

Are you spending time with your Child when you feel lonely or depressed?

(Ensure that you spend time with your kid when you are happy to make your child happy)

Sunny has just joined his kindergarten school and spend around four to five hours every day with friends and teachers. Although his school takes maximum efforts to make the children happy and engaging, Sunny always missed the time he spends with his dad. Sunny's dad, Mr. Amarjit is a marketing professional in a good corporation. Mr. Amarjit used to spend quality time with his son before putting him in the kindergarten school. Since now Sunny goes to a regular school, Amarjit's interaction and engagement with his son is reduced to a great extent.

Sunny always looks forward to every weekend to spend time with his dad and his list includes playing Ludo at home, going out for dinner and purchasing toys from his favourite store.

It was a Sunday and Sunny keeps asking his dad since morning to plan the day. Amarjit on that Sunday, had a different set of plans for his office to complete few urgent assignments. While Sunny was in a mood to strive for the day, Amarjit started yelling at his son and advised him to do his activities alone. The whole episode made Sunny feel depressed and went back to his room. The day was not very encouraging for Sunny. After realising his mistake, Amarjit went back to Sunny and invited him to come for a walk in the garden outside of their house.

They moved in the garden with a limited amount of engagement between them. Although Amarjit was physically present with Sunny, he was estimating his time for completing his office assignments. Sunny was not happy and asked his dad to return home.



What Parents should be aware of!

- 1 Our interaction and engagement with our kid in a low mood including anxiety, angry etc may transmit such emotions to our children.
- 2 An engagement in a happy mood would also inculcate such happy emotions in our child.
- 3 When you feel that you may be in a anxious situation, angry or depressed avoid interacting with your kids
- 4 When planning an engagement with kids, make sure your are in a very happy mood.

"Happy Parenting"

Such incidence happens with all of us on daily basis.

But do we ever realise the impact of such incidence on the psychological and emotional growth of our kids.

A study over 10 years consisting of 5,100 people and their social contact infers that the average person experiences loneliness about 48 days a year, but having a lonely friend can add another 17 days of loneliness in a year⁵. This indicates that if you are lonely then you would transmit loneliness in others in your social circuit. Loneliness in a person includes anxious feeling about lack of connection and communication with other individual both in present and extending into future⁶. The loneliness may manifest shyness, anxiety, more hostile, more socially awkward, more low self-esteem in a person.

The induction hypothesis infers that the loneliness in one person contributes or to cause the loneliness in others. The emotional, cognitive and behavioural consequences of loneliness may contribute to the induction of loneliness⁷.

Family is the most closely bounded social network of people. When a family member is depressed or anxious, this leads to easy transmission of such emotions in other family members. In such a situation children are most vulnerable members as they easily pick up these emotions as compared to other elder members in the family.

On the otherhand, when a family member is happy there is more than 25% chances that the other family members including friends would remain happy. A Yale study shows that the feel good feeling can even spread to people whom a person is indirectly connected. Happiness begets happiness.

Therefore it is very crucial for the parents to take a note that our engagement with our kids must not be done when we are in a low mood, angry or depressed. We may make a rule at home which would say "*I only talk to my child when I am happy*".

It is therefore better to have a small interaction or engagement in happy mood than having longer engagement in a depressed mood.

When you should have an engagement with your kid



Happy



Blissful



Smiling



Satisfied

When you should NOT have an engagement with your kid



Sad



Afraid



Angry



Dissatisfied

5 Times of India, 7th April 2019

6 Wikipedia; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loneliness>

7 Alone in the Crowd: The Structure and Spread of Loneliness in a Large Social Network; Journal of personality and social psychology.