

# Sharing Meals

are we?

The act of dining, dining spaces, their implications in the quality of life in modern homes



Are we? Everything seems so distant, seated next to each other but we cant speak, busy with our lives but no one to talk about it to! Everyone is under the same roof yet seated apart.



## Eateries, Cuisines, Cultures and Rituals

We have deep rooted relations with food, cuisine, associated cultures. The making of this substance of value, food is a celebration in itself. Food brings together people. In fact they say, the quickest way to impress someone like your boss, is to cook and invite them over for some great meal!



## Work – Life, Balance?

This work life, where one travels to work in an environment crowded with coworkers seated amongst monotonous work desks, allows very little room for anything other than demanding dedicated working hours, not allowing for any slack. These long working hours, the late-night shifts, healthy-unhealthy working spaces, this culture is in itself setting its deep roots into the society where the want to escape from an atmosphere like this, to find tranquil, to go back home to their loved ones, feels more than a NEED.

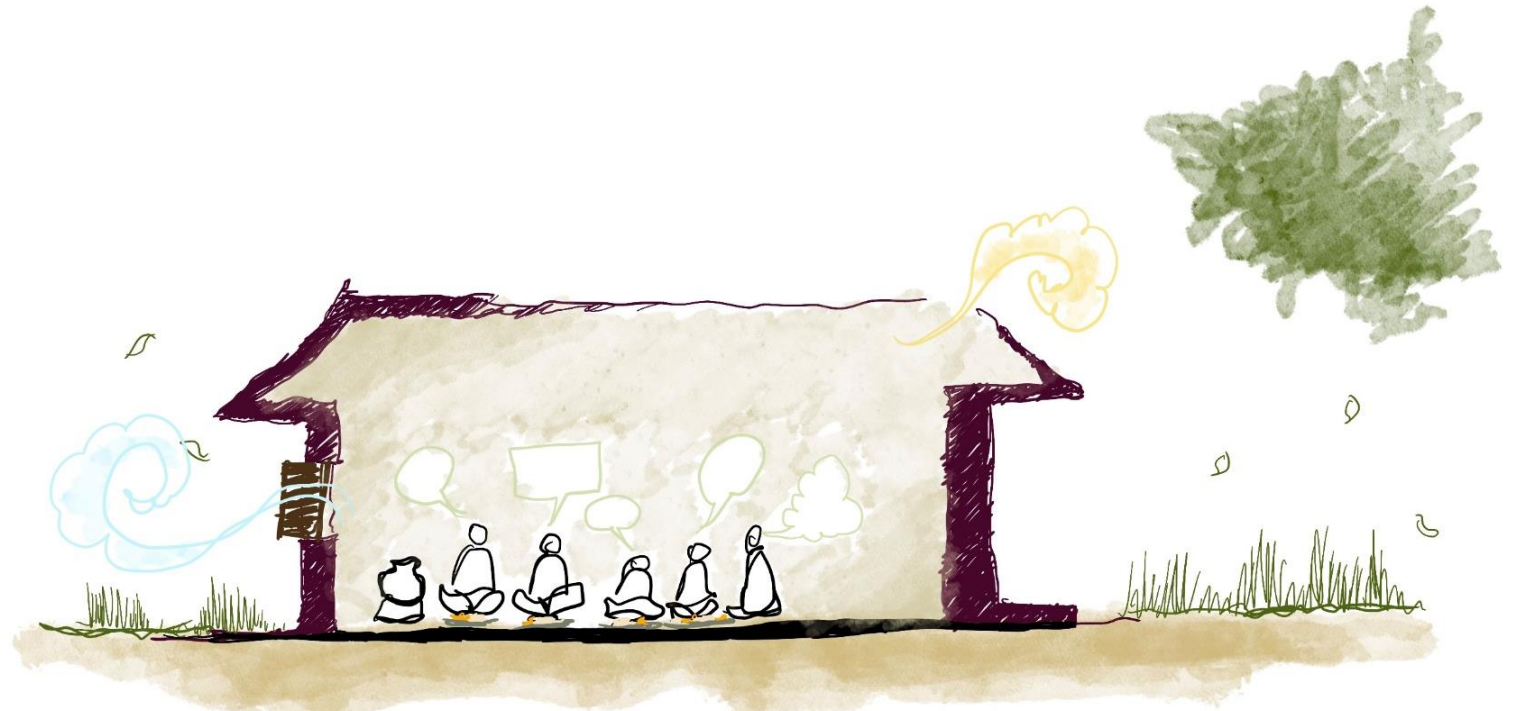
What have we been traditionally doing?



