

# **Citizenship, Economics and Society (Secondary 1-3)**

## **Support Resources**

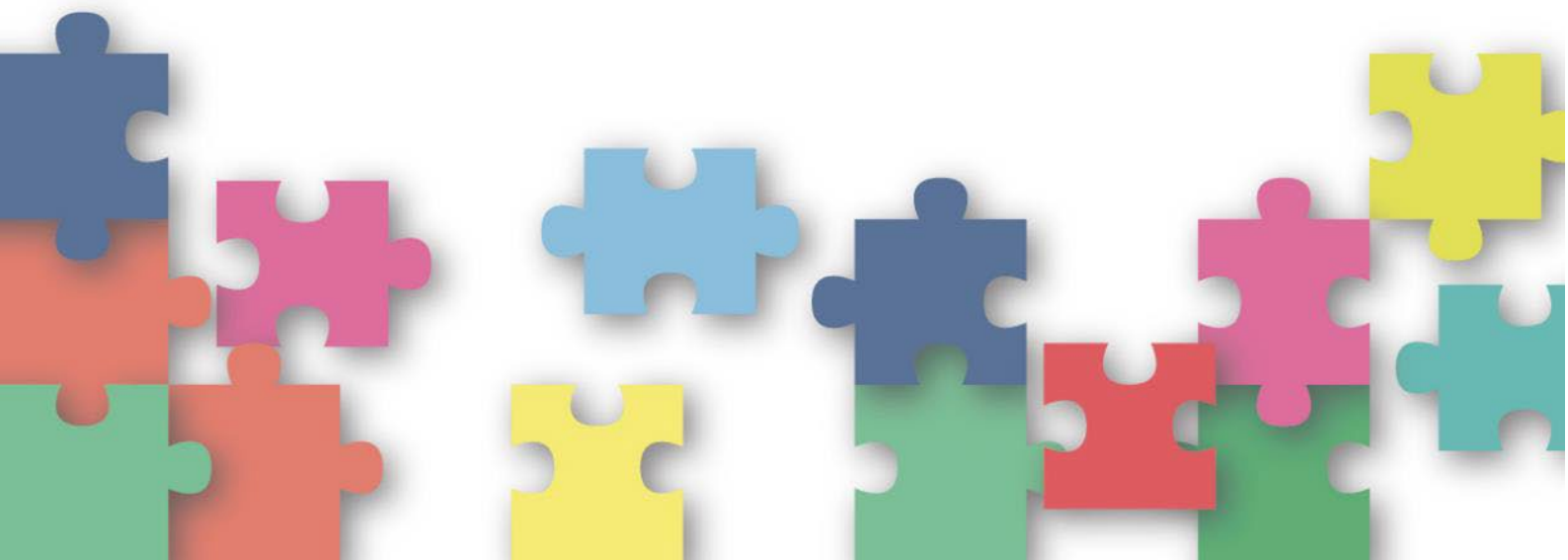
### **Secondary 1**



## **Module 1.2 Interpersonal Relationships and Social Inclusiveness**

### **Part 1: Enhancing Family Cohesion**

Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section  
Curriculum Development Institute  
Education Bureau



## **Introduction**

- The “Citizenship, Economics and Society (Secondary1-3) Support Resources” covers the essential learning contents of Strands 1, 5 and 6 in the Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area. It is designed to support the implementation of the Citizenship, Economics and Society curriculum.
- The support resources provide diversified learning activities to help students acquire knowledge and understand concepts, develop skills and nurture positive values and attitudes. In addition, they offer teaching guidelines and suggestions on learning and teaching activities for teachers’ reference. Further, they provide reading materials to enhance students’ interest in reading.
- “Module 1.2 Interpersonal Relationships and Social Inclusiveness Part 1: Enhancing Family Cohesion” for Secondary 1 was developed by the School of Education and Languages of the Open University of Hong Kong, commissioned by the Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute of the Education Bureau.

# Module 1.2

## Interpersonal Relationships and Social Inclusiveness

### Part 1: Enhancing Family Cohesion

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## Teaching Design:

<b>Topic:</b>	Enhancing Family Cohesion	
<b>Duration:</b>	4 lessons	
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand the importance of family to personal growth</li> <li>• To learn the roles of family members and personal responsibilities and commitments to family</li> <li>• To learn the causes of family conflicts and ways to resolve family conflicts</li> <li>• To learn the importance of communication to family</li> <li>• To enhance family cohesion</li> </ul>	
<b>Lesson 1 and Lesson 2 (The importance of family to life and the causes of family conflicts)</b>		
<b>Pre-lesson Preparation:</b>	Students finish the following before class: - Read Worksheets 1- 2 and finish the activities.	
		<b>Suggested lesson time</b>
<b>Enquiry Process:</b>	<b>1. Set:</b> The teacher invites students to share their answers for “Activity 1: Learning words through pictures” in Worksheet 1 and introduces the Chinese character for “family” which depicts a house where a family life.	10 minutes
	<b>2. Interactive teaching:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly introduces the contents of “Activity 2: Functions of family” in Worksheet 1 and guide students to develop an understanding of the importance of family and think about the influence of our family on us.</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion:</b> The teacher invites students to share their answers for “Activity 2: Functions of family” in Worksheet 1. The teacher can also select some functions of family and invite students to share their stories, for example, what their family members will do when they are feeling down, how they spend quality time with their family, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Teacher debriefing:</b> The teacher asks students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How important is family to us?</li> </ul>               After the debriefing, the teacher introduces the next part of teaching.             </li> </ul>	20 minutes

	<p><b>3. Interactive teaching:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly introduces the contents of “Causes of family conflicts” in Worksheet 2 and explains examples of family conflicts in different areas and guides students to understand that family conflicts are common and the causes of family conflicts.</li> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly introduces the contents of “Activity 1: Where do family conflicts come from?” in Worksheet 2 to guide students to understand that there are many factors might lead to family conflicts, among which communication failure is one of the main causes.</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion:</b> The teacher invites students to share their opinions on the causes which may easily lead to family conflicts and their personal experience of family conflicts. After that, the teacher shall deepen students’ understanding of the impacts of family conflicts and that family conflicts are very common; and brings out the importance of communication.</li> <li>• <b>Summary:</b> The teacher encourages students to find out more about the causes of family conflicts and reflect on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When there are conflicts between you and other family members, do you usually have positive or negative emotions?</li> <li>- If you had explained yourself when the family conflicts happened, do you think the results would be different?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	25 minutes
	<p><b>4. Interactive teaching:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly introduces the contents of “Activity 2: Are family conflicts necessarily bad?” in Worksheet 2 and bring out that family conflicts can bring about both positive and negative effects, rather than merely crises.</li> </ul>	20 minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Group discussion:</b> Students work in groups of 4 and classify the positive and negative effects of family conflicts on family relationships with reference to Activity 2 of Worksheet 2 and discuss the effects of family conflicts that last for a long time and how such effects can be handled properly.</li> <li>• <b>Presentation and class discussion:</b> The teacher invites each group to present their discussion results. Students listen to the discussion results of different groups and reflect on the questions raised by the teacher and peers, which will help deepen their understanding that family conflicts can also bring about positive effects to family relationships.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>5. Conclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher concludes the key points of Lesson 1 and Lesson 2.</li> <li>• The teacher encourages students to reflect on the importance of family to life and understand the causes of family conflicts and their effects on family relationships.</li> </ul>	5 minutes
<b>Extended Learning Activity:</b>	Students read Appendix 1 “Know More: What is Family?” after class.	
<b>Learning and Teaching Resources:</b>	Worksheets 1-2; Appendix 1	

Lesson 3 and Lesson 4 (The importance of family communication and the strategies to resolve family conflicts)		
<b>Pre-lesson Preparation:</b>	Students finish the following before class: - Read Worksheets 3-5 and finish the activities.	
		<b>Suggested lesson time</b>
<b>Enquiry Process:</b>	1. Set and revision: The teacher reviews the key learning points of Lesson 1 and Lesson 2 with students.	10 minutes
	2. <b>Interactive teaching:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly introduces the contents of “Enhancing family cohesion (1): Family roles, responsibilities and commitments” in Worksheet 3 and guides students to understand that family is formed by family members and all family members have to take different roles and responsibilities so as to maintain the cohesion of the family.</li> <li>• <b>Group discussion:</b> Students work in groups of 4 to discuss and analyse the cases in “Activity 1: Family roles and responsibilities: Whose responsibility is it?” in Worksheet 3.</li> <li>• <b>Presentation and class discussion:</b> The teacher invites each group to present their discussion results. Students listen to the discussion results of different groups and reflect on the questions raised by the teacher and peers, which will help them understand their roles and responsibilities in their families, which is helpful for enhancing family cohesion.</li> <li>• <b>Student reflection:</b> The teacher briefly introduces the cases in “Activity 2: Understanding our parents” in Worksheet 3. Students finish the reflective questions based on what they have learned in class and personal experiences.</li> <li>• <b>Teacher debriefing:</b> The teacher debriefs and asks students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is hard to avoid family conflicts. How can we resolve them?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	20 minutes

