

# My space to breathe



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

I have several Indian friends in the Los Angeles area, with whom I have shared good times and bad. I have slept in their homes, and even been considered by their parents a genuine part of their families. Yet I disliked the fact that Indian families can often act only on the basis of emotions. I blamed their emotionally charged natures on the Indian soap operas they watched day after day. I disliked those Indian shows even though I had watched only two of them in my entire life. Still, I knew that it was best not to feel negative emotions in myself.

The Indian dramas that my friends' families loved to watch daily were just slow motion pictures in my opinion. Each moment of each drama focused on lethargic and unreal adventures in emotions. Nothing went very far. Crying; getting offensive about everything under the bright blue sky; and blaming one another were the themes of these shows. I disliked them with all my heart. And, whenever it was time for my friends' families to watch those Indian shows, I found myself leaving their homes. I was even uncomfortable leaving in those moments, given that my own negative emotions were obnoxious enough to seem to strangle me because I did not understand them at all.

In order to understand these emotions, despite the fact that I loved my Indian "families," I made an effort to watch "Kyunke Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thee" (2006) with my friends another time. While watching the show this time, I was observant of my own reactions and feelings. At the same time, I observed the others in the TV lounge watching the show with me. Two of the aunts of my friend, Vijay, sobbed during the show. I tried to suppress my own strange emotions at this point. As luck would have it, Vijay, his mom,

and his dad started to laugh during the show soon after I had witnessed his sobbing aunts! I relaxed there and then, and from that point on, the show was a breeze.

Even though “Kyunke Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thee” lasts only thirty minutes each time, five days a week, I disliked it the first two times I watched it. I had witnessed real sad emotional dramas in my Indian friends’ homes before I had watched the show, which was perhaps the main reason why I detested the emotion packed drama on television. I believed that it was the TV drama that had taught my Indian friends to overreact to issues. I also believed that this drama was a bad influence on me! Obviously, I was being oversensitive at the same time as I blamed the drama for teaching oversensitivity to its viewers. Besides, I was not thinking that it is the individual himself with the prerogative to allow conditioning of any sort. Nobody can force us to be influenced by anything.

Now I have stopped detesting the Indian shows that I previously could not digest. I can stay in my friends’ homes as long as I please. Apart from this, I have understood that my Indian “families” have a right to feel and believe whatever they do. Choosing emotions over the intellect many a times is their choice and responsibility. And if I love them, I must do so regardless of the different perspectives we have about dealing with ourselves and others. While I imagine that I am granting my Indian friends this “space to breathe,” in actuality this space is mine to occupy. I give up my negative emotions today – and for ever. For sure, it was difficult to breathe in negativity.

## **References**

Star Plus. (30 December 2006). “Kyunke Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thee.” TV Series.