Walking across green stretches to get back from work, carrying empty lunch packs.



Meeting and greeting familiar faces, would one reach home.



A strong play of aromas by the entrance, the cool wind gushing across the tiny punctured openings create a threshold, marking the distinction between the work and life scenarios. Everyone in the family gathers around, some setup the mat or charpai, someone places the plates and then there goes an endless supply of savouries. Looking across through each other, they share their day, conversate, nudge over, quarrel sometimes, take important decisions as well. A well- knit family where one deeply cares for another and is aware at all times.

**What is it to Dine?**





## What is it to Dine to you?

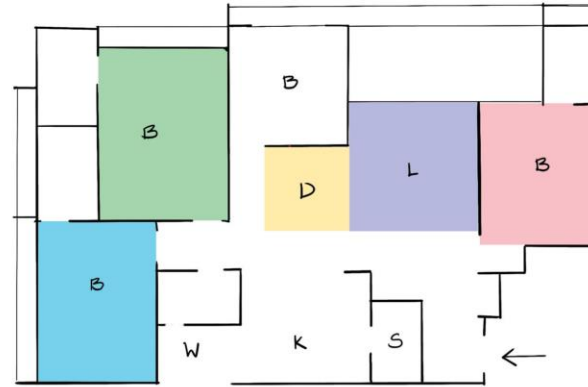
Many amongst us have memories associated to being together with their families, extended relatives, friends back in their hometowns where grandma's cooking brings all together. Elaborate meals, conversations, face to face interactions, all supported by a sequential set of experiences. If the space would not have supported for a warm, inviting atmosphere allowing for these carefully curated situations, would memories and associations this strong not been created!

I have very vivid memories of grandma calling us all for food when its about lunch time, I would leave my assignment then and there, rush down the stairs and sit down on the cool, deep red flooring. That kitchen of her's is pretty small, unlike the quarrel in deciding who gets to sit beside another, in that tiny space. She wiping the steel plate with her saree, shining against the dark room, against the flames from the stove beside her, sets up the atmosphere. Huge utensils filled with saaru, korma, meatballs, rice and what not is just a beginner. A little sacrifice, a little nudge from that aunt of mine, another aunt killing it with the intense conversations, my sister and I with beaming eyes looking at each other while ajji cuts through thin slices of that juicy mango, Oh gosh, I wished I was there when I was writing this down. Well, you all would've missed up on my little presentation so I decided to skip it for later.



Sharing Meals, we were

Sharing Meals, **are we now?**



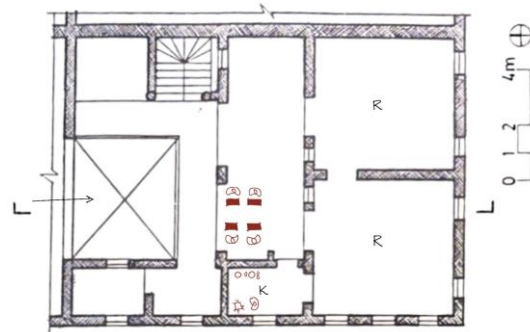
Where are the recent trends leading to?

One roof, multiple members indulging in different cuisines, eating at different times, at different places

Where does the familial relationship stand for this house?

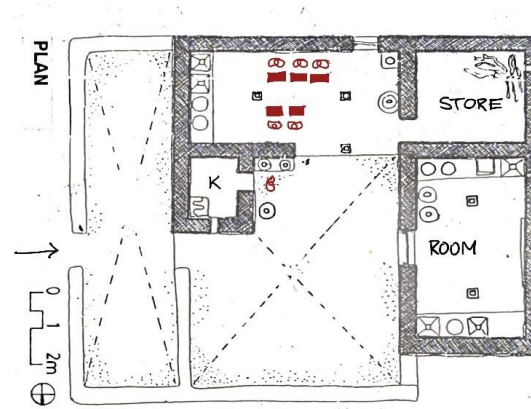
It can be observed that people earlier sat together sharing almost all meals through the day. With the change in lifestyle, current situations show that from say three meals per day, now its is reduced to sharing one meal or rather no meals despite living in the same family. People resort to their rooms, eating their favourable cuisine, as per their time either while working or while watching some show!