	After the debriefing, the teacher introduces the next part of teaching.	
	<p><b>3. Interactive teaching:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly introduces the concepts of one-way communication and two-way communication in Worksheet 4 “Enhancing family cohesion (2): Positive communication”.</li> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher introduces “Activity 1: Positive communication starts with me” in Worksheet 4 and guides students to think about the importance of positive communication. Then, the teacher explains the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication so that students can understand how to use this model to carry out positive communication with their family members effectively.</li> <li>• <b>Group discussion:</b> Students work in groups of 4 to discuss and analyse the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication in Activity 1 of Worksheet 4.</li> <li>• <b>Presentation and class discussion:</b> The teacher invites each group to present their discussion. Students listen to the discussion results of different groups and reflect on the questions raised by the teacher and peers, which will help deepen their understanding of positive communication and its significance.</li> <li>• <b>Student reflection:</b> With reference to “Activity 2: ‘Empathetic’ communication” in Worksheet 4, the teacher guides students to pay attention to the benefits of positive communication and how to improve communication with family members and draw their attention to whether their attitudes and language when communicating with family members will cause negative feeling in others.</li> </ul>	20 minutes
	<p><b>4. Interactive teaching:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly</li> </ul>	20 minutes



	<p>introduces Worksheet 5 “Enhancing family cohesion (3): Strategies to resolve family conflicts” and guides students to understand that a conflict can be turned into an opportunity for resolving differences through communication. The teacher then explains the principles of resolving conflicts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct instruction:</b> The teacher briefly introduces “Activity 1: Conflict Resolution Strategies” in Worksheet 5 and guides students to understand that different strategies shall be applied to different conflict situations. Since each strategy has its pros and cons, there is no one right conflict resolution strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Group Discussion:</b> Students work in groups of 4 to discuss and analyse the cases provided in Activity 1.</li> <li>• <b>Presentation and class discussion:</b> The teacher invites each group to present their discussion. Students listen to the discussion results of different groups and reflect on the questions raised by the teacher and peers, which will help them deepen their understanding and mastering of conflict resolution strategies so that they can cope with family conflicts that might happen in the future.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>5. Conclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher summarises the key points of Lesson 3 and Lesson 4.</li> <li>• The teacher points out that although family conflicts are complicated and unavoidable, students should learn to understand their family members and be willing to take on responsibilities corresponding to their roles in family and conduct positive communication, which helps to enhance family cohesion.</li> </ul>	10 minutes
<b>Extended Learning Activity:</b>	Students read Appendix 2 “Know More: Communication and Care are Keys to a Good Family Relationship” and Appendix 3 “Joyful Reading: Good Education” and reflect on related questions after class.	

<b>Learning and Teaching Resources:</b>	Worksheets 3-5; Appendix 2-3
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**Module 1.2**  
**Interpersonal Relationships and Social Inclusiveness**  
**Part 1: Enhancing Family Cohesion**  
**(Lesson 1 and Lesson 2)**  
**Learning and Teaching Materials**



The teacher asks students to finish Worksheets 1-2 before class and then carries out a discussion activity and makes a conclusion during class.

## Preface

Why do people need families? With the passage of time and changes such as rapid economic development, greater mobility of people, and prevalence of the only-child families, big families have been replaced by nuclear families. Even though family size has changed, one thing that has remained unchanged is that home is still a safe fortress protecting and caring for us so that we can thrive. Even if family exists in different forms (such as two-parent, single-parent, two-generation, three-generation, etc.), it still plays an important role in our lives.






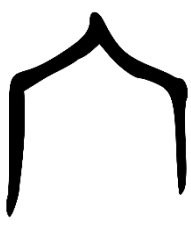

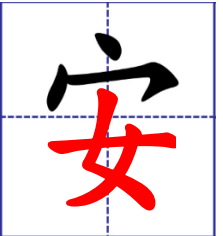


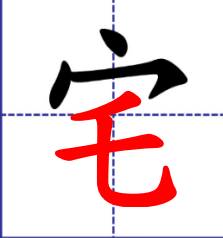
However, harmonious family is maintained by the effort of every family member. Family members need to be sincere, willing to put in concerted effort, willing to invest time, care, understanding, tolerance and love, as well as share responsibilities in and make contributions to building and maintaining harmonious relationships and creating a happy family.



## Worksheet 1: The importance of family to personal growth

### Activity 1: Learning words through pictures

In ancient times, “宀” means a house, “宀” is the roof, and the two sides are drawn to symbolize the left and right walls. As a hieroglyph is a picture or symbol that represents a character, Chinese characters derived from the same radical have similar meanings. For example, the radical “宀” is related to houses. Putting various things in the house will form characters with different meanings. Try to use your imagination and knowledge of Chinese words to complete the “word” part of the right column in the table below.

(i)		+		=	
(ii)		+		=	
(iii)		+		=	

Source: XU Shen (2017), Shuowen Jiezi.

(i)	“豕” means pig. In the past, a family with pigs would be regarded rich and stable.
(ii)	In ancient times, men went out hunting. Men were at ease when they knew that women were safely staying at home.
(iii)	“宅” means grass leaves, which grow straight to the top with roots under the ground. There is an old Chinese saying “A man took root wherever he was born”, “宅” refers to a house.

People often say “home” is our shelter, a place for reunion and living.

Does the above activity further your understanding of “home”?

## Activity 2: Functions of family

**Family functions** refer to the purposes of a family's existence and its impact on other family members. Forms of family will change with time. For example, compared to big families in the past, nuclear families today will gather more frequently and casually. However, no matter how the forms of family have changed, family functions are essential for maintaining the existence of a family. For example, family gatherings will bring family members together where they will share with each other things that happened in life, which will enhance and maintain family relationships.



**Economic function:** Family provides its members with daily needs (e.g. food, clothing, housing and transportation).



**Emotional function:** Family members take care of, respect, and support each other so that they feel cared, accepted, a sense of belonging and a sense of security.



**Entertainment function:** Family members participate in activities together, share happenings in life, which will bring joy to family members and enhance relationships.



**Religious function:** Family members participate in ritual activities, marriage ceremonies and ancestor worship together, which helps to pass on culture, maintain family unity and relationships.



**Reproductive function:** Reproduction is one of the main purposes of family, which helps to extend the family line and expand the family.



**Educational function:** Family is the main place to educate children. Children learn values and ways to get along with others from their parents and elders, which helps personal growth and integration into social life.



**Protection function:** Family provides protection and care for family members to prevent them from getting hurt. The elders will also be responsible for mediation and coordination to maintain the stability of the entire family and even the clan.











**Social function:** Parents will guide children to understand social traditions, norms, customs, etiquette and other knowledge, establish their own identity and status, and gradually achieve social expectations and requirements.

**Fig. 1 Eight basic family functions**

Source: FEI Xiaotong (2005), *From the Soil—The Foundations of Chinese Society*; DENG Weizhi, XU Rong (2001), *Family Sociology*; Eshleman (2003), *The family: An introduction*.

Refer to the above, identify the family function for each of the following situations and fill in the answers in the right column.

Family member	Situation	Function
	1. If you are treated unfairly by others, you can go home and tell me if you are unhappy. I will support you!	<i>Emotional</i>
	2. Every year Ching Ming Festival and Chung Yeung Festival are big festivals for our whole family. The family members will be busy preparing offerings, sweeping tombs, and worshipping ancestors and praying for them to bless the future generations.	<i>Religious</i>
	3. My parents taught me to have perseverance in doing things since I was young, and I should not give up easily. When I fail, they will encourage me and tell me to keep trying; and when I succeed, they will praise me and encourage me to keep working hard.	<i>Educational</i>
	4. After entering secondary school, you need to buy school uniforms, have lunch at school and pay various fees. Although the expenses are high, you don't have to worry, just study hard! Mom will provide you with everything you need.	<i>Economic</i>
	5. On weekdays, our family likes to watch TV together and talk about fun things in life. Saturday is my family's parent-child day. My parents do not have to go to work, and my brother and I do not have to go to school. The whole family will spend time together.	<i>Entertainment</i>
	6. My good grandson, after you graduate from the university, you should get married and have children as soon as possible. You are responsible for extending the family line. Grandpa will take care of your children!	<i>Reproductive</i>
	7. My parents are old, and I need to care for their daily living.	<i>Protection</i>
	8. Dad often reminds me that when I visit someone, I must address everyone in the house politely and greet them. This is what an educated child should do.	<i>Social</i>

Reflective questions:

According to Activity 2 and your personal experience, answer the following questions:

1. List at least one function in your family and explain.

*For example:*

- *Emotional function: When a family member is unhappy, I will comfort him/her and let him/her know that he/she is not alone.*
- *Protection function: If my younger brother/sister is not feeling well, I will take care of him/her and let him/her have good rest.*
- *Religious function: During festivals, I will assist my grandmother and mother to prepare offerings for ancestors, and we will worship together.*
- *Entertainment function: Dad works hard every day. I will ride bicycle with him on holidays so that he can relax.*

2. How important is family to you? Try to list life examples to illustrate.

*For example:*

- *My family is the most precious thing in my life. Whenever I am sad, I will talk to my family. My parents will not only comfort me, make me happy, but also point out the causes of my unhappiness and teach me a lot of principles of life.*

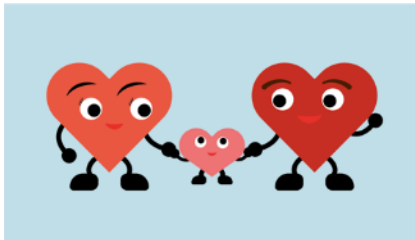
3. Select one of the family functions and explain how you will fulfil this function in the future.

