

Lesson 10: Parents and Siblings

Objective: To encourage children to appreciate and be grateful for the love of parents and siblings. The importance of family.

Silent Sitting:

Discussion:

- Parent-child relationship starts at birth and ends only with one's death.
- In the Vedic tradition, parents receive love, devotion, and high esteem.
- *Mathru devo bhava, pitr devo bhava*

May you be one for who mother is a deity, may you be one for who father is a deity.

- A mother carries a child for 10 months in her womb, after birth, she nourishes the child physically and emotionally. Mother is the primary caretaker in most societies.
- A father is described in the arthasastra as follows:
 - One, who provides, protects, gives a girl in marriage, and initiates a boy into the study of Vedas.
- Just as one worships God, one should look upon parents with an attitude of love, worship and respect.
- Ramayana shows great examples of devotion to parents. Rama follows his parents' orders to go to the forest and Sravana Kumar's dedicated service to his blind parents.

Siblings

- Having a sibling, one learns to share and compete, both of which are essential to emotional growth.
- A positive relationship of love and mutual support between siblings is encouraged in the Vedic culture.
- Ramayana shows this love between Rama and Lakshmana and between Bharata and Rama.
- In Mahabharata, the five Pandavas exemplify the love and respect even during adversity.
- Bond between a brother and sister is celebrated in the festival Raksha bandhan.
- A sister ties a silken thread to her brother's wrist as she says the following prayer.

Yena baddah bali raja danavendro mahabalah

tena tvaam anubandhami rakshay ma chal ma chal

I tie this thread with the same bond that King Bali was tied. Do not move.

- The brother in turn pledges to protect his sister and gives her gifts.
- Similar festivals are followed in various parts of India. *On makara sankranti and bhai bhij, bhayya dhuj*
- The relationship between siblings is considered sacred and given important place in Indian culture.

Mothers are Special

Once upon a time, there was a little boy called Rudra. He lived with his parents. Some of his friends helped in their houses only if they were given money for each task they did. In Rudra's house, his parents bought him whatever he wanted, if they felt it was all right for him to have it, and if they could afford it. But they did not give him allowance. Of course, he too had to help his mother around the house like all other children.

One day, Rudra's mother found the beds untidy. She called Rudra to ask him why he had not made the beds. Rudra gave her an angry stare. He told her that he would do it only if she paid him for it. His mother

looked at him for a while. Then, she went back to her work with a smile. Rudra left for school without making the beds.

In the evening, when he returned from school, hungry, he noticed that there was nothing but a note on the dining table.

Dear Rudra,

Here is a list of things I do for you every day.

- I rise much earlier than anyone else, and get the kitchen ready for the day.*
- I make the breakfast the way you and your father like.*
- I hurry about getting things ready for the day for you and your father.*
- My whole day is busy like yours, and I too am tired when I come back from the office.*
- In the evening, while you rest, play, relax with a book or watch TV, I cook dinner.*
- After dinner is over and you go to bed, I clear up and get things ready for the next day.*
- I keep the house clean, wash and iron, do the shopping, keep every meal ready on time, help you with your studies and do anything else you want.*
- On Sundays when all of you are free, I am not.*
- I do not have summer holidays or any holiday for that matter.*

Now, tell me, do you think I should do all this for you every day without payment?

Love,

Mother

Rudra hung his head in shame as he read the note. He went to his room and made the beds. Then he went up to his mother, hugged her and said, "Sorry Mother. I will never speak like that again. Please forgive me!"

Rudra's mother hugged him and said, "! I wrote that note only to make you understand things better. Helping each other and working together in a family is a joy. It is not something for which you ask payment. Ask me for pocket money whenever you want. If I can, I will give it to you. But, never ask for a tip to do work for your family. Do you understand why?" Of course Rudra did. They went down for dinner together.

Activity: Scrapbook page for Parents/Siblings

Name: _____

Lesson 10 Homework

1. How can you show you love and respect your parents?

2. How can you show you love and respect your siblings?
