerment and help them develop self-defense skills.

The cycle of improbable practices of violence is embodied in a number of people and situations, not necessarily within the family, and this makes it important for women to work and become aware and able to protect themselves.

A new center for teaching women's self-defense has been opened in north Syria, and this achievement is the first of its kind in the region. I believe that the society in general and women in particular are now well aware of the importance of empowering women physically, and this will help in making women more accurate in the determination of potential dangers wherever they are.

I also believe that the establishment of women's self-defense centers is a positive thing that can help women be more courageous to express and defend themselves regardless of the place and

time, and it will change the stereotype of women being weak creatures who need to be protected at all times.

The wide spread of technology has made it easy for all of us to acquire different skills especially those related to protection, and this means we have countless written and visual online contents from which we can learn these skills in case there's no self-defense center in the area where we live.

According to an article published by Raseef 22 under the title: "A primary kit of self-defense for cases of assault", there are many simple and easy moves that women can do when they are assaulted or attacked and these moves don't require having great martial skills. These moves are enough to distract the assailant giving females the time to escape, and the following is some of them:

First: don't try to solve the problem alone. You need help, and all the steps and moves you can do are to help you escape, not fight back. Don't attack, just defend yourself.

Second: Before the assailant can drag you anywhere, start to fight. Fight in open areas, and try not to let him (the assailant) drag you towards a wall, tree or corner because closed places will make him in control of your movements.

Third: you need to learn that weakness parts of the body are the face, eyes, nose, and knees. Be decisive enough to choose one of them and then strike as hard as you can. If the assailant is facing you, strike the down part of his nose with the palm of your hand. If he is attacking you from behind, kick his knees or use your elbow to strike a weakness point in his face.

Fourth: Tied hair will help the assailant drag you more easily so untie you hair as fast as you can.

Fifth: if the assailant is holding you tight on the floor, use your hips to push him away and be on top. Strike as hard as you can and run away quickly.

In theory, all of the above mentioned steps seem to be difficult due to the state of fear that results from being assaulted or attacked, so whenever you have the opportunity to take classes in physical self-defense, go for it because this might be the only way of survival in some cases.

By:Zenat



Wasl Network Document on Participation and Freedom



Wasl Network recently launched “the Document of Participation and Freedom” which was one of the most important outcomes of the project entitled: “10 % Youth at Decision Making Positions”.

Wasl Network is a group of local civil society organizations which are: (Afaq Academy for Education and Training, Hooz Center for Social Development, Women Support Unit, Souryana Al-amal Team, Jarablus Culture Forum, and Steps of Hope Team) and which all operate in rural northern and eastern Aleppo.

Wasl Network has implemented 30 sessions in rural northern and eastern Aleppo and targeted 535 people (including 330 females) who came from different components of the community (locals, IDPs, syndicates, and university students). Based on outcomes of the former sessions, Document of Participation and Freedom was issued. The document was first drafted by a group of specialists and then published on web pages of Wasl Network. Earlier, visits were made by the Network to 20 local government institutions (local councils, police leaders, unions, and syndicates) with the aim of introducing the document and discussing it with them so that it could be launched officially on web pages of the Network to mobilize as many people as possible to sign the Document and shed light on the issues related to freedom of expression and participation.

The Network seeks to promote and activate the youth's participation by 10 % in the deci-

sion-making process in the local government and civil institutions through building capacities of workers in the local institutions and developing policies to ensure empowering and activating the participation of the fragile and marginalized components of the local community.

The Document of Participation and Freedom includes many terms that call for ensuring freedom of opinion and expression in the society, in addition to relevant public principles the most important of which are:

1. Work by local government institutions and civil society organizations to create a suitable environment for freedom of opinion and expression.
2. International and national laws shall be adopted to guarantee freedom of opinion and expression.
3. Ensure that freedom of opinion and expression is regulated through the adoption of laws guaranteeing the exercise of this right.

The Document also made clear the importance of community and political participation and identified direct forms of community participation (questionnaire, studies, referendum) and indirect ones (by persons concerned and by being designated by certain bodies).

Moreover, the Document sheds light on the political participation, its importance and some relevant concepts like (public opinion, political parties, political development), and it's concluded with some terms to ensure community and political participation.

For more information about the document, click on the link below:

https://wasl.tech/freedom-and-participation-charter/?fbclid=IwAR0zUGJgsvoIt-wD9ZHYzzCiiNMmYSbxs_vGYiG_Qj_Zzu3JwZ_W5lhUnrxo



The photos were taken during working on the Social Document of Participation and Freedom



WSU has access to 12 cities in rural northern and eastern Aleppo

Empowerment, training, participation, networking.

A local, non-profit civil society organization for women's affairs, launched in 2018 through a conference attended by more than 150 women in rural northern and eastern Aleppo from Afrin to reaching to Jarablus.

Empower and support women to participate effectively in public life.

A healthy society with empowered women who contribute to building society and meeting challenges in partnership with men.

The Unit targets women who have difficulty playing their role optimally in society. It also seeks to empower women politically, economically, culturally and socially in the northern and eastern countryside of Aleppo.



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The geographical zone of the WSU's work: northern and eastern countryside of Aleppo