



COMMUNICATION-AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE

CONTEXT: This material highlights how clear communication between boundaries and expectations is essential for family understanding. Not all situations can be anticipated, so it's important to approach each event with good intent. Letting go fosters open discussion, trust, and transparency in the family.

OBJECTIVES: In this session, parents will get an opportunity to look closer at:

1. Living in the age of “Digital Dilemma” – how can we recognize that exposure to certain tools/ devices/information is beyond our control – and in all cases curiosity trumps control.
2. How do we keep ourselves as a family in an open communication state where conversations are based on trust and learning?
3. Practicing genuine “Letting GO” as a learning experience.

SCENARIO: Maya (Mother), Amar (Father), Jyoti (daughter) & Kian (son)

Family times are very much about reading books and discussing the thematic summary of the books everyone reads – during daily family reading time. This did not come easy for all the family members as it required all members across generations to read books in print form. Use of digital platforms for reading time was not permitted. For the most part, the scheduled reading time was going well – with minimal resistance and general acceptance. Let’s look at what unfolded after a quiet reading time one Saturday.

Amar: So, I have come to know that some of us are exploring digital books and managed to subscribe to Kindle membership. I am disappointed... (Interrupted by Kiann)

Kian: (in a derogatory tone) I knew it. I knew it. Sis – did you break our little pact? I am surprised why it took so long for you to spill the beans. I am sure you made me the sole guilty party. That’s what you did, right Jyoti. Shinning some light on the situation – Ah!

Jyoti: That is not how it happened. Kian – you are not being nice.

Maya: Hmm, let’s calm down. All follow me: Breathe in “So” and breathe out “Hum.” Repeat with me - all

Kian: Mom, this is not working “So” wrong time to bring your meditation technique. Hmm.

Jyoti: Kian, is that...



Amar: (in a firm and loud voice): Kian, this is not acceptable behavior, and you know it. If you have done something wrong, accept it and take ownership. Instead, I see you are very rude to your sister and mother. Are you okay?

Kian: I am done with this reading time. I need to go into my room and do my homework.

Amar: Kian, sit down and stay here. Walking away will only make things worse!

Maya: Kian, please sit down! Let me explain how all this unfortunately unfolded for us as a family. We found something very interesting over the last 4 months. We saw an additional charge, related to Amazon, of 9.99 on our credit card for Kindle Unlimited. We questioned Amazon, I questioned myself, and I questioned your dad. All resulting in more questions and doubts. Now this was interesting as all of us are reading the paper version of the book – and no one mentioned any interest in the digital version of the reading platform. Then we suddenly saw a legit monthly charge on our statement. And Amazon provided proof of activation from my account.

Amar: Exactly, mom and I were having an argument about who activated Kindle Subscription – knowing how I am against the digital book reading platforms. At this point, your sister Jyoti has hesitantly shared how you and her activated Kindle Subscription using Mom’s phone. This solved the mystery – and on the other hand made us very concerned about the actions you have taken – and the silence after that.

Kian: OK, now that you know it. The conversation is over. You know who the troublemaker in the family is. When you have decided the consequences, text me with my punishment. I am going to focus on my homework.

QUESTIONS:

1. How do we set expectations and continue to reinforce them – and where necessary to modify them to meet the current trends, including penetration of digital platforms in our lives?
2. How can we create an environment – that fosters open and transparent communication without fear factor.
3. What small shifts can we make to include all family members (as appropriate) in understanding certain situations that arise – and work out solutions together so that we all are committed to it.
4. How can we model and encourage a balanced approach to listening and understanding with a focus on the well-being of each member as well as the value system that is the core foundation of the family unit.

**SWAMI SAYS ...**

Courage and strength are on the decline, because you have unsacred thoughts and wicked feelings. Your enemies are not outside. Your bad thoughts are your worst enemies, and thoughts based on Truth are your best friends.

- Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 32, Discourse 7, March 1999.

WRAPPING UP ...

- Facilitator to summarize the highlights from discussions as well as individual reflections [Brief takeaway by facilitator.]
- Reflections- request attendees to share anything that was interesting or intriguing or inspiring. Reflective prompt: *Let's go around and quickly hear from everyone in one or two words, your takeaway from today's Parenting session.*
- Commitment- Let us, as parents, commit to recognizing the difference between wants and needs, and to guiding our children with empathy and wisdom—fostering contentment, cooperation, and shared values over material excess.