**The Virtue of COURTESY: Discussion and Reflections for parents**

**What is courtesy?**

Courtesy is being polite and having good manners. It is a gracious way of speaking and acting which gives others a feeling of being valued and respected. It is greeting others with respect. “Please”, “Thank you”, “Excuse me”, “Hello”, “Goodbye”, “You’re welcome” are not just words. They are courteous expressions that show people you respect them and care for them.

**Why practice it?**

When a person doesn’t practice courtesy, people feel insulted and disrespected. They think this person is rude and ignorant, not caring about anyone or anything. Practicing courtesy gives people a sense that they are valued. Courtesy is like a magnet. It makes you attractive to others.

**How do you practice it?**

Courtesy is remembering your manners. Speak politely. Wait your turn. Instead of interrupting someone, say “Excuse me,” and then wait patiently for them to give you their attention. Greet people pleasantly. When you are courteous, you make requests instead of demands. Bring courtesy home. Your family needs it most of all. Courtesy helps life to go smoothly.

**Signs of Success**

You are practicing courtesy when you…

* Show others that you value and respect them
* Remember to treat elders, parents, teachers, and children politely
* Think about how your actions affect others
* Eat, speak and move graciously
* Make requests instead of demands
* Greet people with a smile

Affirmation

I am courteous. I speak and act in a polite way.

I show others that I value and respect them.

**Virtues Reflection Questions**

* How do you and your friends show courtesy when you greet each other?
* How does it feel to you when someone is not courteous? When someone is courteous?
* How does it feel to you when you are not courteous? When you are courteous?
* How do people tend to react if you disrespect them by forgetting courtesy?
* What can you do if you have “slipped” and forgotten to be courteous?
* Who in your family needs more courtesy from you?
* What is the difference between making a demand and making a request? (You may want to role play the “before” and “after”, first without courtesy, then with courtesy)

**Quotable Quotes**

*“Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy.”*

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

*“If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world.”*

-Francis Bacon

*“Most smiles are started by another smile.”*

-Anonymous

*“Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important.”*

-Janet Lane

From The Virtues Project Educator’s Guide, by Linda Kavelin Popov