

MODULE #5: Family Dynamics

Objectives

- Participants will understand the importance of self-disclosure in the family.
- Participants will discuss their family dynamics.
- Participants will understand the importance of parent-child relationships and will enhance problem solving skills.

Context



The most common definition of “family” is the basic unit in society traditionally consisting of two parents rearing their children; also a single-parent family is regarded as equivalent to the traditional family (Merriam-Webster, 2008). Thus, it is necessary to bear in mind that families, especially in immigrant communities, can be composed of godparents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Research illustrates the importance of family stability in a child’s educational success and emotional well being. Communication is a means to healthy family dynamics.

Handouts & Resources Needed:

Handout 5.1: Sample Parts of me

Handout 5.1A: Parts of Me Form

Pens/pencils

Sheet of paper- one for each participant

Journals – one per students

Activity #1: Self-disclosure (30 min)

Procedure:

- Icebreaker
- Tell participants that the purpose of this exercise is to allow self-disclosure. Remind participants about this concept. Self-disclosure is important in the family to maintain a sense of trust and honesty. Then, ask participants to form small 4-5 randomly assigned groups.
- Provide a sample of Record of Me, which include rules for the group and ask them to discuss among peers, and to add to the rules (Handout 5.1).
- Ask participants to write the most important things about themselves to put in a “record of me form” (Handout 5.1A).
- Debriefing

Activity #2: Child-parent/guardian responsibilities (55 min)

Procedure:

