**HANDOUT: DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION FOR PARENTS**

**Virtue: PRAYERFULNESS**

**What is Prayerfulness?**

Prayerfulness can be practiced in many ways. Prayer is talking with God. You can pray in silence or out loud. You can sing or dance your prayer. You can use any language. God always hears your thoughts and understands your heart.

 Prayerfulness is living in a way which slows that you are in hte presence of your Creator. It is doing simple things with an attitude of gratitude. If is knowing you are a unique creation of God, and acting in ways which are worthy of tat gift. Prayer is praising God, being thankful for things. Prayerfulness is quiet reflection It is allowing the Great Spirit to speak to you. It is listening and receiving God's guidance.

 You can turn to God in prayer at any time. Prayerfulness is sharing your hopes and your problems, the things you feel ashamed of and the things you fell proud of. It is trusting God and turning things over to God. Prayerfulness is living your life in the presence of God.

**Why Practice Prayerfulness?**

 People who rush around ***doing*** all the time without stopping to pray or reflect lose touch with their own spirits.

 If we don't allow ourselves to feel the presence of God, we can get lonely even if we are in a crowd. Who else completely understands our worries, thoughts, hopes and dreams?

 When we practice prayerfulness, we can feel God's presence any time -- not just at special moments in a place of worship or when we see something beautiful in Nature.

 Prayer makes things clear when we are confused, gives us hope when we feel sad, gives us answers when we have a problem, and provides strength to face the challenges of life. With prayer, we don't ever have to be alone.

**How Do You Practice It?**

 You practice Prayerfulness by becoming very still and turning to God. Let God know all that is in your heart, as if you were talking with your very best friend. Trust God's wisdom and don't expect that everything you ask will happen. Listen and notice what happens.

 Without the listening part of prayer, it is like dialing someone's number on the telephone and then hanging up before they can answer you. Becoming very still and listening for an answer is a way to connect your spirit to the Great Spirit.

 Prayer can be answered in many ways. A thought or idea may come to you while you are reflecting. You might have a dream that gives you an answer. The Holy Spirit may speak to you through the actions or words of another person. You may start to see things differently. When you pray, be ready to receive an answer.

 You can also pray by dedicating something you are doing to God. It could be a simple chore, like making your bed, or doing some homework or a special act of kindness to another person.

 Prayerfulness is saying "thank you" to God and remembering to stay in God's presence. The feeling of love and connection does not have to stop when you finish praying. You can choose to stay with that feeling throughout the day.

**You are practicing Prayerfulness when you...**

* Take time every day to pray and reflect
* Talk to God as you would to a really good friend.
* Share your innermost thoughts, hopes, and fears with God.
* Ask God to provide you with what you need.
* Trust, listen and watch for God's answer.
* Have an attitude of gratitude.
* Dedicate some of your actions to God.

**Affirmation*:***

Thank you God for the gift of prayer. Today I will live in Your presence.

I will find Your answers in quiet moments.

I will dedicate my actions to You today.

From: The*Virtues Guide: A Handbook for Parents Teaching Virtues*by LindaPopov, Dan Popov, John Kavelin

**Quotable Quotes:**

*A servant is drawn unto Me in prayer until I answer him; and when I have answered him, I become he ear wherewith he heareth.*

 ~ Bahá'u'lláh

*There is nothing sweeter in the world of existence than prayer. Man must live in a state of prayer. The most blessed condition is the condition of prayer and supplication. Prayer is conversation with God. The greatest attainment or the sweetest state is none other than conversation with God. It creates spirituality, creates mindfulness and celestial feelings, begets new attractions of the Kingdom and engenders the susceptibilities of the higher intelligence.* ~ 'Abdu’l-Bahá

*Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts.*
 ~ [Mother Teresa](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/838305.Mother_Teresa)

*The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.*
 ~ [Søren Kierkegaard](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6172.S_ren_Kierkegaard)

*The inner voice is something which cannot be described in words. But sometimes we have a positive feeling that something in us prompts us to do a certain thing. The time when I learnt to recognize this voice was, I may say, the time when I started praying regularly*.
 ~  [Mahatma Gandhi](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/5810891.Mahatma_Gandhi)

Adapted from: *The Virtues Guide: A Handbook for Parents Teaching Virtues* by Linda Kavelin Popov