

an{y}other family...

**“There was once a family quite run of the mill,
They did everything that a usual family will
They gossiped, bellowed and flared,
And at each other they glared,
Only their unending love was their skill!”**

yeah... as you would've guessed, this is my family. Or maybe 'our family' would sound better, wouldn't it? Our family is different from any other family in this world though, whatever this poem might say. True, it looks the same as any other family as any other family would too, but dig deeper, friends, and you'll see, that my family is unique. And it's this uniqueness that binds us together, and which we also call as love.

So what's the uniqueness here? Or more specifically, what's the gift that we possess? The gift is that there's not just one gift, it's an assortment, a mixed bag of many gifts, many ideas, many experiences... that each generation in our family possesses which we all acknowledge and celebrate that make us unique. [it sometimes also results in debates and quarrels between us!]

-Sakhi, Nitin, Anita

The gift of each generation to our family—

Aji, Abu, Nani, Nana-



We bring traditional values and wisdom to the family. Also, our our compassionate love helps bring the family together and nurtures it. Our oldish humour, innocence and curiosity is also a provision for a great laugh for our family!

Nitin, Anita, Manoj, Poorna,
Shivanand, Kshama-



We feel we are a link between the older and younger generations and we bring the family (a gift) of stability.

Vaishali, Prashant, Manisha,
Milind-



We are a mixture of the old tradition and yet the bluntness

of the young. We play many roles and are always being tuned into one role from another like a radio FM! This versatility and flexibility which we are prone to is our gift to our family.

Amelia, Sakhi-



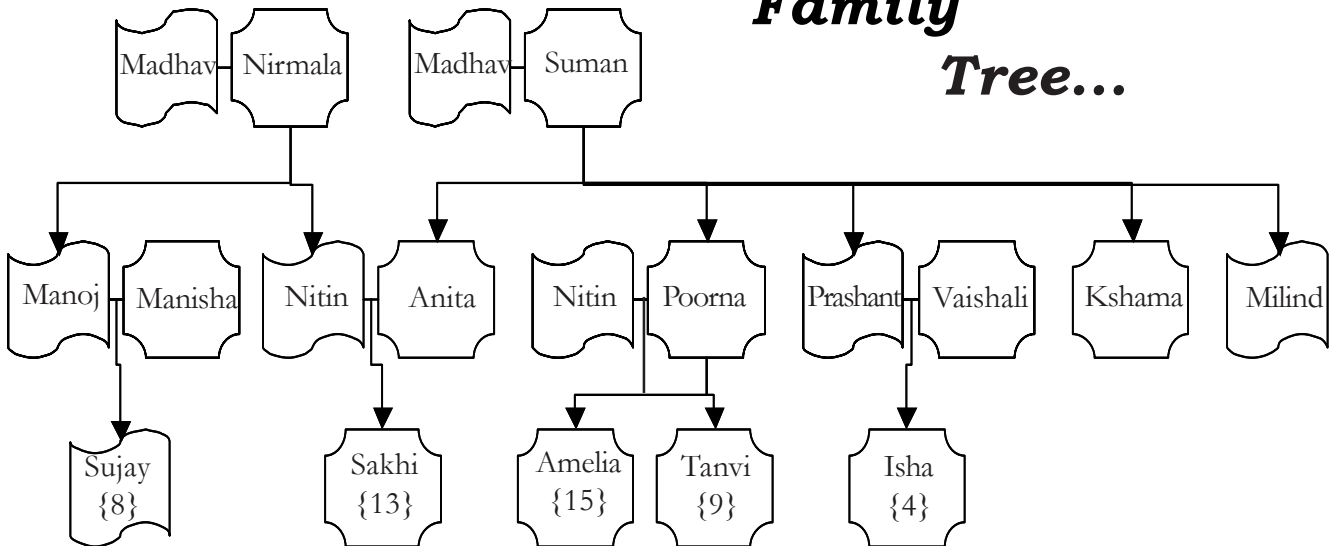
We believe that our generation has the ability to ask questions. To ask and to change from the root to new possibilities, and explore new horizons is the gift we give to our family.

Tanvi, Sujay, Isha-



our jenerashan bring to famili play and happy and hop and kurio citi. we like to make mom and dad famili laaf and tek dhem bak to our jenerashan.

Family Tree...



Guess...

* Who is Tanvi's sister's mother's husband's mother-in-law's other daughter's daughter's father's father?

___ ___ ___

* Then what about Kshama's brother's wife's mother-in-law's son-in-law?

___ ___

* Tell who's Sujay's mother's mother-in-law's husband's other son's wife's brother's daughter.

___ ___ ___

* Is she Sujay's mami?

___ ___ ___

* She is Milind's sister's husband's only daughter's grandfather's son-in-law's mother-in-law. Who is she?

AND LASTLY--

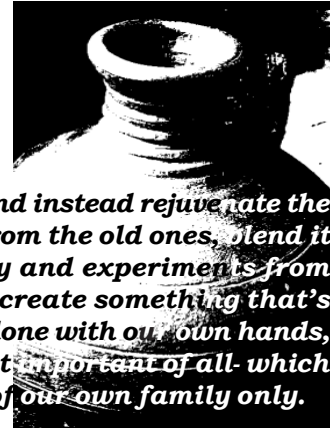
**"A family that G
together, Y together."**

fun from family...