*For example:*

- *Economic function: My parents work hard and provide a comfortable environment for me to grow up. In the future, I will give back and support them and let them enjoy life.*
- *Protection function: After I become a parent in the future, I will take good care of my children and let them grow up healthily.*
- *Educational function: I will guide my younger brothers and sisters, cultivate their positive values, and hope that they will contribute to society in the future.*

## Summary

Family has existed in human society for a long time. Since ancient times, society was formed by families. “Home” is not only a social unit formed by a group of people living together, but also the focus of our lives and where we will meet our innate emotional needs. Moreover, the sense of security and belonging given by the family is irreplaceable.



From birth, growth to retirement, family provides us with basic needs such as food, shelter, care, education, as well as love and comfort. These are the sources of our happiness. Family members can support each other and make each other complete; they think about each other, share feelings with each other and rely on each other. No matter what difficulties we have experienced outside, when we return home, we will have a quiet and warm feeling. This is why family is important to us.

Having a happy family can make our lives better and improve the quality of life, but this cannot be achieved overnight. It requires us to put in effort to build and maintain it. Therefore, we not only need to understand the functions of family, but also work hard to create a harmonious home.





## Know More: What is Family

### The Relationship between family and society

Traditional Chinese culture attaches great importance to the concept of family. In ancient society, an extended family was the most typical ideal type of family. Chinese people have a clear order of social relations. The well-known sociologist FEI Xiaotong (費孝通) (2005) illustrated the close and distant relationships with a metaphor. When throwing a stone into water, ripples are created. The centre represents a person. The ripples near the centre represent someone who have closer relationships with the person. The ripples which are far from the centre represent someone who have distant relationships with the person. Confucianists believed that there are five basic human relationships, namely the ruler to the ruled, father to son, husband to wife, elder brother to younger brother, and friend to friend.

## Appendix 1

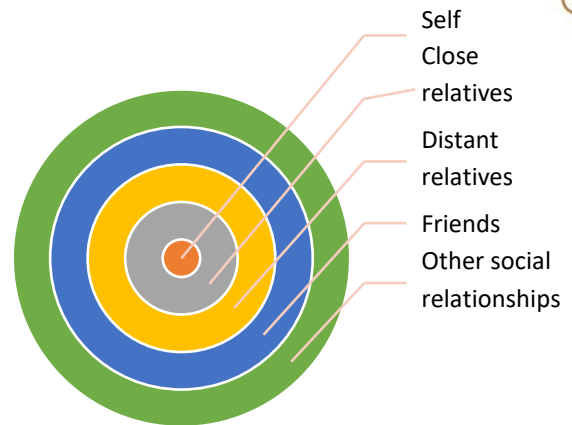


Fig. 2 Close and distant relationships in society

Chart 1 Views of ancient scholars and different fields of study on “family”

Ancient scholars and different fields of study	Views on “family”
Confucius	The ethics of family relationships are summarised as follows: a father is loving his son, and the son demonstrates filial piety to his father; older siblings should be kind to younger siblings, and younger siblings should be respectful of their older siblings; a husband should be good to his wife, and his wife should, in turn, be obedient.
Mencius	Families are the foundation of a country, “The foundation of the world lies in the countries. The foundation of the countries lies in the families, while the foundation of the families lies in each of individuals.”
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to find a family.... The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.
Sociologists	Family is a social arrangement based on marriage and the marriage contract.
Anthropologists	A family is a group of relatives who live together and give birth to and care for their children.

Chinese people attach importance to themselves and family harmony. Although family structures have been changing and most people are living in small families, this concept has not changed. In addition, the way in which parents educate their children becomes a two-way mode. Although they are the leaders of families, they no longer require their children to be fully obedient. Instead, they tend to adopt more positive communication methods to raise their children. Therefore, as a family member, a child should not only be filial to his/her parents and support his/her relatives, but also shoulder his/her responsibilities in the family and pass on the meaning of family.

Source: FEI Xiaotong (2005), *From the Soil—The Foundations of Chinese Society*; DENG Weizhi, XU Rong (2001), *Family Sociology*; Eshleman (2003), *The family: An introduction*; Ma (2007), *The differential mode of association: Understanding of traditional Chinese social structure and the behaviors of the Chinese people*.

## Worksheet 2: Causes of family conflicts

A family is a place where family members live together. Since each family member is an independent individual with different personalities and thoughts, and has different preferences, habits, values and needs, it is easy to cause disagreement and even different kinds of conflicts between members.

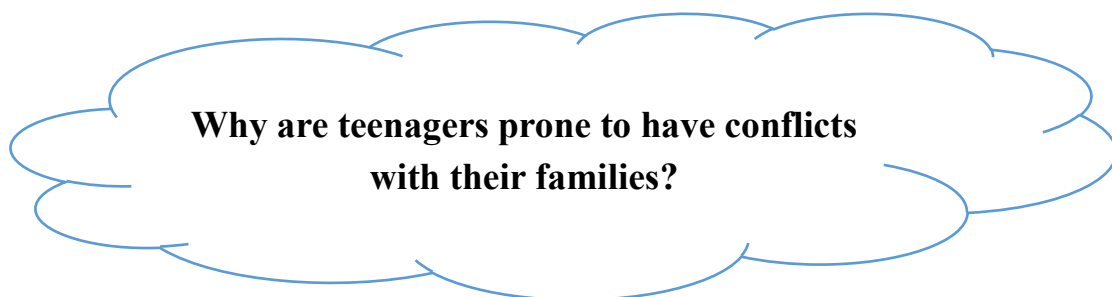


A conflict is a clash of thoughts or actions between individuals arising from differences in goals, understandings, emotions, or behaviours. The following are areas in which young people tend to have conflicts with their families.

Area	• Example
Social life	• Such as the time to go home, making friends, activities to join, etc.
School life	• Such as academic performance, learning attitude, behaviors in school, goals for further studies, etc.
Life attitude	• Such as housework sharing, use of pocket money, use of mobile phone, clothing styles, etc.
Family relationships	• Such as parenting styles, sibling relationships, etc.
Values	• Such as honesty, responsibility, courtesy, law-abiding, etc.

**Fig. 3 Areas where teenagers are prone to conflicts with their families**

Excerpted and adapted from: Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (2006, 2013), “A Survey of Views of Parents and Adolescents on Parent-Child Conflict”, Today’s Conflicts Between Two Generations.





## Activity 1: Where do family conflicts come from?

Young people undergo great physical and psychological changes in puberty, and it is a time when they are more likely to have conflicts with their families. Causes of family conflicts are many, but communication failure is the root cause of conflicts. When there are gaps in relationships between parents and adolescents due to differences in values between the two generations and communication breakdown emerges, it becomes difficult for both parties to properly express themselves or listen to each other's feelings or opinions. It becomes very difficult for them to get to understand each other, thus resulting in frequent conflicts. The following are common causes of family conflicts.

### Communication failure

- Family conflicts mostly begin with miscommunication and misexpression. Teenagers are prone to impulsiveness, and it is difficult to maintain a calm attitude, which tends to heat up the crisis. On the other hand, parents believe that what they say are all out of love and care, and young people should accept it. However, misunderstanding of each other's messages may occur in the communication process. When many conflicts occur, both sides respond with bad and improper attitudes. Inappropriate handling of conflicts may lead to greater crises.

### Family status expectations

- Some older family members think that they are the authority in the family, and younger generations who lack life experience should obey and respect them. On the other hand, some young people think that they have grown up and hope to be independent, and they also expect their family members to treat them equally as adults. Therefore, when older family members ask them to follow their instructions in doing things or getting along with others, or criticize them, young people tend to feel being restricted from doing what they want and they are not being respected. As a result, they will challenge the authority of these older family members, and family conflicts hence arise.

### Differences in standards and behaviour expectations

- Older members of family (especially parents) often differ from teenagers in their readiness to accept and adapt to new things. While teenagers generally prefer new things and like following new trends (such as trendy clothing and gadgets, thoughts, language and ways of doing things, communication styles, etc.), parents or relatives may not be able to accept those new trends. Teenagers feel that their parents are conservative and outdated, and exercise too much control over them. However, parents think that their children do not have the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, and they will be easily led astray. As a result, they think they must provide guidance to their children.

### Different values

- The older members of family have more life experiences than teenagers, and their views on things are more realistic and pragmatic. They think that young people are more idealistic and sometimes they just do not realize how blessed they are and often make senseless complaints and show discontent. On the contrary, in the eyes of young people, the traditional and conservative thinking and values of older members are incompatible with the present generation. Due to differences in thoughts and values between each other, family conflicts tend to arise.

### Sharing of responsibility

- As a member of the family, each member should take up different roles and responsibilities. Most parents think that as they are earning the living for the family, their children should not only study hard, but also share housework. If their children fail to meet their expectations, or their children think their parents do not understand themselves, it is easy to cause conflicts.

Excerpted and adapted from: Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong (14 April 2014), The Causes of Parent-Child Conflict in Adolescents.

Based on the above information and personal experiences, answer the following question:

1. Which three do you think are the most likely causes of conflicts between teenagers and their families? Please choose one of the causes and briefly share your experience of family conflicts.