House in Central Plateau



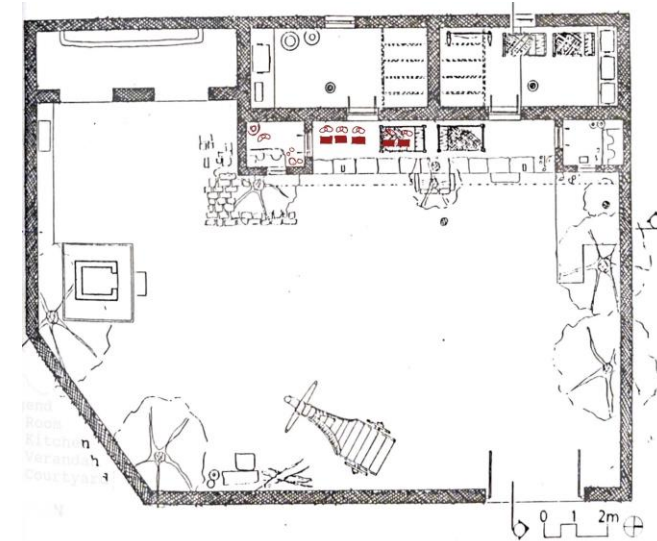
D - adjacent to K (D - K)  
D - Leads to Rooms

House in Rajasthan



D - adjacent to K (D - K)  
D - Separate room, not a part of main Circulation

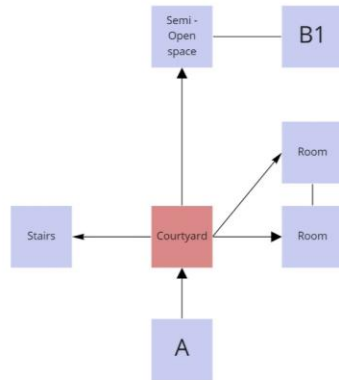
House at Saurashtra coast



D - adjacent to K (D - K)  
D - Leads to Rooms

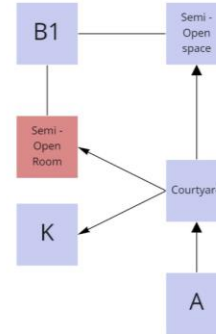
Vernacular houses in different cultures across India

House in Central Plateau



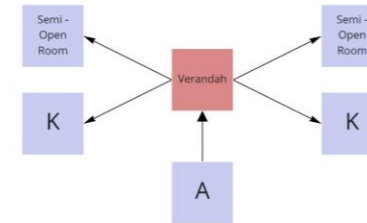
D - adjacent to K ( D - K )  
D - Leads to Rooms

House in Rajasthan



D - adjacent to K ( D - K )  
D - Separate room, not a part of main Circulation

House at Saurashtra coast



D - adjacent to K ( D - K )  
D - Leads to Rooms

## J graphs

Semi - Open flexible spaces for dining, placed adjacent to kitchens

Large courtyards, small kitchens

Hypothesis	The idea of eating together, sharing a space together to talk about their day is diminishing due to societal changes. The modern housing is adding to this disparity and not helping in enhancing familial relationships - expanding into dine-liv
What led to this study	Observing the trend where dining room is not a room, rather a piece of furniture in a corridor, this is what it has been reduced to now.
An observation	A family's internal relationship is highly reflected by the working of their dining space
Data Collection	Studying and comparing house plans, Asking people about their dining activities and spaces
Why this study	To allow apartments to be more than 4 dead walls and rather evoke a sense of calm and bonding, thus making it a home

