

# SAMVEDANA

## **The Magic called-Jaadu ki Jhappi**

As the year 2018 says goodbye to us and as we usher in the New Year-2019, we all can learn a lot by giving a glance back on the road just crossed. Few lessons learned, few experiences gained but overall a satisfaction of having lived a year to the fullest as a nurturing parent.

Our children have been taking tiny steps over the past year towards becoming confident individuals. As I interacted with a lot of parents through the year, I gained a lot of insights from the stories or anecdotes which were told to me. I want to share my learning and reflections with all of you today. I am sure many of us are practicing these, so this will serve as reminders and for those who have not been able to do so, the time to begin is now.

Can you remember what made you feel loved as a children? Think about it. Maybe you remember having a great time with your parents, holidays, being helped with homework or just telling them a few secrets. As a parent now, are you making the effort to make your children feel loved? Very often it is the small things which count. Here are 15 ways to make your children feel loved. When you become grandparents, you will be touched that they still remember them.

### **1. Turn off your smart phone.**

When you get home or your children get back from school, turn off your phone and give them your full attention at least for the first half hour or so. The children love this because they know you are not going to be distracted by texts as they tell you what happened at school.

### **2. Turn off the TV and all gadgets at mealtimes.**

Not much fun when children have to compete with TV commercials or everybody texting away. Mealtimes are rare moments to enjoy each other's company. There are enormous advantages for children. They eat more healthily as it is not rushed. They also enjoy the companionship of their parents and they are much less likely to have an eating disorder later on.

### **3. Make bedtime a precious moment.**

With younger children, they will always treasure those moments when you read them a story as they drift happily into sleep. It is enormously reassuring and it is a unique bonding experience for parents and children..

### **4. Show physical affection.. 'Jaadu ki jhappi'**

Countless studies show that children thrive on warmth and affection. The child feels loved and will have a greater self-esteem. There is no need to go overboard but a kiss or a hug once a day will do you both a lot of good. It lessens the chances of your children becoming aggressive, anti-social and having other behavioral problems.

### **5. Spend quality time with each child.**

It is wonderful when a parent or both parents can spend quality time on a one-on-one basis with their children. This is great because they feel special and their brothers and sisters are not around. It can be anything from playing sports, cooking, or helping with chores. There is no better way of showing your children that you really love and cherish them.

### **6. Discipline them with love and affection.**

There are still parents who believe that beating a child is probably the most effective and time saving way of dealing with discipline. The child learns that violence is an effective way of dealing with disagreement and conflict. The key to successful parenting is not to switch on the love when they do well and deny it when they misbehave. There are no conditions but just a steady flow of affection so that children feel their parents' love is truly unconditional.

### **7. Leave funny and affectionate notes and messages.**

It can be a text or a little note tucked under their pillow. It can be a joke, an affectionate nickname or anything that shows the children they are still on your radar.

### **8. Look into their eyes.**

The best way of communicating with your children is to look them straight in their eyes as you talk to them. Eye contact is so important in this age when everyone is glued to some computer, device or phone. The child can learn to wait until he or she has your full attention but this is worth waiting for. It is also a great lesson to teach a child that eye contact is a very important social skill as they get older.

### **9. Smile more often.**

What better way of showing your love and warmth for your children than smiling every time they come into the room. This immediately puts them at ease and also confirms that their presence is valued and that they are not a nuisance. There may be times when they will need to be reminded about bad behavior but why not use the other 90% to show that you love them?

### **10. Be a great role model.**

How many times have you told your children what to do, how to be polite and to always wear their seat belt? Oftentimes, parents forget that they must be the perfect role models because children are great copycats. No better way to show that you love your children than to walk the talk. Be kind, affectionate and caring to others and teach your children to be colour-blind about race.

### **11. Involve them in decision making.**

What to wear for school the next day or where to visit when you go on holidays can be decided together with your children. Make sure your children are fully involved and engaged. It is also great for children to start learning how to make decisions with their parents' guidance.

### **12. Just play with them.**

Children often say that they felt there was far too much going on and they were over scheduled. They really want some downtime with their parents where they can just play, have fun, laugh and be together. It might be a good idea to cut out one or two activities so that you just do not end up being their chauffeur!

### **13. Take action when your child is unhappy.**

There may be problems at school with bullying or with the teacher. Show that you care and ask to see the people involved and just try to find out what is the cause of the tension and unease. It may well be the child's fault but when it is not, there is an ideal opportunity to show that you are there for them and you will be their champion.

### **14. Save the cards and gifts.**

When your child gives you a note, funny drawing or little poem, show that you care by treasuring them. Put them in a special drawer or folder. Show the child a photo of where you keep a favourite picture in your office. You can take digital photos of the artwork and store them on a photo sharing site. Show your child the results at regular intervals. It gives the child a great sense of achievement. It also saves loads of precious storage space at home.

### **15. Never interrupt their stories.**

When a child has a story to tell about what happened at school never interrupt them but hear them out. The same goes when they want to share a book with you or show you a picture story. They will feel loved and wanted. If parents ignore them or are far too busy children will be the first to suffer and it is likely to last into adolescence and adulthood unless we really make the effort now.

Love and affection are the foundation of happiness. By showing children this love every single day, we are giving them the greatest gift of all.

I pray that all of you remain happy and bonded together.

Happy Parenting and A Very Happy New Year.....

(ANUPAMA CHAND)