*For example:*

- *I think that different values, communication failure, and sharing of responsibilities are the most likely causes of family conflicts.*
- *Take communication failure as an example: Once I wanted to borrow a backpack from my brother. He refused to hear the reason why I wanted to borrow it. There was no room for discussion. Although I tried to explain to him the reason for borrowing his backpack, he did not listen, making me even more angry. Therefore, I scolded him and accused him of being selfish. In the end, we did not talk to each other for a week.*
- *Take sharing of responsibility as an example: After the sports day was over, I was so tired that I fell asleep when I went home, but my mother kept asking me to help her with housework. I ignored my mother's request and continued to sleep, but my mother scolded me loudly. I felt wronged and irritated.*

## Activity 2: Are family conflicts necessarily bad?

Quarrels and conflicts are unavoidable when getting along with each other, and family members are no exception. Family conflicts that last for a long time will destroy harmonious relationships between family members, leading to alienation or even separation. However, if family conflicts are handled properly, they may have a positive impact on family relationships.



The box below lists the possible positive or negative effects of family conflicts on family relationships. Try to classify them into positive and negative effects.

- Avoid similar conflicts in the future
- Cause more misunderstandings/problems/arguments
- Improve understanding of yourself and your family
- Cause more intense conflicts and even violence
- Obstruct communication
- Weaken the motivation to improve family relationships
- Opportunities for enhancing mutual relationships
- Improve communication
- Increase the chance of conflicts in the future
- Learn to handle conflicts

### Positive and negative effects of family conflicts on family relationships

- *Improve communication*
- *Improve understanding of yourself and your family*
- *Avoid similar conflicts in the future*
- *Opportunities for enhancing mutual relationship*
- *Learn to handle conflicts*

#### Positive effects

- *Obstruct communication*
- *Cause more misunderstandings/problems/arguments*
- *Cause more intense conflicts and even violence*
- *Weaken the motivation to improve family relationships*
- *Increase the chance of conflicts in the future*

#### Negative effects

Based on the above activities and personal opinions, answer the following questions:

1. What are the effects of family conflicts that last for a long time?

- *Family conflicts that last for a long time will damage family relationships, and family members will turn away from or even ignore each other. Repeated conflicts may worsen the family atmosphere and relationships between members.*

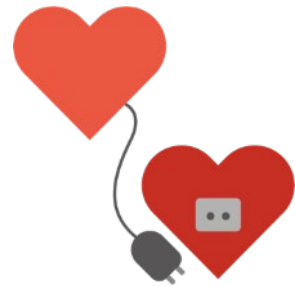
2. If family conflicts are handled properly, what are the effects?

- *If family conflicts are handled properly, they can improve understanding among family members. When they are willing to resolve the conflicts, try to express their feelings in a peaceful manner, and at the same time put themselves into each other's shoes, understand and listen to each other's opinions, they will definitely understand themselves and each other more deeply and avoid the same conflicts from happening again.*

## Summary

Conflicts between people are inevitable but losing family harmony due to conflicts is definitely not worthwhile. We tend to have conflicts with family members during our youth. This may be due to our desire to grow up and eager to get recognition from family members. If we do not know how to handle family conflicts properly, they may cause irreparable damage, suspicion and even break up with family members. As mentioned in the previous part, family is especially important to us, so how to deal with family conflicts is a lesson that we have to learn in life.

Although family conflicts may turn into a crisis in family relationships, it is also an opportunity to enhance family relationships. The key lies in how we handle them. If we face family conflicts with a “I win you lose” mindset and fail to put family relationships first, then the conflicts may develop into a crisis. Conversely, if we cherish family relationships, make resolving the conflicts and protecting the family as our primary consideration, put ourselves into others’ shoes, and understand that others’ position is based on kindness, care and love, conflicts can also be an important driving force for maintaining harmonious family relationships. Therefore, putting family relationships first and striving to maintaining family relationships is the basis for dealing with family conflicts.



In Worksheets 3 to 5, we will discuss how to enhance family cohesion through family roles, responsibilities and commitments; positive communication; and strategies of resolving family conflicts, in order to maintain harmonious family relationships and enhance family cohesion through actions.



The teacher asks students to finish Worksheets 3-5 before class and then carries out a discussion activity and makes a conclusion during class.

### Worksheet 3: Enhancing family cohesion (1): Family roles, responsibilities and commitments

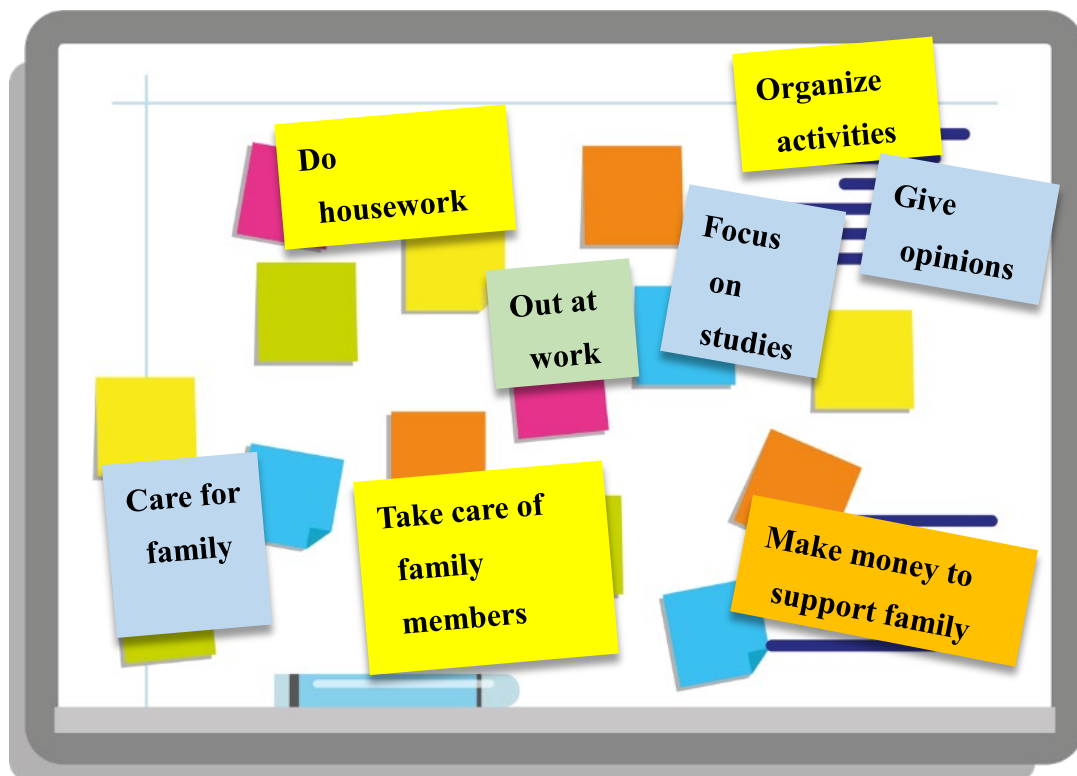
**Family cohesion** refers to the degree to which family members feel stable and close to each other, and the main component is love. Enhancing family cohesion can increase the sense of connection, intimacy, and happiness between family members. Since the family is composed of different members, each member's life experience, personality and needs are different, and their roles and responsibilities are also different. When



members are fully aware of their family roles and their importance in the family and are willing to take on related responsibilities, make contributions, maintain family harmony and enhance emotional connection between family members, family cohesion will increase.

#### Activity 1: Family roles and responsibilities: Whose responsibility is it?

**Responsibilities** refer to duties, tasks and missions undertaken by individuals. In a family, in addition to knowing their own roles and assuming their own responsibilities, family members should care for, support, appreciate, share with, and be considerate of and tolerant of each other; be grateful for each other's contributions to the family; and be willing to contribute to the family. A cohesive family requires members to share different roles and responsibilities and work together for the family.





Read the following case carefully, and then answer the questions.



I am Kwok Wai. I am studying in Secondary One and live with my parents and sister. Both parents are office workers. They work long hours; and they often leave home early and return home late. Their income is not high, but it is enough to meet the daily expenses of the family. My sister just started kindergarten. Apart from being annoying when she cries, she is good at making jokes and makes us laugh all the time. My sister likes going to school very much, and she also likes to share her experience in the kindergarten with us.

Apart from going to school, I have other family duties such as taking care of my sister, cleaning up the house and washing dishes. If my parents get off work late, I will help with grocery shopping and cooking. I am a little behind in my studies, but I know that I do not have enough money to hire tutorial teachers at home, so I often consult teachers and classmates, hoping to study harder on weekdays to make up for my weaknesses.

My parents are very busy on weekdays, but as long as they are free, they will chat with us and share with us their work experience. I find it very interesting, so I also cherish the time spent with my parents. Although sometimes I find my parents annoying, I regard it as their way of showing their love for me, just like sometimes I will throw temper tantrums at home. A happy home is about loving more and having fewer conflicts.

We seldom go out to play. When my parents are on vacation, they have to deal with family affairs, help me with my homework, and take care of my sister. There is not much rest time for my parents. They also regularly visit my grandmother who lives nearby. My dad often says that respecting elders and helping the weak are our due responsibilities, and my grandmother also has a lot of valuable life experience to share with us. When my parents and I have arguments, my grandmother will calm our emotions and help solve the conflicts. I am very grateful to my parents for their tireless effort in raising my sister and me. I hope that I can grow up quickly, fulfill my filial duties for my parents, repay them for their nurturing care and education provided to me, and contribute to this family.