What led to this study

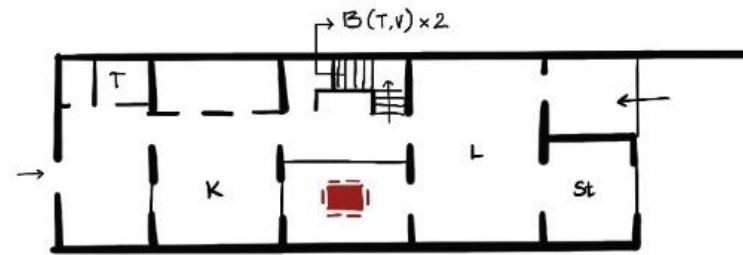


LIC Township, Y - 1973 - 76



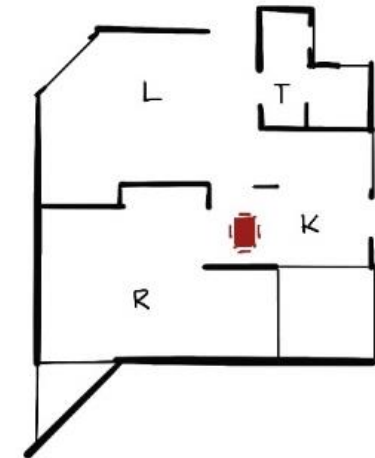
D - a separate designated area  
 D branches into other rooms

Jai Shefali Park, Y- 1974 -78



D - Independent ( L - D - K )  
 D -separate designated area  
 D clubbed with multi-volume branching

Staff Housing for Atira, Y-1984



Transforming from an independent room into a sublet

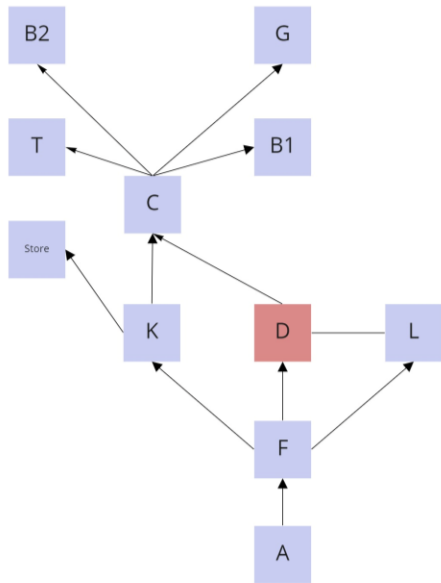
D - clubbed with K ( D - K )  
 D - Sublet of K  
 D - Leads to Room

Semi - Open flexible spaces for dining, placed adjacent to kitchens

Large courtyards, small kitchens

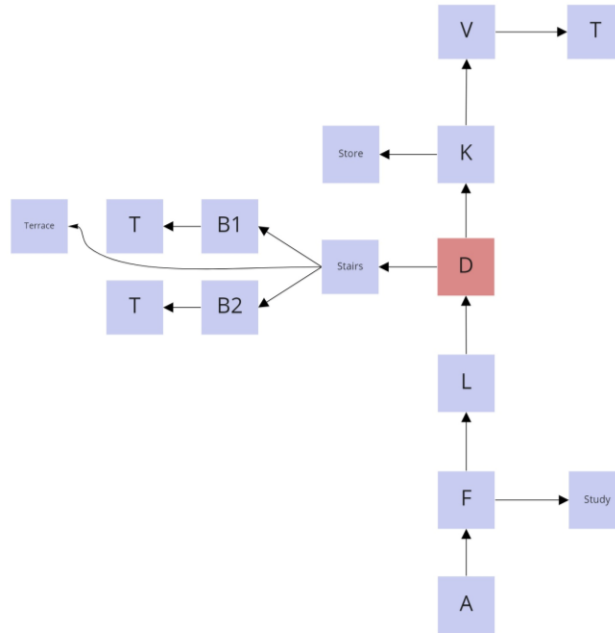
## Plans - Gujarat (1970s -80s)

LIC Township, Y- 1973 - 76



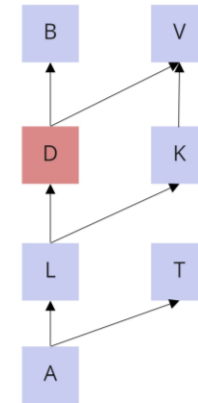
D clubbed with L ( D - L )  
 D - a separate designated area  
 D branches into other rooms

Jai Shefali Park, Y- 1974 -78



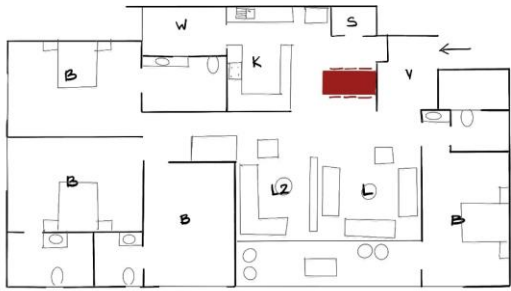
D - Independent ( L - D - K )  
 D -separate designated area  
 D clubbed with multi-volume branching

