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Home: It Can Be Different

Children's Day in April, Mother's Day in May, and Father's Day in June are all reminders of the importance of family to us. Family is the safe haven of the soul. In their presence, we can receive protection in our adversities, acceptance in our mistakes, and love in our despair. Family invests unconditionally, yet hopes to receive only a smile in return.

We see our family members day and night, and when you get used to each other's lifestyle habits, the feeling of home can potentially become numb. This quarter's "LEAP" issue will introduce three ways that can lead to a happy family, such that you can rekindle positive feelings toward your home.

#1: Appreciation

Everyone has different personalities and needs, which means conflict is unavoidable. In reality, every personality type has their own strengths, and every event can be seen as a blessing. As long as we learn to approach things with an attitude of appreciation and gratitude, we can generate a lot more positive energy in our families.

#2: Cohesiveness

Life in Hong Kong is bustling and fast-paced. As such, there is generally limited time to see family, let alone be able to spend quality time with them. Try to find time to chat with family members and plan family activities together. Start with simple and easy activities. More important than the content of the activity is the emotional involvement, concentration and interaction between you and your family during the process. Intentional and good-quality time spent together is the foundation of a family's cohesiveness.

#3: Commitment

Whether you are the child or the parent, as a family member, you must place the family's wellbeing at the top of your priorities. Balance your personal needs with your family's needs and make appropriate compromises and adjustments. A happy family is not one that laughs loudly, but one that walks alongside each other through difficult times and does not easily give up.

In this Quarter's issue, we will share about how good family relationships and work productivity generate a complementary effect. We will also introduce family friendly strategies that different industries use. Through improving employee family relationships, employee family relationships, employee involvement and commitment at work can also be significantly enhanced.

LEAP 是指：

L eading Personal Effectiveness
發展人才
E nhancing Family Cohesiveness
凝聚家庭

A chieving Team Success
卓越團隊
P romoting Corporate Wellness
促進企業健康

Family Strengths

“My daughter keeps saying that we don’t love her and that we are pushing her to death. I don’t know how to communicate with her- she doesn’t listen to me! Then I thought about the news article that came out earlier this year about a student suicide and got worried. What should I do?” asked Ken anxiously as he phoned a counsellor during his lunch hour.

Sammy, Ken’s young daughter, is currently in second grade. Every day, she fights her way through the battlefield of homework alone until 11pm. Ken and his wife are both white-collar workers who take turns checking Sammy’s homework past midnight, and her daily needs are taken care of through the surveillance of the house maid as well as security cameras. In the counselling room, Ken pours out his grievances agitatedly. He thinks that Sammy needs to spend a long time correcting and redoing her homework every night due to making careless mistakes. Additionally, the most frustrating thing is that Sammy is not teachable and is unwilling to make changes to her homework- she even tried to hide her eraser away. Ken considers his disciplinary style to be rather lenient, and does not agree with his wife’s strictness. The two even had a huge argument because of this. Ken is worried that the “carrot and stick” approach is no longer working for Sammy and that he has run out of incentives for her. Recently, Sammy has even started speaking disrespectfully and lying to her parents, which is making them really nervous.

“Ken, when was the last time you played with Sammy?” asked the counsellor.

“There is no time to play since she hasn’t finished her homework,” replied Ken.

Scholars (Stinnett & DeFrain, 1985) offer 6 healthy Family Strength characteristics, including:

1. Appreciation and Affection
2. Commitment
3. Positive Communication
4. Enjoyable time together
5. Spiritual well-being
6. Successful Management of Stress and Crisis

A healthy family should have these 6 characteristics and continue to develop them equally in order to exert family positivity and increase family health. Ken listened to the counsellor explain Family Strengths, and tried to do a simple analysis on his own family. He realized that he has not effectively managed his parental stress, which not only affected his family in various ways, but also neglected Sammy’s growth needs. Ken even joked and said that his family is malnourished, and expressed that he wishes to work harder at positive communication. Ken and his wife gained a much deeper understanding of each other’s expectations toward Sammy’s discipline through counselling, and reached a mutual understanding on their parenting. They set up a timetable for Sammy and planned family activities as well. After several sessions, Sammy’s bad behavior completely recovered without any individual treatment.



Fuel for the Soul: Don’t bring work-related stress back home

“Bang!” The door slammed shut. Mary and her son both jumped at the unexpected noise. It turned out to be Peter returning home. Peter glanced at his wife and son watching TV in the living room without any expressions or words, and sat down in front of a pile of documents. He frantically turned on his computer and continued working, not even hearing Mary’s greetings. In that moment, Mary and her son became increasingly irritated, but still continued to watch TV calmly.

A while later, Peter suddenly yelled at Mary and their son angrily, “Who moved my documents? Who?” Mary ultimately couldn’t hold it in anymore and shouted back, “Nobody touched your documents! Can you please stop piling your documents in our living room? Stop bringing your work home! If you cannot finish your work, stay at the office until you are done. This is not your workplace!” At this, their 10 year old son frowned and then “bang!” slammed his room door shut. The entire house became silent, and nobody spoke another word that evening.

That night, Peter seriously reflected upon himself. Because he’s been so busy recently, he continuously brought his work home. Not only did he have less time to spend with his family, but he also released his work-related negative emotions inappropriately towards them. In order to mend his relationships with his family, Peter decided to apologize and promise to never work in the living room again. Mary and their son also tried to understand Peter and forgive him. Learning to mutually tolerate, communicate and understand each other is extremely important towards building a harmonious family.