Questions for discussion:

1. Form groups of four, discuss the case and complete the following table.

Character	Family Role	Responsibility
1. Kwok Wai's parents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Breadwinner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carer <input type="checkbox"/> The person being cared for <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional support person <input type="checkbox"/> Houseworker <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Learner <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainer <input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____	1. Breadwinner <u>Example: Working hard to earn enough money to pay for the family expenses</u> <hr/> 2. Carer <u>Example: Taking care of children and the elderly at home</u> <hr/> 3. Teacher <u>Helping their children with their homework and teaching children the importance of respecting the elders</u> <hr/>
2. Kwok Wai	<input type="checkbox"/> Breadwinner <input type="checkbox"/> Carer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The person being cared for <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional support person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Houseworker <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learner <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainer <input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____	1. Houseworker <u>Helping with grocery shopping and cooking</u> <hr/> 2. <i>The person being cared for</i> <u>Getting the care and education provided by family members when growing up</u> <hr/> 3. <i>Learner</i> <u>Accepting guidance from parents and learning the principles of life from grandmother</u> <hr/>

<p>3. Kwok Wai's sister</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Breadwinner  <input type="checkbox"/> Carer  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The person being cared for  <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional support person  <input type="checkbox"/>  Houseworker  <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learner  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainer  <input type="checkbox"/> Others:  _____ </p>	<p>1. The person being cared for</p> <p><i>Getting the care and education of family members when growing up</i></p> <hr/> <p>2. <i>Learner</i></p> <p><i>Going to kindergarten to learn</i></p> <hr/> <p>3. <i>Entertainer</i></p> <p><i>Making jokes to create a happy atmosphere for the family</i></p> <hr/>
<p>4. Grandma</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Breadwinner  <input type="checkbox"/> Carer  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The person being cared for  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emotional support person  <input type="checkbox"/>  Houseworker  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher  <input type="checkbox"/> Learner  <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainer  <input type="checkbox"/> Others:  _____ </p>	<p>1. Teacher</p> <p><i>Passing on life experience, skills and ideas to the next generation.</i></p> <hr/> <p>2. <i>The person being cared for</i></p> <p><i>Enjoying the care from family members</i></p> <hr/> <p>3. <i>Emotional support person</i></p> <p><i>Providing emotional support to Kwok Wai's parents and the children</i></p> <hr/>

1. Based on Kwok Wai’s case, your answers to Question 1 and your personal opinion, answer the following questions:

(1) Do you think that Kwok Wai’s family members have taken up their responsibilities in the family? Try to support your views with the roles and responsibilities of one of the members.

*Yes. Kwok Wai’s parents are the breadwinners and housekeepers. They make money to support the family and handle family affairs. They are also the carers and teachers of Kwok Wai and his sister. They take care of them and teach them by being their role models, and they also teach Kwok Wai to respect the elders and take care of grandma. Kwok Wai’s parents are also emotional support persons for Kwok Wai and his sister. They chat with Kwok Wai and his sister and share their work experience with them in their spare time, and always pay attention to their children’s emotions and react to them.*

(2) The introduction of the activity states, “In a family, members should not only know their own roles and assume their own responsibilities, but also **care for, support, appreciate, share with, and be considerate and be tolerant of each other; be grateful for each other’s contributions to the family; and be willing to contribute to the family.**” Try to find examples of Kwok Wai’s family showing positive values and attitudes towards family members in Kwok Wai’s case. (The relevant values and attitudes are shown in bold.)

<b>Value and Attitude</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>1. Care</b>	Example: Kwok Wai	Help take care of his sister
<b>2. Support</b>	<i>Kwok Wai</i>	<i>Study hard to avoid extra tuition expenses</i>
<b>3. Appreciate</b>	<i>Kwok Wai</i>	<i>Appreciate the hard work and contributions of parents to the family; Appreciate the cheerfulness of his sister who often brings joy to the family.</i>
<b>4. Share</b>	<i>Sister</i>  <i>Parents</i>	<i>Share her learning experience in the kindergarten with family members; Chat with children and share their work experience.</i>
<b>5. Considerate</b>	<i>Kwok Wai</i>	<i>Be considerate of his hard-working parents and help take care of his sister, clean up the house and wash dishes.</i>

<b>6. Tolerant</b>	<i>Kwok Wai</i>	<i>Be tolerate of his sister's crying which is annoying, and parents who are sometimes annoying.</i>
<b>7. Grateful</b>	<i>Kwok Wai</i>	<i>Grateful to parents for their hard work, raising him and his sister, and the happy family.</i>
<b>8. Contribute</b>	<i>Kwok Wai</i>  <i>Parents</i>	<i>Help take care of his sister, clean up the house and wash dishes, and also help with grocery shopping and cooking; Make money to support the family, support children's emotions, and take care of family members.</i>

- (3) How well are you doing in taking up family responsibilities and having a positive attitude towards your family? Try to invite family members to review and reflect with you and fill in at least one good performance and one area for improvement in the table below.

	<b>Take up family responsibilities</b>	<b>Have a positive attitude towards family</b>
<b>Good performance</b>	<i>(Free answer )</i>	<i>(Free answer )</i>
<b>Areas for improvement</b>	<i>(Free answer )</i>	<i>(Free answer )</i>

## Activity 2: Understanding our parents

KU Wai Ming, also known as “King of Drainage Services”, has worked in the Drainage Services Department for more than 30 years. He has to work shifts from Monday to Friday, and also has to go to work on Saturdays and Sundays. In case of emergency, whether it is amber/red/black rainstorm warning, or any tropical cyclone warning, he must be on call at any time, including on 24-hour shifts at the “Emergency Coordination Centre”. Due to unstable working hours, KU Wai Ming’s 12-year-old son once complained that he is often away from home. As a father, he can only patiently explain to his son that his job is to serve the society. He hopes his son will understand more when he grows up.

Excerpted and adapted from: Hong Kong Economic Times (10 June 2018), “King of Drainage Service” A Good Father Sacrificing His Parent-Child Time to Serve the Society: I Hope My Son will Understand When He Grows Up.

Based on the discussion in Worksheet 3 and your personal opinions, answer the following questions:

1. What problem do the character and his son encounter?

*The son cannot see his father often and feels that he has been neglected. For the father, his working hours are unstable and he needs to be on call at any time.*

2. Refer to Kwok Wai’s case in Activity 1. If you were the son of the story character “King of Drainage Services”, how would you deal with this problem?

*For example:  
I will not complain but share with my dad sincerely to let him know that I miss him and hope to spend more time with him. At the same time, I will understand that my dad has to work irregular hours, and that my dad is serving the society and he has given up family time in order to contribute to the society. I will cherish the time spent with my dad. At the same time, I hope to grow up quickly, take care of my father as soon as possible, lessen his family burden, follow his example and make contributions to society.*

## Summary

When encountering setbacks, the family is our shelter. When we return home, we can take rest, receive the warmth, care and nourishment from the family; and then we gain strength, which enables us to continue to work hard and face difficulties. Therefore, having family cohesion is essential. When there is cohesion in family, there will be a sense of unity. When encountering difficulties, the family will unite and face the difficulties together. Family members will care for each other and work together to solve problems. And this kind of cohesion cannot be established by one person in the family alone; it has to be cultivated by the concerted efforts of all family members.



Every family member has his own roles and responsibilities. Family members should act in a respectful and responsible manner, perform their duties, bear responsibilities, and make contributions to the family. In addition, family members must be considerate and tolerant of each other, appreciate each other's effort, know how to be grateful, and maintain good communication in order to enhance family cohesion. For example, parents do their best to nurture us and we should understand that they are working hard for the family. We should always be grateful and fulfil our filial responsibility by helping reduce their family burdens, loving each other, getting along well with our brothers and sisters, and treating the younger ones with care.



In Worksheet 4, we will discuss how to improve family cohesion through communication.

## Module 1.2 Interpersonal Relationships and Social Inclusiveness

### Part 1: Enhancing family cohesion

#### (Lesson 3 and Lesson 4)

#### Learning and teaching materials

### Worksheet 4: Enhancing family cohesion (2):

#### Positive communication

Family cohesion can be enhanced through good communication between family members, apart from taking up family responsibilities mentioned in Worksheet

3. **Communication** refers to the exchange (including sending and receiving) of information, facts, and attitudes through speech, text or body language between two or more people. Good communication can improve understanding of oneself and family members, and reduce conflicts caused by misunderstandings or unintentional mistakes. At the same time, it can further enhance interpersonal understanding and mutual trust, increase the joy of family life, and enhance sense of intimacy and happiness in the family. Keep in mind that “the same rice breeds a hundred kinds of people”. There are individual differences between people. Therefore, we need to understand each other through communication. We need to learn to respect, appreciate, accept and affirm others, which will provide good conditions for good communication.



The teacher asks students to finish Worksheets 1-2 before class and then carries out a discussion activity and makes a conclusion during class.

#### Communication methods:

#### One-way and two-way communication

1. **One-way communication** means that only the speaker expresses, and the receiver does not care what the other says or does not respond.

For example: Dad asked Ching Ching to help her younger brother with his homework, but Ching Ching only cared about the TV series she was watching and turned a deaf ear to Dad’s request.



2. **Two-way communication** means that both parties listen to and express opinions and respond appropriately to each other.

For example: Mom shared with Chi Ho interesting things that happened at work. Chi Ho paid attention to Mom and in response, he said to Mom that it was fortunate she had got a team of helpful colleagues.

