

# Questions and Family Activities



## Comprehension Questions:

- What were Alexander and his sister doing? (Fighting during breakfast)
- What did Huckwin want to do? (Fight the Erodians) How did Alexander feel about fighting the Erodians? (He felt fighting wasn't the right choice) How did this make Huckwin feel? (He challenged Alexander to a fight)
- Who was the lady Alexander met? (The Peace Maker) What did she ask Alexander? (If he would like to buy a game) Where was the lady from? (Peace Mountain) Where did Alexander need to go? (The Hall of Power on Peace Mountain)
- How were Alexander and Huckwin working out their differences? (Moving on a giant chess board) What happened when Huckwin counted to 10? (He was a little less mad) Why did Alexander and Huckwin not want to fight anymore? (They tried to understand instead of argue)

## Discussion Questions:

- What is peaceability?
- Is peaceability a choice?
- What would our home be like if everyone worked on peaceability?
- How many people does it take to fight? Do we make a choice to fight? Why can it be hard to choose not to fight?
- Can you think of anyone who's really good at peaceability? Who? How do you feel when you're around this person? What do you think makes them peaceful?
- Who wins when two people fight?
- Can you think of a time when you've chosen to be handle something difficult in a peaceful way?

## Scenarios:

Your brother is having a bad day. He's been mean and grumpy to everyone! When you ask to borrow his skateboard, he tells you you'd better keep your hands off that thing in a very mean voice. How can you respond in a peaceable way?

Everyone is asking your mom for things and the phone is ringing while your mom is trying to make dinner. It doesn't feel peaceful at all and your mom seems frustrated. Is there anything you can do?



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Your little brother and sister are fighting over a toy. Is there anything you can do?

### **Win-Win Scenarios:**

Ask what the difference is between "win-lose" and "win-win." Define "win-win" (finding a way to agree -- a way where no one is hurt and where everyone benefits). Share the situations below with your children (and add your own). Ask children to come up with a "win-win" solution.

- Your mom said it's time to do your homework but your friend that you haven't played with in ages comes over and asks you to go jump with him on his new trampoline.
- You get to go out to eat with your family. You really want to go to a certain restaurant but your sister wants to go somewhere else. And your parents want to go to a different place than you or your sister.

### **Family Activity Ideas:**

**Stillness Contest.** See who can go the longest without speaking, or without moving. This is a way to teach small children the feeling, as well as the skill, of being peaceful, quiet, and calm. Afterward talk about how it feels nice to be quiet and still sometimes. You can also do this while playing soft, pleasant music and talk about how silence and the right music can help us feel peaceful and nice.

**"Boiling Anger" Demonstration.** Give your young children the vocabulary they need to talk about anger and give them a way to conceptualize why anger is dangerous and harmful. Show children a pan of cool water. Have them touch it and put their fingers in it. Then put it on the stove over heat. Explain that when we get mad and lose our tempers, we start getting hot. When the water is boiling, say, "This is like getting angry and losing our temper -- we get all bubbly and upset and we can hurt people. Would you like to touch that water now? (No!) So let's try not to boil -- not to get mad, not to lose our temper."

**Simple Musical-Harmony Game.** If you have a piano, show children the difference between a chord that is in tune and in harmony and the sound of two or three random and dissonant keys struck together. Let them hear the sound and say, "Harmony" or "No harmony." Then ask which sounds best. Then ask which sounds upsetting. Finally talk about the other (but similar) kind of harmony -- of how people treat each other. Say some kind words in a kind voice and invite someone else to do the same. Talk about how that conversation is like the nice notes that sound good together. Then say something not-so-nice in a not-so-nice tone and invite someone else to respond in kind. Point out how that sort of interchange is NOT harmonious and makes us feel bad.

**Peaceful Atmosphere.** Work to improve the calmness of your home throughout the month. (a) play restful music -- classical and other peaceful music creates a feeling of refinement, order, and peace; (b) Parents set an example of calmness by controlling the tone and decibel level of your own voice -- yelling accomplishes little and instantly punctures a peaceable atmosphere

**Calming Methods.** Talk about how everyone gets angry and frustrated sometimes but that we don't have to give in to those feelings. Discuss and determine a method for calming yourselves and practice this method throughout the month. One good method is to count to ten. Explain how counting to ten before we yell or get angry allows us to calm down. Set the example by letting your children see (and hear) you counting to ten. Another good method is to give yourself a "time



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out” when you're feeling angry and encourage all family members to simply walk away when they're feeling angry or frustrated and come back when they've calmed themselves (talk about ways to calm ourselves – read a book, play with a favorite toy, say a prayer, etc.).

**Calm Couch.** Create a “calm couch” in your home this month. When someone (including you!) is feeling angry or upset, invite this person (or send yourself) to a designated “calm couch” for 2 minutes. At the calm couch, you can read or simply close your eyes and take deep breaths. When the two minutes is up, you can join back in with the family and make any necessary apologies. Don't treat the calm couch as a punishment -- rather as a way to avoid punishment. If children don't wish to sit on the calm couch and fix their behavior, they instead have to receive a stronger consequence such as losing a cherished privilege.

**The Peace Award.** This award is a good way to praise and recognize children for their efforts to stay calm and peaceable. Have children help design how the “Peace Award” will look (it can be a simple paper with the peace sign on it, colorful letters, etc.). Say to children, "Who is in the running for the Peace Award this week?" A child might be in the running if he has not lost his temper all week, has not retaliated when someone hurt him, has counted to ten, has helped others to calm down when need be, or could explain why someone might have done a hurtful thing. Lavishly praise every effort. Be in the running yourself, thinking of examples of your own efforts to be peaceable during the week just passed. Discuss each situation that anyone brings up. Give the award to the family member who has made the greatest effort to be peaceable that week. Praise the winner profusely! Remember that awards get posted on the bedroom door of the family member who wins it for the week then come back to be re-awarded to someone new a week later.



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