Staff Housing for Atira, Y-1984 pg 100

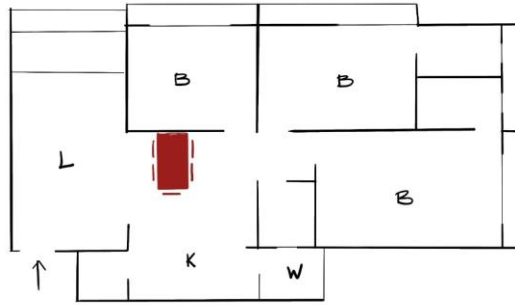


D - clubbed with K ( D - K )  
 D - Sublet of K  
 D - Leads to Room

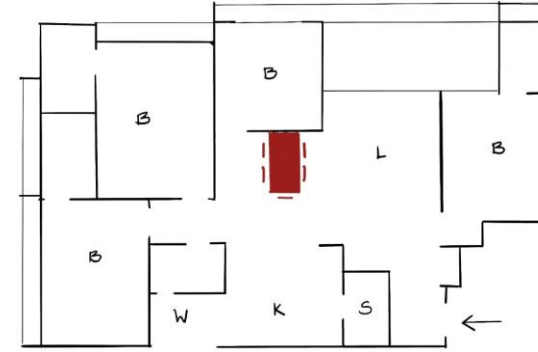
Dining rooms exist, leading to other rooms  
 Larger courtyards, kitchens, living and dining or similar room sizes



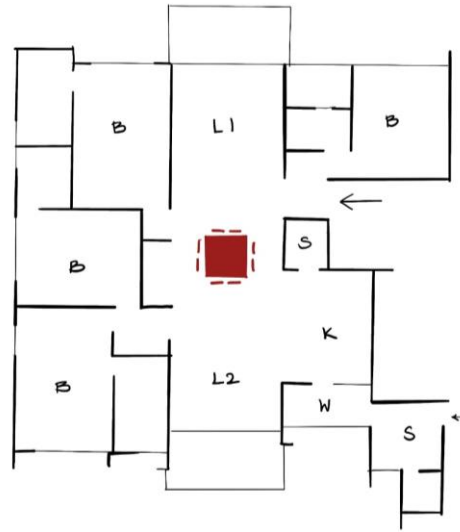
K-D



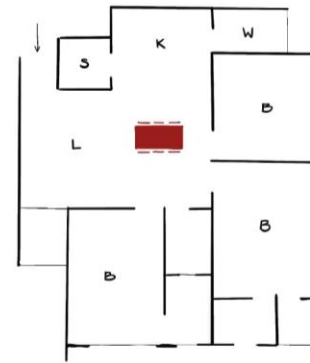
L-D  
K



D-L  
K



L-D  
K



K  
L-D

# Plans - Ahmedabad (2020s)

Dining rooms exist, leading to other rooms  
Larger courtyards, kitchens, living and dining or similar room sizes

Corridor - sublet - neglected

Is it just a piece of furniture?

No, it isn't

Dining as a space is what the space echoes/ speaks to you -  
how the space enables for warmer or colder relations with  
its inhabitants.