**In your opinion, which of the above two communication modes is/are more empathetic and able to achieve good communication? Why?**



## Activity 1: Positive communication starts with me

In Worksheet 2, we know that most family conflicts start with poor communication. Poor communication not only destroys family relationships, but also affects personal growth. Learning positive communication helps promote open, positive and active communication. In the communication process, if we put ourselves into others' shoes and get along with family members with empathy, they will feel respected and cared for and they will be more willing to share thoughts and feelings with each other frankly, which will reduce misunderstandings and disputes, and enhance family cohesion.

**Positive communication** refers to two-way and quality communication. The speaker and the receiver actively participate in the communication process. The speaker needs to express the message clearly and calmly, and the receiver should also listen attentively and patiently. By sharing the happy and sad moments in life, and things that they appreciate or are grateful for, the family will feel involved and enjoy the time spent on communicating with each other. At the same time, through this positive thinking, contents associated with negative communication, such as blames and complaints, will be replaced.

We can learn how to promote positive communication through the **Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication**, which includes joy, gratitude, listening, flow and savouring. Family members use the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication to listen attentively, cultivate empathy, appreciate each other, learn to be grateful, and use a positive and active attitude to maintaining two-way communication, build mutual trust, and enhance family cohesion. The following table lists some communication modes and behaviour goals (life examples) associated with the use of the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication.



**Chart 2 Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication**

<b>Elements of Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication</b>	<b>Communication modes</b>	<b>Behaviour goals (life examples)</b>
<b>Joy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recall and share with your family happy events which happened to you or write down the events which you are thankful for your family.</li> <li>Be more tolerant and more considerate of your family and complain less and blame less about your family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share interesting things that happened in school.</li> <li>When you are unhappy, think of the positive impact of the incident to replace complaining and blaming, and share your thoughts positively with your family.</li> </ul>
<b>Listening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't interrupt others' speech and be patient.</li> <li>Pay attention to what your family members say and pay attention to their body language.</li> <li>Think from the perspective of each other and pay attention to the feelings behind the words.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Let family members finish before you begin to talk.</li> <li>When talking with family members, maintain eye contact with them and maintain a friendly expression and posture.</li> <li>Put yourself into others' shoes and try to understand their intentions before responding.</li> </ul>
<b>Gratitude</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Say more words of praise, thanks, and affirmation.</li> <li>Express your gratitude to your family in words or actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Say words of thanks to Dad every day.</li> <li>Give your mother a massage on the shoulders every night.</li> <li>Give your sister a hug when she gets off from work.</li> </ul>
<b>Flow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on and cherish the time spent together with family members.</li> <li>Stay engaged in the communication process and respond more positively with empathy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When having meals, do not look at the phone.</li> <li>When family members are chatting, share your thoughts and respond to their opinions with empathy.</li> </ul>
<b>Savouring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slow down the pace of life and enjoy time with family.</li> <li>Take the time to communicate with family members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to spend holidays leisurely with your family.</li> <li>Organize family activities during holidays and get actively involved.</li> <li>After dinner or before going to bed, take some time to talk to your family about what happened during the day.</li> </ul>

Excerpted and adapted from: Hong Kong Council of Social Service (2013), "Family-oriented" Practice Manual of Happy Family Kitchen Project.

1. According to this worksheet, the emotion management skills in Module 1.1 Self-understanding and Life Skills Part 2 “Emotion Management and Resilience Enhancement” and the SMART Principle in Module 1.1 Self-understanding and Life Skills Part 5 “Life Planning”, try to use the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication to set ten behavioural goals for yourself and your family (two goals for each) to enhance family cohesion.

### **Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication Plan**

<b>Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication</b>	<b>Behaviour goals</b>
<b>Joy</b>	<p>Example: Share with parents an interesting event that happened in school or an event that has inspired you to think positively.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>For myself: Share interesting stories between classmates with family members.</i></li> <li>- <i>For family: Recall something worthy of gratitude every day, write it on a Post-it note and place it at an eye-catching spot at home to share it with family members.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Listening</b>	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>For myself: Do not interrupt the other party’s speech for more than three times a week.</i></li> <li>- <i>For family: Whenever you talk to family members, maintain eye contact with them.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Gratitude</b>	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>For myself: Give a family member a hug every day for at least 10 seconds.</i></li> <li>- <i>For family: Give a family member a massage on the shoulders for five minutes every night.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Flow</b>	<p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>For myself: Do not look at the phone when having meals with my family.</i></li> <li>- <i>For family: Set aside 30 minutes a day to chat with family members and respond positively.</i></li> </ul>

**Savouring**

*For example:*

- *For myself: Spend no less than 30 minutes having meals with family members each time.*
- *For family: Hold family activities once a month and actively participate.*

## Activity 2: “Empathetic” communication

Recall five things which your family members said to you, and which have impressed you. Then, based on the discussion in this worksheet, analyse the communication methods involved; how you feel about what they said; and what is worth learning/needs to be improved.

	<b>Who said it to you?</b>	<b>What is said?</b>	<b>Communication method (e.g. one-way/two-way communication; positive communication; with empathy, etc.)</b>	<b>How do you feel?</b>	<b>What is worth learning/needs to be improved?</b>
E.g.	younger sister	Don't go to bed too late. Good health is the most important thing.	Positive communication, with empathy	Feel loved and cared about	Worth learning: caring for family
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

## Summary

“Rome was not built in a day.” A cohesive family can only be cultivated by the concerted effort and mutual support of all family members. In family, conflicts are inevitable as there are differences and misunderstandings, and heart-to-heart communication is the main way to resolve the family conflicts. Through positive communication, mutual understanding, respect, trust, as well as kind and considerate regard for others can be achieved. Family members can finally overcome the crisis by understanding each other with empathy. This is often based on goodwill, love and care.



Everyone is born unique, with differences in personality, thoughts, values, habits, etc. When we realize this, we should let go of our preconceived ideas when we communicate with family members. Family members should use positive communication methods more often to express mutual care and gratitude to family members (such as expressing their thoughts in a calm manner, listening to and respecting each other’s opinions, taking spontaneous actions to show care for family members, cherishing family time spent together, etc.). We can make use of the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication to help us work towards positive communication. With positive communication, not only can we get more joy and happiness from the family, but also, we can improve our own shortcomings and achieve a more positive attitude towards life.



## Know More: Communication and Care are Keys to Good Family Relationships

### Enhancing parent-child relationships

Good communication helps improve the relationships among family members. We need to know about ideas of our family members first before we can show care and support to them.

The Hong Kong YWCA Western District Integrated Social Service Centre conducted a survey about parent-child behaviors and relationships. The survey interviewed more than 1000 parents and students from Primary 4 to Secondary 3; and their opinions on the “top 10 supplements for parent-child relationships” were enquired. The results showed that both parents and students thought that good communication was more important than formal and material care. Therefore, it can be concluded that positive communication can improve parent-child relationships.



**Chart 3 Top 10 “supplements” for parent-child relationships**

	Child behaviors viewed as good for enhancing parent-child relationships by parents	Parent behaviors viewed as good for enhancing parent-child relationships by children
No. 1	Sharing thoughts with me (78.8%)	Caring about my feelings (62.8%)
No. 2	Accepting my suggestions (56.4%)	Trusting me (62.7%)
No. 3	Asking for my opinions actively (52%)	Complimenting me and encouraging me to talk (62.1%)
No. 4	Taking the initiative to care about me (51.2%)	Being willing to listen to my voice (52.4%)
No. 5	Reviewing lessons actively and consciously (51%)	Being tolerant when I make mistakes (52.3%)
No. 6	Taking the initiative to care about me when I am sick (49.2%)	Taking me on trips to other places (48.3%)
No. 7	Understanding my difficulties (46.3%)	Buying goods that I like (48%)
No. 8	Studying hard (44.8%)	Giving me presents (47.7%)
No. 9	Hugging or kissing me actively (44%)	Allowing me to make my own decisions (44.9%)
No. 10	Agreeing what I have done for him was motivated by good intentions (35.3%)	Accepting my opinions (44.1%)

Source: Hong Kong Young Women’s Christian Association (2014), Parents are more Satisfactory with Their Parent-Child Relationships Reflecting that Parents “Feel Good about Themselves” and Ignore the True Feelings of Their Children.

## **Worksheet 5: Enhancing family cohesion (3): Strategies to resolve family conflicts**

Everyone hopes to have a loving and harmonious family. However, every family has problems and challenges, and family harmony is not easy to come by. As mentioned in Worksheet 2, there are many causes of family conflicts, which can bring positive or negative effects. The key to resolving family conflicts depends on whether family members put family first, and are willing to work together to resolve conflicts. Worksheet 5 will further discuss the principles of resolving family conflicts, the process of conflict formation and ways for handling conflicts, so as to enhance family cohesion.

**What do you care most when you have conflicts with family members? Reputation? Self-esteem? Victory? Your feelings or family members' feelings? The impact on family members?**

### **Principles of resolving family conflicts**

In the face of family conflicts, some people may become irrational or think only about their own reputation and start to accuse their family members using inappropriate language or attitudes. As a result, their family members may feel offended and refuse to communicate, which may even intensify the conflicts. There is a saying "Is it worth winning a game but losing a home?". It means winning one's reputation but losing important family relationships in fights is really not worth it.

