

Reaching out to families during the pandemic

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Aims

- To share a concept from Fraenkel and Cho (2020) to support families resilience
- To offer ideas of how families can continue to navigate through the pandemic and possible ongoing impact of it
- Offer participants a reflective space to identify how they might support and be supported by other family members

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Challenges

- Illness / death
- Moral injury
- Home schooling / working from home
- Unemployment / financial difficulties
- Usual strategies compromised
- Feeling unsafe / out of control
- Loneliness / isolation
- Mental health affected
- Increased conflict

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Reaching, up, down, in and around

(Fraenkel and Cho, 2020)

- Unfamiliar ground
- Think about your values
- Where do they come from?



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Reaching up (Fraenkel and Cho, 2020)

- Spiritual / religious / ethical or moral beliefs?
- What is essential to our wellbeing?
- What do we expect from our life?
- What do we expect from our relationships?
- What do we pay attention to?



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Reaching down (Fraenkel and Cho, 2020)

- Re-examine our expectations of life
- Spending time outdoors /appreciation of nature
- Tending to nonhuman beings within and outside of our living spaces
 - What is in your surroundings?
 - What may you have been too busy to notice before?



Reaching in (Fraenkel and Cho, 2020)

- Limited space and privacy
- Creative activities (family tiktok dance)
- Watching TV together / listening to music
- Cooking
- Exercising together
- Getting to know each other's tastes in different things
- Making art (scrap books)
- Collecting memories for the next generation



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Reaching around (Fraenkel and Cho, 2020)

- We are all experiencing this together
- New opportunities
- New rituals



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References

- Fraenkel, P., & Cho, W. L. (2020) Reaching up, down, in and around: Couple and family coping during the Coronavirus Pandemic. *Family Process*. Vol. 59 (3): pp. 847-864.

Time for reflection

Looking back.....

- What do you hope to say are the essential components and features for you and your family to have a reasonably secure life?
- What do you think you will have learnt to live with less of? (how much money and material goods do you need and what can we do without?)
- What positive changes might your family have noticed about you during this period?
- What new rituals have you started with your family during the pandemic you would like to hold onto and continue?
- What would you and your family be saying you most appreciate about one another through the pandemic?

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