- Icebreaker

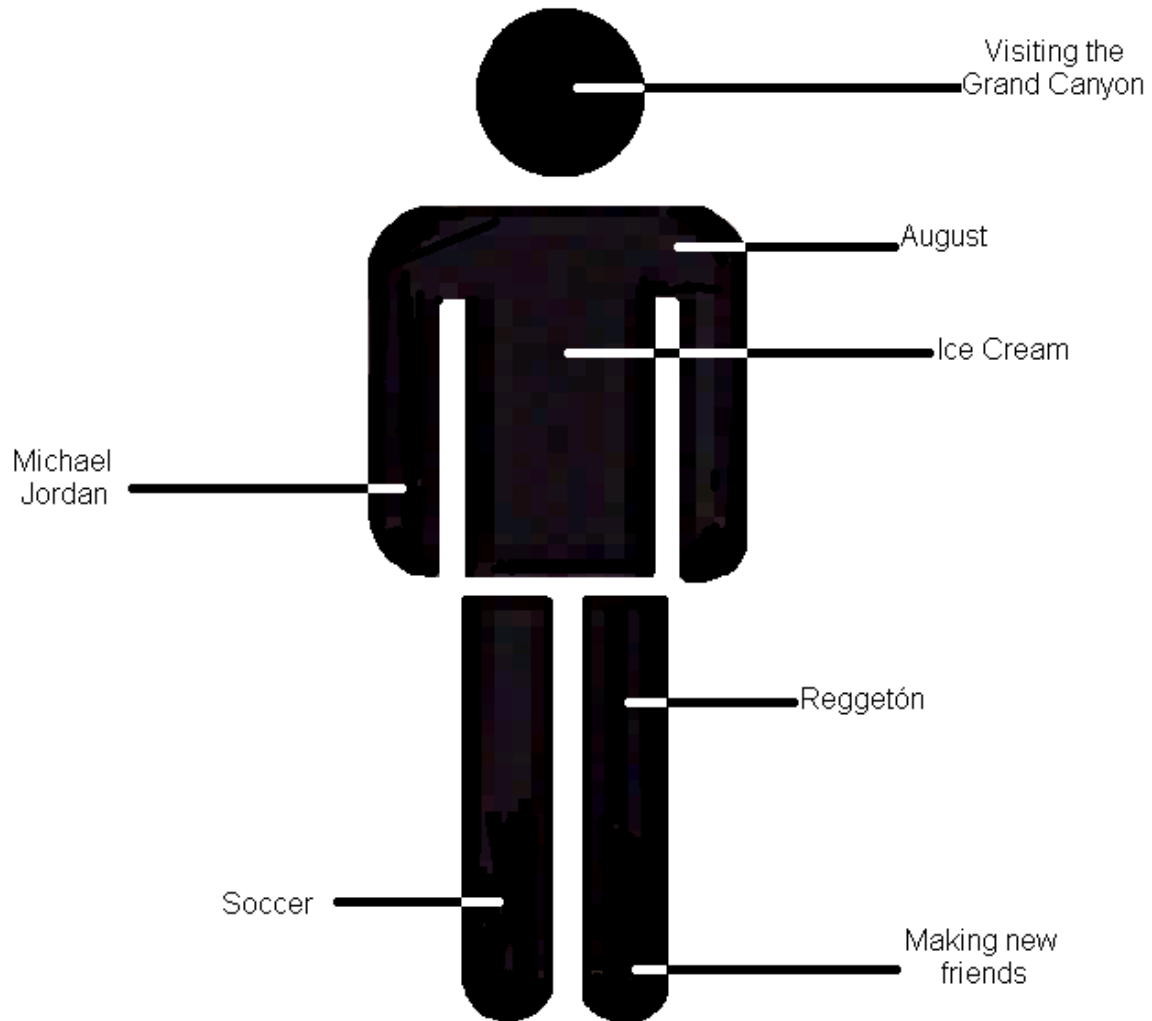
- Initiate this activity by asking participants with whom they live. Tell participants that parents, guardians and children have responsibilities; however, when the responsibilities are disregarded, it leads to conflicts. For example, parents are responsible for providing food to their children; children are responsible for doing their homework. How can we avoid conflicts?
- Ask participants to brainstorm on the kind of conflicts parents, guardians and youth have with each other. Ask them to think about themselves, friends or relatives. Make sure to take notes on the flit chart or blackboard.
- Once conflicts have been discussed, engage in discussion on how to avoid those conflicts; ask participants to write down their responsibilities as son or daughter and their parents' or guardians' responsibilities.
- Ask for two volunteers to do a role-play to reinforce avoiding conflicts with parents or guardians. Have one participant be the son or daughter and the other the parent or guardian.
 - The child is coming from school and the parent/guardian is cooking. The parent/guardian told the child in the morning before leaving for school to make sure to clean the room when he/she comes back. The child returns from school and puts his/her book bag in the closet, and proceeds to grab the TV remote control. The role-play should indicate what the son/daughter should do differently to avoid conflicts with parents/guardians.
- Discuss what they learned from the activity
- Debriefing

Activity #3: Family dynamics (55 min)

Procedure:

- Icebreaker
- Begin this activity by telling participants that the idea of dysfunctional families has been created by society and internalized by many families. For example, single-parent households are not necessarily “dysfunctional”. Tell them that as long as they have one person that loves them that is what matters.
- Ask participants to write an autobiography in their journal, which should include their parents' involvement in their lives. Ask them how parent involvement or lack of parent involvement has affected who they are. Is this belief instilled by society? How can we change self-damaging beliefs?
- Have participants reflect and share on how this activity made them feel.
- Debriefing