Therefore, when dealing with conflicts, we must abide by the following principles. As long as we handle conflicts in an appropriate way, we can handle things in a sensible and reasonable manner and turn crises into opportunities.







**1. Focus on the matter, not on the person:** Focus on the incident or problem, do not accuse the other party, and do not make personal attacks.



**5. Enhance understanding:** Clarify misunderstandings and resolve grievances as early as possible.



**2. Be gentle:** Handle own emotions first, do not use an angry or complaining tone, and use a gentle attitude to communicate with others.



**6. Listen patiently:** Let the other party finish talking before responding.



**3. Respond with empathy:** Put yourself in other people's shoes to understand their positions, thoughts and feelings.



**7. Positive response:** Use positive ways of speaking more often.



**4. Uses words but not fists:** Do not use violence to solve problems.



**8. Seek assistance:** If the problem cannot be solved, seek advice from someone trusted by both parties.

**Fig. 4 Principles of resolving family conflicts**

Do you notice that some principles of resolving family conflicts are similar to the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication? Try to find them out.

The principles of resolving family conflicts have many similarities with the Five-Taste Model of Positive Communication, because positive communication is an important element in resolving family conflicts.

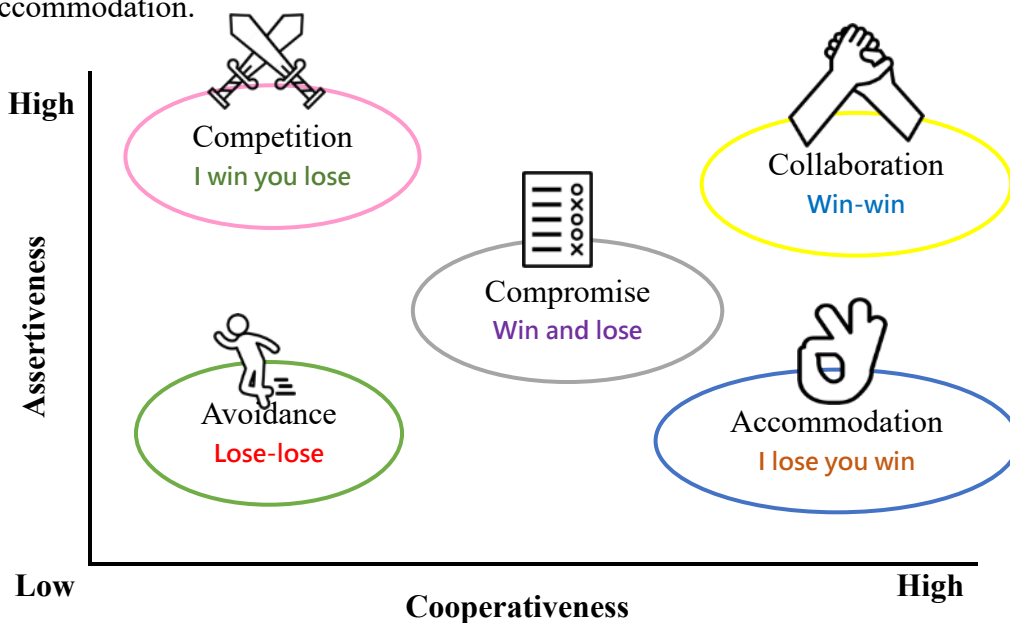


- *Principle 2 “Be gentle” is similar to “Joy”*
- *Principle 6 “Listen patiently” is similar to “Listening”*
- *Principle 7 “Positive response” is similar to “Gratitude”*

## Activity 1: Conflict resolution strategies

Conflicts occur in every family, because getting together with people will always produce differences in opinions, needs, values and interests. Some family members ignore each other and do not contact each other, and they are like strangers. This does not mean that conflicts between them will go away. On the contrary, it ignores the seriousness, consequences and harms of family conflicts. Learning conflict resolution strategies helps us stop and think about the conflicts we are facing and choose more appropriate methods to deal with or resolve them.

The **Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)** established by American scholars Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann divides the conflict resolution strategy into Competition, Collaboration, Compromise, Avoidance, and Accommodation.



**Fig. 5 Five conflict resolution strategies**

The Thomas-Kilman conflict resolution model helps us understand our behaviours in conflict situations, predict the outcomes of the conflicts and adjust our attitudes, which together will help us work towards resolution of the conflicts. When the two sides have different levels of assertiveness and cooperativeness, the strategies of resolving conflicts are also different. For example, if the both sides are assertive, insisting on their own opinions, and are unwilling to cooperate, this will lead to competition, hoping to make the other party yield. Conversely, if both parties are willing to make some concessions, this will lead to compromise. Conflicts between people are complex and



ever changing. When we feel helpless, we can use this assessment tool to help us choose appropriate ways to handle conflicts. Of course, there is no one right way of dealing with conflicts. It depends on the individual's preference and the environment the individual is situated in.

**Chart 4 Five conflict resolution strategies**

<b>Conflict resolution strategies</b>	<b>Levels of attention to oneself and cooperation</b>	<b>Solutions</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Avoidance</b>	Not paying attention to oneself or others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave the scene or change the topic</li> <li>• Pretend that the problem does not exist and do not want to face it</li> <li>• Take no measures to cooperate with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More suitable for handling less important issues</li> <li>• Avoid more serious problems which may arise if attending to the problem</li> <li>• Allow a short time for calming down and reducing tension or anger</li> <li>• Others may be able to handle it more effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evading the problem for a long time will make the problem worse</li> <li>• Lack of response will damage the relationship</li> <li>• Decisions will be made in default conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiu Tong accidentally broke her sister's tablet. Her sister is very angry and wants to reason with Hiu Tong. Hiu Tong turned back, returned to the bedroom, closed the door, and temporarily did not face her angry sister who was making a lot of noise outside the room.</li> </ul>
<b>Competition</b>	Pay more attention to oneself and pay less attention to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attack, offend or harm others</li> <li>• Fight for your own interests at all costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions can be made quickly especially when time is tight,</li> <li>• Can solve difficulties immediately, but difficult to negotiate with the other party</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead to hostile and destructive communication and disrupt relationships</li> <li>• The needs of others will not be taken care of</li> <li>• Someone may take advantage of other people or things for their own gain</li> <li>• Others dare not express opinions, resulting in incomplete information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tai Hung was late for a meeting with May Fan because he had to buy medicine for his mother. May Fan was upset because she had been waiting for Tai Hung for a long. So she kept accusing him and refused to listen to his explanation.</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodation</b>	Pay less attention to oneself, pay more attention to others (Just to meet the needs of others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tolerate</li> <li>• Obey the other's instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a harmonious relationship and avoid breaking up the relationship</li> <li>• Solve problems quickly</li> <li>• Being reasonable and showing kindness will</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel unhappy because of not being able to express one's opinions and feelings</li> <li>• The contribution made is not taken seriously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The elder brother accused the younger brother of forgetting to buy a birthday gift for their grandfather. The younger brother actually did not know that he was responsible for buying the</li> </ul>

Conflict resolution strategies	Levels of attention to oneself and cooperation	Solutions	Advantages	Disadvantages	Examples
			help improve the relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own influence and reputation are being played down</li> <li>• The matter may not be handled properly due to lack of thorough discussion</li> </ul>	gift, but he also said that he would do it early tomorrow morning, so he would settle the matter.
<b>Compromise</b>	Moderate attention to oneself and others (Concession to each other for peaceful coexistence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both parties surrender part of the requirements and benefits, but also retain part of the requirements and benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a harmonious relationship</li> <li>• Reach an imperfect but acceptable agreement</li> <li>• Can provide temporary and effective solutions for complex problems in a short time</li> <li>• Can be used as a backup plan when cooperation or competition fails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot fully express requirements, thoughts and feelings, leaving behind unresolved differences for further conflicts</li> <li>• Sacrificing something in order to resolve the incident quickly has made neither party completely satisfied</li> <li>• The process of bargaining can easily hurt mutual trust and feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pak Lam wanted to go to the cafeteria for lunch, while Wai Man wanted to have lunch box in the snack shop so that he can stay at school and play board games. Finally, they agreed to eat fast food at a nearby fast-food shop before going back to school to play games.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>	Pay close attention to oneself and others (Work together to satisfy both parties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt an open and equal attitude to express your opinions</li> <li>• Clarify the requirements and differences of all parties and strive to achieve a win-win situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can summarise different viewpoints</li> <li>• Consider the opinions of others to reach a consensus</li> <li>• Can learn and benefit each other and solve problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It takes a lot of time and effort to reach agreement</li> <li>• It will easily lead to conflicts and fatigue in the process of collaboration and decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wai Yan planned to go to the beach with her family on Saturday, but her father suddenly needed to go to work. After a family meeting, it was decided that the family event would be rescheduled to Sunday.</li> </ul>

Source: Thomas and Kilmann (2004), Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (rev. ed.) ; Northouse (2018), Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice .

Living under the same roof, disputes and conflicts are very natural. Therefore, learning how to deal with family conflicts is an indispensable lesson for enhancing family cohesion.

Read the following two cases carefully and answer the questions with reference to Chart 4.

1. Case Study

**Case 1 Who should have access to their favourite TV programmes**



(1) Analyse what conflict resolution strategy is used in each of the following situations and fill in the answer in the space provided on the right.

