

**Give Appreciation**

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY \*\*

Sit together with your family

And express your appreciation for each other.

You can do this in rounds.

Start with anyone.

*Dad, I really appreciate that you drive us everywhere.*

*Milly, I really appreciate how kind you are to your cat.*

*Mom, I appreciate that you make sure we eat good food.*

Continue the round, until everyone gives appreciation to one other person.

Then do a second round, and a third,

Until everyone has appreciated everyone else in the family.

Do this every day for at least a week

When you are all in the car,

Or eating a meal.

Notice not only how it makes people feel to be appreciated,

But how it feels in you to give appreciation.

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Often in a family we only express the things we don't like, because it has some immediate purpose in mind: to change the other people close to us in the hope of making ourselves feel better. In the intimacy of family, it is very easy to pin our problems on one another's actions. We thus feel the urgent need to point out each other's deficiencies and mistakes so that we can adjust our environment to be more the way we want it to be.

Appreciation is not utilitarian. It serves no immediate practical need: it does not get the kids out the door in time or the kitchen cleaned or phone messages delivered. Instead, it has a much deeper benefit to both the one appreciated and the one giving appreciation. With appreciation, relating becomes not just about getting things accomplished and needs met, but is a celebration of life meeting itself.

When we celebrate each other in a family, we support each other in blossoming fully into who we really are. Defenses relax. The family becomes our church, our temple, where we can feel the divine in each other and in our own hearts.