Well, these are trivia and a game which we play when we come together and which we enjoy solving and riddling, and laughing! So gear up, try it, and see if you get this interesting puzzle and these jokes. You can make some for your own family too and have a good time together!



the family walks out...



Well then, after this fun and play here's going to be some serious talk now. Whatabout??? Well, as we explained earlier, our family may be exactly like any other family, but it is still unique. And to help that uniqueness grow, what can our family try and do? An idea we got was to reject certain standardised items provided by the

readymade world. And instead rejuvenate the wisdom and ideas from the old ones, blend it with some creativity and experiments from the youngsters and create something that's homemade, mostly done with our own hands, collectively and most important of all- which will be unique and of our own family only.

A life without TV...

"We never felt the need to have a TV in our house although I must confess that I do miss the cricket matches. Otherwise we don't feel we are missing on anything. Most of our time at home is spent in household chores which we do our selves, in chatting, having friends, reading, listening to Sakhi, to music, indulging in small things that might look insignificant but are crucial for being and experiencing togetherness. We think it is better to engage in situations and relationships that are in front of us than in some fictional ones potrayed on television serials. Being TV-less has given us the space and time to experience the different shades of moods that we all go through and be available to each other during crucial periods. When loneliness and alienation is tearing apart our societal fabric, we think the nest we have built is on solid foundation where we are not dependent on external agencies to educate and entertain us, and tell us how to love, care, look and be. Listening to sounds and images we create has been much more valuable than being glued to the idiot box! This has helped us to build the foundation."

-Nitin

Re-turning to yoga...

My grandfather has diabetes. Firstly, he used to take pills and other drugs to control it. Generally, it was controlled but did'nt get better. One day, he read an article in this health magazine aabout the hazards of pill popping and taking all these chemical- filled drugs for

the slightest of reasons. After having read that article , in a stroke of inspiration he decided to not depend on these pills for controlling his diabetes but rely on himself and his body more. He decided to do yoga which he had learned a long time back when he was a youth. At first, he mostly did *pranayama* (breathing exercises) and *surya namaskar*. Afterwards, when he was more in tune with his body, he started doing more complicated series of *aasans*. When I first saw him do yoga, I was surprised that at his age, his body was still so supple. I was too, inspired, and started doing yoga with him, whenever i visited my grandparents. My body too, I discovered was flexible but for a long time I had hardly exercised, which resulted in more than half of my body muscles becoming stiff and painful while doing yoga, but, as my grandpa said, were really important for stimulating the flow of hormones and toning up the body for its overall development.

Next time my grandfather went for his monthly check-up for diabetes, he was surprised and pleased that the sugar level in his blood had come down considerably than its usual number. And all this, he realised, had happened just by an hour spent daily for doing yoga.

-Sakhi

Handmade gifts...

Somebody's birthday? Go buy a gift. That had almost become a habit with all of us in the family. Going to the gift shops, selecting a gift that fits our pocket, getting it wrapped in a fancy paper, made me grow repulsive to the whole idea of this pattern of gifting. Till one day, early this year, I declared that I would not receive any 'gifts' on my

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birthday and my birthday is in the first month of the year, so it almost sounded like a new year resolution, never to be taken seriously, fading away as the year progresses! Then on my birthday, my women friends from Nashik came home as usual to greet me and celebrate the completion of yet another year of my life. They were aware of my 'declaration' and had come prepared. Before entering the house, they quickly opened their bags and got busy. As I watched in astonishment, together they drew a beautiful colourful *rangoli* just at the door of our house! Then they came in and hugged me, showering wishes. Each of them had brought a bottle of home-made pickle or jam, that they had made with their own hands as a birthday gift. They confessed that they had to put their heads together to think of getting a birthday gift, as they wanted to respect my decision of not accepting any readymade, 'bazaar' gift. In fact, all of them resolved that they would practice and share this idea with their families and friends too. I was

extremely touched by their gesture and also experienced the strength of their resolve. Since then, every gift, be it to celebrate the arrival of a new baby, or a birthday or a wedding anniversary, I have with firm determination and lots of joy, created gifts by my own hands, with much help from my family members. This has released so much creative energy in the family, with novel ideas being discussed and shared, experimentations, and the sheer joy of creation. I realised that every baby sweater than I have knitted, every eatable I have cooked, every card that I have painted, every bottle of home-made hair wash that I have brewed, every home-remedy that I have shared for simple ailments, carry within them my special loving thoughts and feelings for that particular person. How much I have enjoyed indulging in this gift creation, which has reinforced, renewed or revitalised each and every relationship that I treasure! This realisation was the real gift that my women friends offered early this year on my birthday!!!!

-Anita



The 'grandmas' of the family, sitting together at the Families Learning Together meet at Panchgani.

some moments together...



Dadaji and Nanaji drinking fresh strawberry milkshake while sunning away at Panchgani.



Abu and Sujay worshipping the Ganesh idol which was home-made by Sakhi this year.



Ssakhi and people from our 'extended' family, discussing views sitting 'the Shire' in Canada.

Well, friends, we would've loved to have written more about our family, but paper, unlike speech, limits space. But whenever you wish, you may contact us, for a more deep talk with our family. You'll always be welcome, as we all love to talk!!!

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• **And the beacon is passed over to Aspi and Yasmin...**