

# Dr. Moojan Momen



**I**magine being five years old and traveling thousands of miles across the globe by bus, boat, and train. Then, what if you started school in a new country and had to learn a new language? This adventure is one of Dr. Moojan Momen's earliest memories.

Moojan was born in Iran, and his father passed away when he was three. His mother moved the family to England for better education. Moojan says she set a "heroic" example with her courage.

With determination, Moojan studied medicine and Arabic and Islamic culture at Cambridge University. He became a family doctor *and* a well-respected scholar of the Bahá'í Faith. He's written or edited more than 20 books. He's also a trustee of the Afnan Library in England, one of the world's richest collections of Bahá'í books, photos, and other treasures.

Now retired from his 40-year medical career, Moojan continues to study, write, and teach about Bahá'í history and beliefs. He lives in England with his wife, Wendi.

**Q: What's your favorite childhood memory?**

**A:** A few weeks before my 12th birthday, I went with my mother and brother on pilgrimage [in Israel] . . . We slept for two nights in the mansion of Bahjí . . . [near] the room of Bahá'u'lláh . . . One memory that comes across very strongly . . . was the warmth and kindness of our two guides.

**Q: What was the most challenging experience for you as a kid?**

**A:** Getting to England and . . . not knowing anything about the culture or the language, and sort of being thrust in at the deep end . . . [But] the teachers . . . were all very kind and helped us . . . learn the language very quickly . . .



**Left:** Moojan (right, about age 5) and his brother, Hooman, found it exciting to move to England.

**Right:** As a youth, Moojan (second from right) did service in the Gambia and other African countries.

**Q: What is the Afnan Library?**

**A:** [As] a medical student . . . I [met] Hand of the Cause Mr. [Hasan] Balyuzi\* . . . When he unfortunately passed away in 1980 . . . he wished . . . his books to form the nucleus of a research library . . . It's an evolving collection based upon the Bahá'í Faith [and related] subjects . . .

**Q: What are some of the coolest items in the Afnan Library?**

**A:** We've got things from the family of the Báb going back a long time. We have some original tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and letters of Shoghi Effendi . . . We have all sorts of interesting items [and] . . . photographs.

Questions and  
Answers with an  
Inspirational Bahá'í



**Q: Why is it important to learn about different religions?**

**A:** [When] teaching the Bahá'í Faith to other people, it's good to know something about their religion . . . Another reason [is that] . . . we still haven't really explored the Bahá'í Faith from a Buddhist perspective or from a Hindu perspective . . . Exploring the other religions, particularly with help from people of that religion, we can actually . . . understand the Bahá'í Faith better, because we'll be seeing . . . aspects of the Bahá'í Faith that we were blind to . . .

**Q: What's your advice for kids who might be shy about sharing the Bahá'í Faith with others?**

**A:** I was very shy when I was a child . . . I think you have to just create good friendships with people to whom you can start talking about the Bahá'í Faith . . . You gradually gain confidence to talk to them.

**Top:** Moojan and his family attended the opening of the Bahá'í Temple in Chile in 2016 (left to right): granddaughter, Aaliyeh; wife, Wendi; grandson, Dreyfus; daughter, Carmel; son-in-law, Ashley. **Left:** Moojan enters the Afnan Library, which is in a former chapel built in 1854 in Sandy, England. **Right:** With his wife, Wendi, Moojan shows documents to a guest in the Afnan Library in 2019.

**Q: What is something you would like kids to know about the Báb?**

**A:** I've written . . . about the Báb as an artist . . . He wrote about how when you have . . . some materials, like a few lines of calligraphy, it's necessary to bring them to their state of perfection—to write it in as beautiful a handwriting as possible and then to adorn it . . . with decoration . . . This state of perfection is the nearest that that thing comes to God, because it is most perfectly demonstrating one of the attributes of God, which is beauty.

**Q: How do you think kids can help to celebrate the birth of the Báb?**

**A:** Every child has to look to their own ability . . . If they are an artist . . . they can think about what the Báb says about the arts and try and produce something that's really excellent in the way of arts, whether that's drawing or . . . [they could] look at . . . Bábí heroes such as Táhirih or Mullá Husayn or someone and develop a sort of drama about that . . . [they can] dance . . . They can write poetry . . .

**Q: If you had one wish for *Brilliant Star's* readers, what would it be?**

**A:** That they make the effort to really get into the Bahá'í Faith and study . . . and to follow the guidance that comes from the World Centre . . . and to just sort of follow that path . . . and gain greater understanding of what it's all about.