Sample: Parts of Me



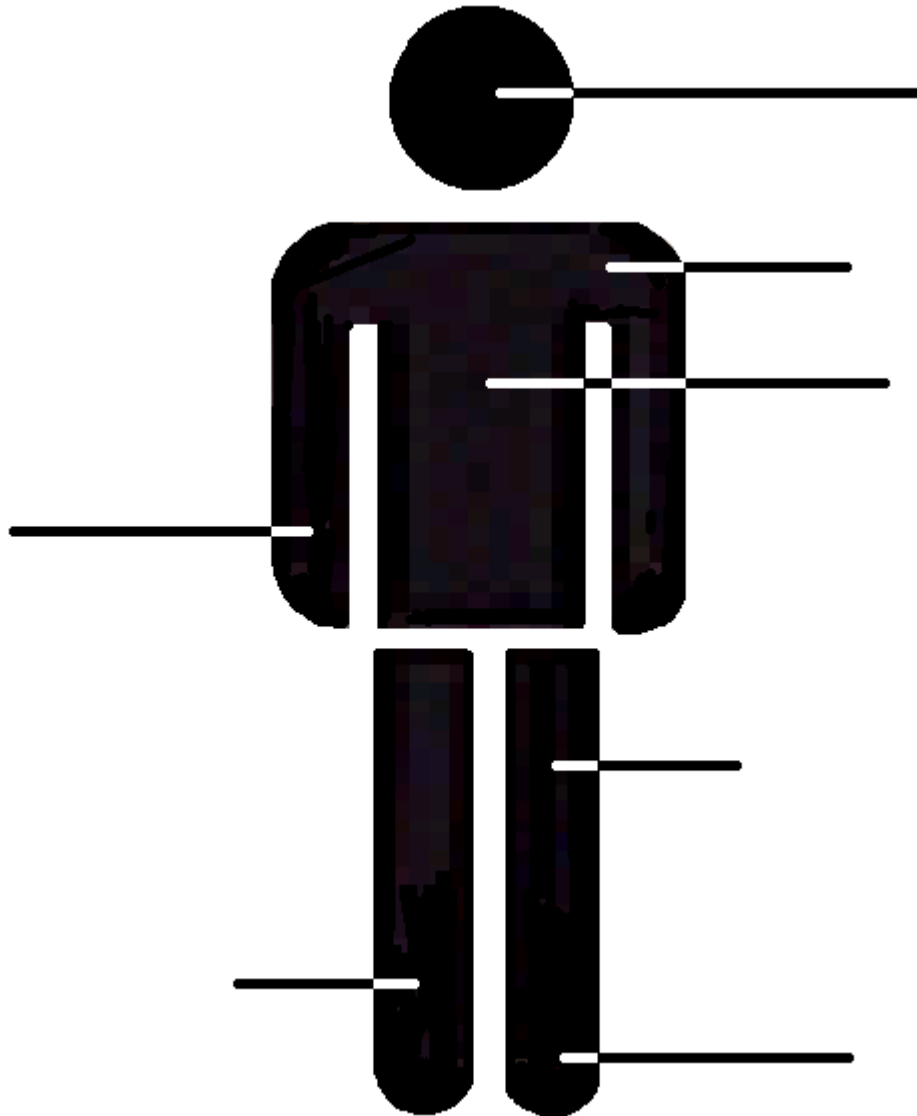
Working Time

1. Introduce the idea of ground rules that help everyone feel respected and allow time for talk. Suggest a few basic ground rules. For example:
 - Confidentiality Rule: What we say and do here is private and stays in the group.
 - Everyone has the right to "pass"—to choose not to participate in an activity or part of an activity.
 - No fighting or arguing.
 - Each person gets time to talk.
 - When someone is talking, everyone else will listen.
2. Ask students to think of other ground rules for the group. List all rules on the chalkboard.

Closing Time

1. Share some positive observations about the session. For example: "Yseth, I appreciate your helping us understand what will be expected in the group," or "I really liked how you shared your idea about friendship, Tincho," or "Evelyn, I'm glad you have decided to be a part of the group."
2. Ask whether there is anything anyone would like to say before the group ends, reminding students of the confidentiality rule, and mention the topic of the next session.

Parts of Me



What important things make you who you are?

- What is your favorite kind of music?
- What is your favorite song?
- What about a favorite performing artist?
- Where do you like to hangout with your friends?
- What is your favorite restaurant?
- What is your favorite food?
- What sports do you like to play or watch?
- Do you have pets?
- What is important to you? Community? Culture?
- What do you value the most?
- Where is your favorite place in the world?
- Where were you born?
- Do you have a favorite season?
- Who was your best friend in your early years?
- Who is your best friend now?