



COMMUNICATION-BELONGING

Context: This material dwells into how children can feel a sense of belonging within their culture, family, and personal identity, even when their choices look different from tradition.

Objectives: In this session, parents will explore questions like:

1. How to balance cultural traditions with children's need for self-expression.
2. What messages can their reactions send about respect, identity, and values.
3. How to navigate generational differences with empathy and understanding.

Scenario:

Lakshmi (Mother), **Ravi** (Father), **Anika** (daughter), **Arjun** (son), **Grandfather**, **Priya** (Anika's friend)

[All the family is in the living room and getting ready to attend a Diwali party at a friend's house].

Anika enters the living room wearing a trendy outfit.

Lakshmi (*hesitant*): It's stylish Anika... why don't you wear a traditional dress on a Diwali festival?

Arjun (*smiling*): It's definitely not the right choice. Are you sure you're comfortable wearing that to Diwali?

Anika: Yes! I want to feel comfortable. Why do you sound like dad already?

Arjun (*teasing*): Just making sure you're dressing appropriately.

Anika: Even Priya is wearing something similar to this one.

[Ravi enters, overhearing].

Ravi: What's this outfit? This is Diwali, not a fashion parade.

Anika (*defensive*): I didn't mean to be disrespectful and just wearing modern clothes.

Ravi: Anika, You're representing our culture.

Arjun (*calmly, supporting his sister looking at her sad face*): Dad, she's not rejecting our culture. She's trying to express it in her own way.

Ravi: You wore kurta to your Diwali party last year.

Arjun: Yes, because I chose it. Let her choose too.

[Grandfather enters, speaking in a regional language.]



Grandfather: In our days, girls used to wear traditional clothing and jewelry. It was beautiful to see girls dressing up like Goddesses.

Lakshmi: Grandpa says tradition is how we show reverence, it's how we carry ourselves.

Anika (frustrated): But I do respect Diwali! I help with rangoli, I light diyas. Why does my outfit erase all that?

Arjun (to Grandpa): Grandpa, remember when you let me wear jeans to the temple? You said, 'Times change, but values stay.'

Grandfather: True. But values must be visible.

Anika went back to her room with disappointment and texted Priya...

Anika (texting): They're all against me. I feel like I'm disappointing everyone.

Priya (texting): Same here. My mom said the same. What the heck? Just wear what makes you feel good.

[Arjun knocks on the door and enters the room].

Arjun: Hey. Want to talk?

Anika: What's the point? Dad thinks I'm disrespectful. Grandpa thinks I'm forgetting my roots.

Questions:

1. If you are in place of Lakshmi(mother)/ Ravi(father), how do you convince Anika to wear traditional clothes at festivals?
2. How did each family member's choice of words affect Anika's feelings?
3. What does Arjun's approach teach us about bridging generational gaps through calm communication?
4. How can we create safe spaces for youth to express themselves without fear of judgment?

SWAMI SAYS ...

The ancient sages laid down certain rules and precepts in accordance with the times. These were intended to foster human values and were based on scriptures and the Vedas.... The sages believed that these disciplines were conducive to the promotion of the highest human qualities and were divinely ordained to help mankind.

- Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.22, Discourse 24, July 1989.

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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.