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Conflict resolution strategy</b>
1. Siu Man watched the drama on TV for 15-minute first, and then let her brother watch the live football match.	<i>Compromise</i>
2. Her brother lent a computer to Siu Man to watch the drama, and Siu Man let him watch the live football match on TV.	<i>Collaboration</i>
3. Siu Man avoided arguing with her brother and returned to the room alone.	<i>Avoidance</i>
4. They had a dispute. Her brother kicked Siu Man on her leg and grabbed the remote control to switch channel.	<i>Competition</i>
5. Siu Man decided to let her brother watch the live football match.	<i>Accommodation</i>

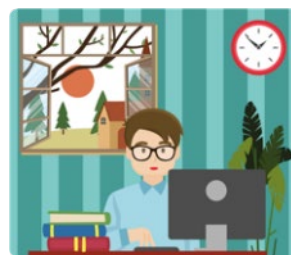
- (2) Referring to Question 1 above, which conflict resolution strategy do you think is the most effective to help Siu Man and her brother solve the above problem?

*For example:*

- *I think it is most effective to adopt a collaborative conflict resolution strategy. This strategy not only avoids hurting the relationships between Siu Man and her brother, but also eliminates the need for other family members to spend time and energy to resolve their disagreement. At the same time, the expectations of Siu Man and her brother are met, and they can learn to resolve disputes.*

## Case 2 You don't understand me

Ho Yin is a secondary school student who lives with his parents and sister. After being promoted to secondary school, Ho Yin has been studying hard, but at the same time he feels stressed. Recently, he has become addicted to online games to reduce the pressure of study. Parents are worried



about Ho Yin's change, so they often ask Ho Yin about his studies. But Ho Yin continues to do things in his own way and adopt an indifferent attitude, which has made his parents very dissatisfied. Due to problems with his school work and online game addiction, Ho Yin and his parents have a lot of arguments, which has led to a lot of dissatisfaction in both parties and deterioration of their relationships.

In Case 1, we learned to identify different conflict resolution strategies. Now try to use different strategies to help Ho Yin deal with the conflicts with his parents. Please fill in the space on the right to show the appropriate method of handling the conflicts under each of the conflict resolution strategies.

Conflict resolution strategy	Method of handling conflicts
Avoidance	<i>Ho Yin continues to adopt an indifferent attitude towards his parents and plays online games as usual.</i>
Competition	<i>Ho Yin argues with his parents, insisting on doing things in his own way.</i>
Accommodation	<i>Ho Yin decides to give up playing online games and avoids arguing with his parents again.</i>
Compromise	<i>Ho Yin spends less time playing online games, and his parents ask about his school work less often.</i>
Collaboration	<i>Ho Yin frankly tells her parents about his stress due to demands of school work and works with them to find solutions.</i>

Questions for discussion:

In a group of four, discuss and complete the following questions.

With reference to the information in Case 2 and your personal opinions, answer the following questions:

1. If you were Ho Yin, which conflict resolution strategy would you use to solve the conflict? Why? How to deal with it?

*For example:*

- *Conflict resolution strategy to be used: Collaboration.*
- *Reasons: Family members have their own ideas and need to understand each other's feelings and difficulties and clarify misunderstandings. In an open and cooperative environment, family members can explain to each other their expectations, give suggestions and jointly choose an appropriate method to solve the conflict.*
- *Method of dealing with the conflict: I suggest that Ho Yin shares his academic pressure with his parents and reassures his parents that he can keep up with the school work. At the same time, parents should also make it clear to Ho Yin that their asking about his school work is because they care about him, but his indifferent attitude has made them feel at a loss what to do next. I believe that when the two parties can understand each other's feelings and difficulties, they can find a better solution to resolving the conflict, such as regulating Ho Yin's game time or family members and Ho Yin exercising together to relieve his stress and anxiety.*

2. Have you ever had a conflict with your family? If so, recall and write down the situation and suggest which conflict resolution strategy you would use to resolve the conflict? Why?

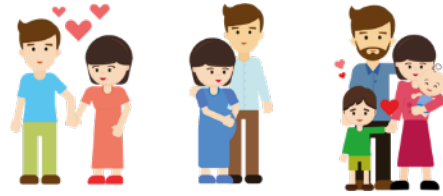
*For example:*

- *Yes. I had conflicts with my family because of unsatisfactory academic performance. At that time, I worked very hard to prepare for the exam, but my results were still not satisfactory. I felt helpless and sad. My parents didn't know it at that time. They just kept asking about my exam results. I couldn't help but argued with them. We did not talk to each other for some time.*
- *I will use a collaborative conflict resolution strategy to frankly tell my parents the drop in my school performance and let them know my feelings about the argument. I expect my parents to be considerate and I will seek their assistance to work out a solution together. At the same time, I will seek advice from teachers and classmates for ways to improve myself, so that my parents do not have to worry about me.*



## Conclusion

“Family” is the first environment we come into contact with after birth. It is an indispensable cradle in life and the cornerstone of life afterwards. In daily life, family love, care and warmth can give us unlimited joy and strength. When encountering difficulties, adversities or setbacks, family care, companionship and support can inject new strength into our lives, and help us face challenges and difficulties, and set off again. When we are uncertain and face choices, family members’ sharing, respect and encouragement can strengthen our courage, self-confidence, and lead us to live happy lives. Therefore, the various functions played by family not only help us become better persons and occupy an important position in our personal growth; family also serves as our shelter and becomes our strongest support in life. This is why people need family. However, while praising the importance of family, we are accustomed to taking everything about family for granted. Family is like air. We need air all the time, but we often do not realize it until we lack oxygen.



Family conflicts are common. Family members have their own ideas, personalities, difficulties, etc., and they will inevitably have differences or conflicts when getting along, but as long as they know how to resolve misunderstandings and rebuild trust, family relationships will be reconciled. We need to take up roles and responsibilities in family, use various conflict resolution strategies to deal with differences, and try to



communicate positively with family members. In doing so, we can enhance understanding and relationships between family members and avoid further negative effects brought by conflicts. Also, we should regard conflicts as a chance to enhance family cohesion. When dealing with family conflicts, we should put family first, understand the causes of the conflicts, listen carefully, work with family members to find solutions, and adopt positive attitudes such as empathy, respect, tolerance, patience and understanding. With such positive actions and attitudes, we will be able to build a happy and harmonious home with our family.

Adolescents have responsibilities and roles in the family, as well as they need to make contributions to the family. Adolescents should think more from the



perspective of other family members and be more understanding of the difficulties and needs of others. These could increase family cohesion and build a happy family. As the tree wants to remain quiet, the wind does not stop. A son wants to serve his parents, but his parents have passed away.” We should always be grateful for our family, cherish the time spent with our family, show your family you love them, and work with family members to create beautiful memories that belong to all in the family. One day, you will become parents. Therefore, the subject of “family” is ultimately inseparable from

our lives. We should learn to get along with our family as early as possible and pass on ideas about building and maintaining family relationships so that the love of “home” can continue.

# Joyful Reading

Appendix 3

## Good education

Family education has a great influence on children's achievement. This is especially so when it comes to Chinese people, who always attach great importance to family education. Chinese parents and relatives hope to teach their children proper attitudes and behaviours in treating others through daily life education. Under the influence of positive family atmosphere, children can naturally benefit a lot. The following celebrities had been cultivated by their parents carefully since their childhoods. And together with their hard work, they had made remarkable achievements in the end.

### Mencius' Mother Relocated Three Times



Mencius' mother and Mencius

Mencius was raised by his mother alone when he was a child, and his home was close to a cemetery. Mencius and children in the neighbourhood played games of building graves or imitating the funeral custom of crying. Mencius' mother thought that the environment there was not good for Mencius' study, so they moved to a house in the city. After they moved there, Mencius imitated businessmen and played the game of killing pigs. Mencius' mother thought it was not an ideal place either, so she decided to move near to a school and live there. One day, Mencius skipped class and went home. Then Mencius' mother picked up a pair of scissors and cut a piece of cloth that she was weaving in half. By doing so, she wanted to teach Mencius that studying was just like weaving a cloth and one has to put in effort continuously. Since then, Mencius began to study hard, and finally became a great thinker whose name will last forever.

### Good Financial Management



John Rockefeller

John Rockefeller was the first billionaire in American history. He was also a famous banker, oil tycoon and philanthropist. He worked hard to make money all his life and devoted the rest of his life to charity. In his later years, he donated most of his wealth. But among his deeds, people feel most delighted to talk about his ancestral education method. The old John Rockefeller made an agreement with his child on the use of pocket money. The starting standard was \$1.50 a week. He asked his child to write down each income and expenditure in a notebook. If the record of the week was satisfactory to him, the pocket money would rise accordingly, and vice versa. In addition to encouraging his child to record expenses, he also encouraged him to do housework to earn extra money, such as shoe shining, mowing and cleaning. Today, the Rockefeller family is still one of the richest families in the world. It breaks the saying of "Wealthy families cannot keep their fortunes more than three generations". This success is closely related to the education of the Rockefeller family in those years.

Excerpted and adapted from: John·D·Rockefeller (2018), 30 Letters by Rockefeller to His Son ; CHEUNG Chi-kwan (2015), Learning Family Climate and Education from Well-known Ancients.

### Reflective questions:

1. Have you been influenced by your parents or relatives? If so, in what aspects they have influenced you?
2. Our names usually contain our parents' expectations on us or some special meanings. Do you know what expectations of your parents on you or special meanings are implied in your name? Go and ask your family to learn more about it!

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