

Family Values

Mi-Yeon remembers something important that happened when she was a little girl. Read the story and find out: What happened? What did she learn?

I was in the kitchen helping my mother when I heard the crash. I knew at once what had happened. I turned and started to run toward the room where the guests were, but my mother stopped me.

“Wait,” she said. **“Let’s return to our guests as if nothing has happened. Do not show how upset and angry you are.”**

“But Mother, how can you say that? You know what has happened. Our family vase has been broken. You heard the crash. This is terrible.”

My mother smiled at me and replied, “Yes, I know. **The vase that has been in our family for over 200 years is broken.** But we mustn’t let our guests know how priceless it is.”

With that, she picked up the tea, and we returned to our guests. When we entered the room, I saw at once that my worst fear was right—the priceless vase was in pieces on the floor. And standing next to the broken vase was the 4-year-old son of Mrs. Kim.

Mrs. Kim had a horrified look on her face.

The boy was starting to cry. He looked very guilty.

“I...I...well, somehow...,” Mrs. Kim began to explain. My mother quickly said, **“Oh, that’s all right. It was an old vase. It was not valuable.”**

“But the vase just fell off the shelf,” Mrs. Kim replied. “Oh, don’t worry about it. Everything is just fine. Would you like some tea? And what about some of these sweets?”

After our guests had gone, I asked my mother, “Why did you say that the vase was worthless? You know that it was very valuable.”

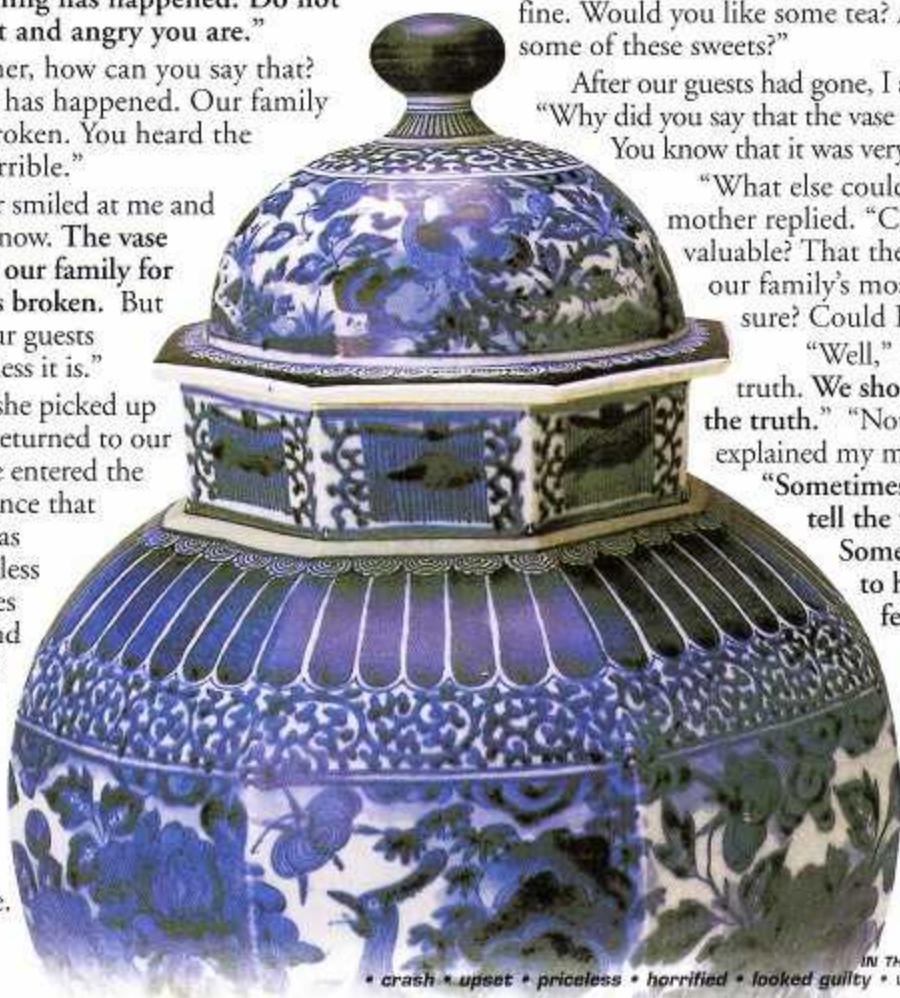
“What else could I say?” my mother replied. “Could I say it was valuable? That the boy had broken our family’s most precious treasure? Could I say that?”

“Well,” I said, “It’s the truth. We should always tell the truth.” “Not always,” explained my mother carefully. **“Sometimes we must not tell the truth.**

Sometimes it is best to hide our true feelings.”

“Is there no other way?” I asked.

“Believe me. I know. There is no other way.”



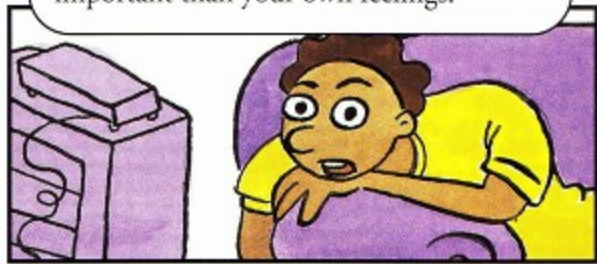
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What was the mother trying to teach her daughter?
Check the sentences you agree with.

Relationships with people are more important than material things like vases.



Other people's feelings are more important than your own feelings.



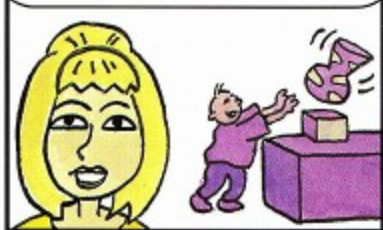
It's sometimes necessary to tell a lie.



Never show other people your true feelings, especially sadness or anger.



Don't embarrass other people. Always protect their feelings.



Now exchange your ideas with a classmate.

TURN TO PAGE 83 FOR AN INTERACTION TIP.

LOOKING AT THE ISSUE

Here are some values we might learn from our families.
Which are the most important in your culture?

Always tell the truth.

Always protect other people's feelings.

Never speak badly about someone else.

Show respect, especially to older people.

Never let anyone see your true feelings, especially if you are hurt or sad.

Always help others who need your help.

What other values did you learn in your family?
