

## **FAMILY HEALTH HABITS CHECK LIST**

### **1. Budgeting time**

- Members establishing appropriate priorities for loyalty and time** - i.e. the family comes first (after one's Higher Power and after work or friends)

### **2. Sharing and Communication**

- Members participating together in regular activities and family rituals:** meals, recreation, hobbies, physical and spiritual activities, special celebrations (birthdays, seasons), etc.
- Members supporting each others' healthy interests, friendships, studies and career**
- Members regularly discussing together** and sharing experiences (including discussion between parents, parent-child discussions and listening and family discussions)

### **3. Members relating positively at the feeling level**

- Sharing verbal and physical affection** and love
- Sharing affirmation (or praise)**
- Regularly expressing both positive and negative feelings, as well as one's needs** and seeking to understand, empathize and provide feedback to one another
- Exercising mutual respect** for each other's person, property and privacy
- Avoidance of competition or abuse** (emotional, verbal, physical or sexual)

### **4. Nurturing and influence**

- Parents seeking first a strong bonding** and teamwork between themselves for nurturing, loyalty and supervision
- Both parents providing jointly for practical family needs** (such as food, clothing, shelter, education, health and wholistic development)
- Finding a father or mother substitute for children, where needed** (such as an extended family member or mentor)
- Adult children caring for disabled or elderly parents**
- Parents teaching about life** (including values, sexuality, male or female responsibilities, etiquette, wisdom, excellence and spirituality)

- Parents discussing and modeling positive behaviours** and healthy lifestyles
- Parents teaching responsibility** by organizing roles, decision making procedures and sharing of household duties
- Parents jointly providing **appropriate explanations and consistent discipline** for desirable behaviours
- Children respecting authority roles**
- Family promoting good citizenship** through voluntary community service and outreach

#### 5. Flexible, trusting and open behaviours

- Children allowed **increasing independence, initiative and self-reliance** with age
- Avoidance of excessive inflexible, controlling, jealous, overprotective and dependent behaviours:**
  - Between parents
  - Between parents and children
- Establishing open, mutually supportive, external links** with the outside world (such as the extended family, neighbourhood, friends, support groups, worship community, school, interest groups, workplaces and the society in general)

#### 6. Problem solving and conflict management

- Developing procedures** to deal with:
  - inevitable problems** (such as sex, family planning, finances, in-laws, religion, different interests, friends, communication and child rearing styles, sibling rivalry, both parents working, life changes, and emergencies)
  - Serious problems** (infidelity, alcoholism, addiction to drugs and gambling, outside children, domestic abuse (all types), chronic illness or disability and social deviancy in children)
- Discussing all problems early and at appropriate times**
- Using problem solving skills:** brainstorming options and seeking the best alternatives
- Encouraging democratic participation and tolerating differences of opinion and interests** while avoiding ridicule or becoming “personal” and allowing instead for compromise

- Seeking consensus-building versus arguments, blame, criticism, personal attacks and revenge**
- Exercising a willingness to say “I am wrong” and “I forgive you”**
- Avoiding games of favouritism or using children as “pawns” or substitute parents**
- Seeking professional help when necessary**