

The lion king: family ties

Business



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The movie begins with an introduction to the average, nuclear family: Mufasa (father), Sarabi (mother), and Simba (son). Simba was just born, and Mufasa and Sarabi begin the long and perilous journey from the beginning stage of the family cycle (establishing a home) to the parental stage (becoming parents and raising kids). For the entire pride, the average birth rate is one or two cubs per lioness.

The lionesses hunt for the entire pride, while the male lions take care of the teaching of the cubs, and protecting the land itself. The time the parents spend with their cubs help them develop morals as well as bonding with the parent. Moral values that are passed down to the cubs are: manners (please and thank you), respecting family members and superior pride members, honor, and responsibility. In the movie, divorce does not exist, but neither does marriage. There are no real official relationships, but all of the lions seem to be paired up as if they were married. Simba's uncle Scar (part of Simba's extended family) comes and implies that he wants to take over the Pride Lands, through rude conversation with his brother, the king.

After Mufasa leaves to do his kingly thing, Scar 'innocently' tells Simba about an exciting and interesting place called the Elephant Graveyard, with the intention of intriguing Simba, and sending him to the dangerous place. This affects Simba's emotional growth, as he places undeserved trust in Scar, right before the main conflict of the story occurs, causing him major trauma through the rest of his life. In turn, Simba and Nala adventure to the Elephant Graveyard, and almost gets eaten by Shenzi (the female leader), Banzai (the cooperative male), and Ed (the crazy male), who are Scar's right-hand-hyenas. Scar can be seen as the adoptive parent of Shenzi, Banzai and

Ed, because he has permanently made them a part of his family, and they follow his commands and rules. Thankfully, Zazu, who was supposed to be watching Simba, flies off to find Mufasa to save the day.

Mufasa arrives in the nick of time to save his son and Nala, who were dangerously close to getting eaten. When Mufasa pulls Simba off to the side for a stern talking-to, the audience is surprised when he says that Simba was brave to go there, and kings need to be brave. Then, we all ooh and aah over an adorable bonding moment between father and son. Mufasa teaches Simba how to hunt down prey, which is a fantastic example of taking care of physical needs, intellectual growth, emotional growth and social development. Also during this period, Simba learns about loyalty, responsibility, respect, forgiveness, and dependability.

Not long after that, Scar is up to his mane in evil. He designs a plan that will kill both Mufasa and Simba in one shot. He tells Simba that he has a surprise for him, and asks him to wait under a tree in a large canyon. Then, Scar's hunch-hyenas and adopted sons and daughter chase a herd of wildebeest, causing a stampede to funnel into the canyon. Scar ran to fetch Mufasa, conveniently on time to save Simba. As Mufasa struggles to gain traction as he climbs the sheer side of a cliff overhanging the canyon, Scar digs his claws into Mufasa's paws, forcing him off the cliff and to his death below.

When Scar realizes that Simba is still living, he tells Simba to run, because the pride will hate him for killing his own father, even though it wasn't his fault. Scar sends his minions after Simba, who escapes through dashing and crawling through a large expanse of thorns. The hyenas aren't daring enough

to follow, and assume that since he was headed into the Savannah, he'll die anyways. But they assumed incorrectly. Simba is saved by an obese warthog and a cleverly stupid meerkat.

They teach him their way of life, and he grows up strong, happy and healthy. Timon and Pumba (meerkat and warthog) are a great example of both a couple, and a foster family. They are a couple in the sense that they consciously chose to live single lives, and not have kids. But they take on the role of Simba's foster parents because they know he has nowhere else to go, and they think he will protect them from large predators. This all occurs, forcefully and sooner than expected, while Sarabi and Mufasa should have been in the Launching stage and middle age stages of the family cycle. When Nala, Simba's childhood friend, shows up unexpectedly, Simba shows signs of infatuation, and then love.

They spend time together, and that turns out having a major influence on Simba. He tells her that he can't ever return to the Pride Lands. But his love for her stays strong and ends up pulling him back to his home. He triumphs over Scar in a battle, during which the hyenas become the predator to the boss they had worked so hard for, for so long. Scar is killed and eaten by his own "children". Nala and Simba have a baby named Kiara.

This is also the time when Sarabi is in the retirement stage of the family life cycle. Simba and Nala also begin their journey from the beginning stage, into the parental stage, and in the second movie, they go through the launching stage of the family life cycle. Through the entire movie, the audience sees Scar's anger and jealousy towards his own brother. This is the driving force

behind all of Scar's actions, and it affects everyone else in the story. The audience can learn from Scar's example to respect your siblings and family members, and be responsible for your own actions and don't blame your downfalls on someone else.

But the most important moral of the story is that family is important, and you can't just take it for granted. One minute they might be there, and the next, they might be gone, for any number of reasons. Remember that your family is the one thing that will never fail you, even if you have done something wrong.