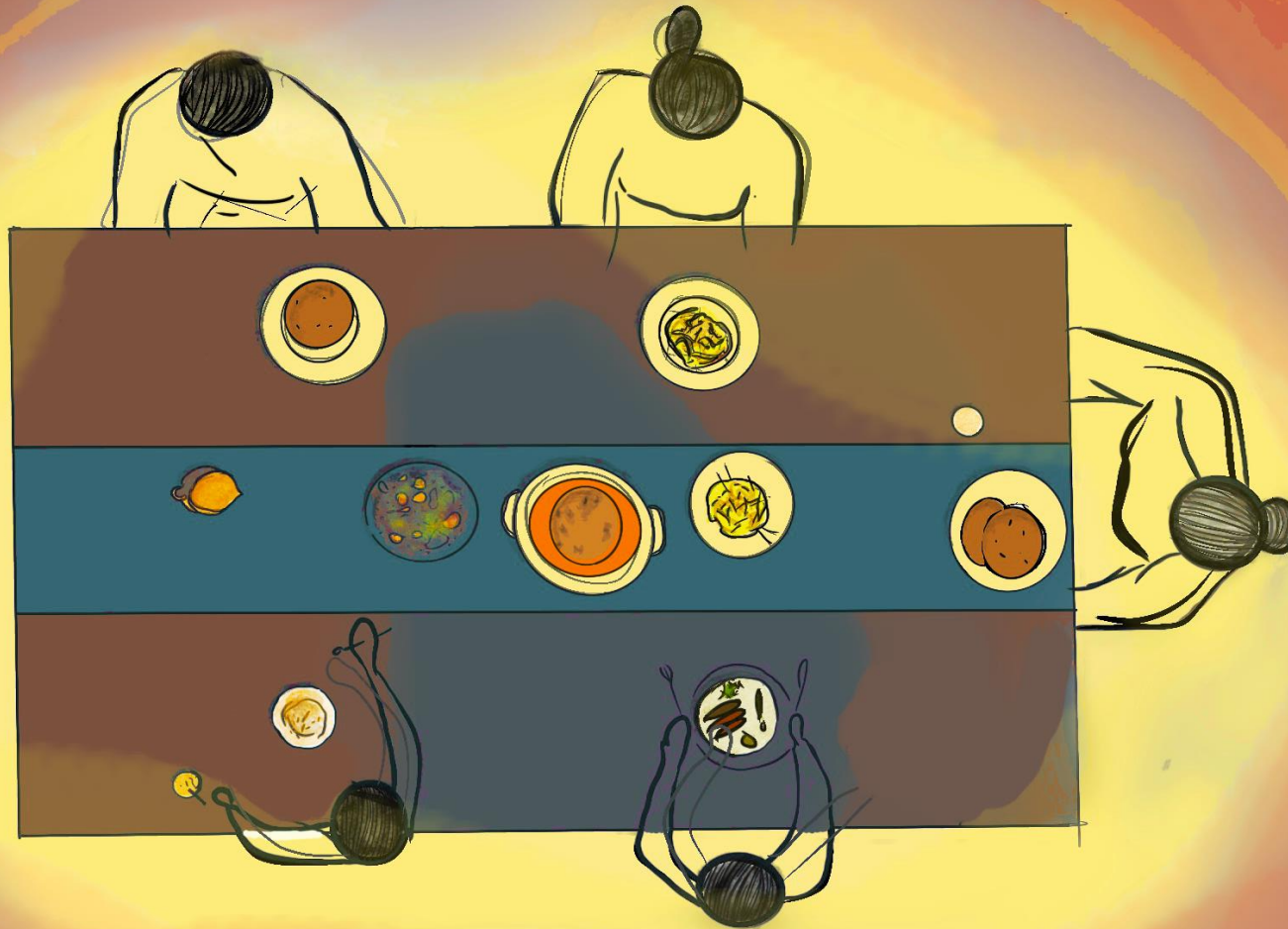
Explain to me, your dining room, does it hold any specific character? When there is so much an act like eating together can do, should we need a space that allows for more such opportunities rather than reducing it to something very bare, a raw corner that might feel exposed and vulnerable?

Are the existing dinings evocative? Are they evocative enough that they allow for meaningful time, conversations, nudges and blurring of boundaries? Does the place allow to make it echo with aromas or does it feel like an audio, olfactory, visual clutter, crashing down at you all at once? Is it expelling human touch, allowing the members to resort to non-existing individual niches in their homes?

Where does the family here stand? How strong are their bonds? Do they know if someone excelled or if one is going through something difficult? Are they alone in a building crowded with people, all screaming for bonding time and space but cant seem to find anywhere near?

Could designing for dining spaces provide for much needed change from the mundane routines?

**Could the HOME provide an ESCAPE, a blur from the fast – life outside?**



- What purpose did a dining space provide?
- What if the Corridor is developed into something meaningful, more than a piece of furniture?
- Do we need a space that captures the essence of this memory?
- Will evocative spaces help the people hold ground/ make memories over?
- Could a house designed now, adhere to the changing cultures and make room for calmer, peaceful spaces over which the housed family can bond?