



FAMILY REFLECTIONS

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Should your family choose to complete Family Reflections? In making your decision, consider the answers to the following questions:

Are there several ways to interact with Family Reflections? Yes, at least 3 choices.

1. Complete Family Reflections but not return it for feedback.
2. Complete Family Reflection and return it for feedback. Feedback could or could not be shared with service providers.
3. Do not choose to complete Family Reflections.

How will feedback from Family Reflections help in understanding the development of your child?

- ◆ Family Reflections will not provide feedback about the development of your child.
- ◆ Family Reflections will provide feedback about the development of your family, about your family style and about how your family approaches the task of raising your child. These family issues directly influence all family members.

What type of feedback will Family Reflections provide?

- ◆ Many families have felt that just completing Family Reflections has been an informative experience.
- ◆ Feedback will focus on three possible styles of organization and on three characteristics of family interaction.
- ◆ This feedback should aid in your understanding of families in general, your family and in helping your service provider to understand your style (should you choose to share the feedback).

Please continue if you're going to complete Family Reflections.

NAME: _____

DATE OF COMPLETION: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

**WHAT IS FAMILY REFLECTIONS
AND**

HOW TO COMPLETE FAMILY REFLECTIONS

FAMILY REFLECTIONS:

Family Reflections is a series of 20 descriptions about how a family might operate. You will be making a choice for each of the 20 descriptions that best describes your family. Given the vast diversity among families, you may not find a description that completely fits the workings of your family, so you may be choosing the best fit possible.

There is no right or wrong answer for each of the 20 descriptions. The descriptions are just that, descriptions of possible ways that families may work. As it should be, families will be very different in how they operate, so there is no correct answer.

PURPOSE OF FAMILY REFLECTIONS:

Family Reflections may have as many purposes as there are families using it. It is hoped that Family Reflections will provide some valuable self-reflection for families.

It could be an educational experience to stimulate thinking about your family and how it operates. It may provide insight into other ways that families work. It may be shared with professionals or other families to help understanding. At times, it encourages family members to share with each other their individual perceptions about their own family. It could help a family identify goals and desired changes.

FAMILY DRIVEN:

Family Reflections can be completed and used without professional assistance.

WHAT IS A FAMILY:

For the purpose of Family Reflections, the family will be identified as a household where individual(s) cooperate and participate in the raising of children.

Using this description, the family could be as small as a unit of two (adult and child) or beyond two members it could be without limit.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Family Reflections has 20 total descriptions.

Each of the 20 descriptions has a general description and concept regarding the way a family might operate. Under this general description and concept are 5 possible ways a family might operate.

You are to make two choices. The first is where you think your family is now. Check the box above the statement that has the best fit possible for where you think your family is now. The second choice is where you might want the family to be if change seems helpful. Check the box above the statement that has the best fit possible for where you might want your family to be.

Select the best description that fits your family based on how they operate at the PRESENT TIME.

COMMENTS:

If there are any comments or thoughts that you would like to add, add them under each of the 20 descriptions.

Example: In description 1, the concept and description is knowledge of resources. Read the description and then make a choice as to where you think your family is now. For example, you may choose the second from the left. Mark the box above the statement. You next choose where you might want to be if change seemed needed. If you felt that there was no change needed, you would again choose the second from the left, the same as the choice in where you think your family is now. Mark the box above the statement.

FAMILY REFLECTIONS

1. The family's awareness of services (knowledgeability)
2. Help obtained from agencies (formal utilization)
3. Help obtained from family and friends (informal utilization)
4. How decisions are made (decision making)
5. How your family views change (change)
6. How information is shared (communication)
7. How your family expresses feelings (expression)
8. How your family expresses conflict (conflict)
9. How your family supports its members (internal support)
10. How close is your family (connectedness)
11. The attitude of your family (mood)
12. How much loss is felt (grief)
13. Who's in charge of your family (leadership)
14. How clear are your rules (clarity)
15. The influences of outsiders (infringement)
16. Does your family have assertiveness skills (assertiveness)
17. Does your family influence decisions (sense of influence)
18. Does your family take time to heal (family renewal)
19. Does your family allow alternatives (alternatives)
20. Does your family monitor energy (energy allocation)

1. Knowledgeability

Needing to obtain services (this could be services such as medical help, child care, financial assistance, respite care, testing and therapy) is a common fact of life. Families differ in their knowledge about services, where to obtain them, where to start looking, how to get assistance and how to network. If your family needs service, which is a best description of your family:

Choice 1:
Where are you
now?

Choice 2:
Where might
you want to be?

We're not sure as to where to start, how to look, what to ask and what to expect. We haven't begun to know and understand the process yet.

We know we must start to build an awareness of how to locate and obtain services. We're just starting to look into the process.

We have some idea as to obtaining and locating services. We have some network established we can build on.

We have a fairly good idea of the process. We have many networks established and know where to look most of the time.

We feel that we have a very good understanding of the process, where to look, who to ask and what to expect in locating and obtaining services.

2. Formal Utilization

Formal resources would be such things as agencies, hospitals, institutions, government, medical providers, funding sources, public schools, and therapy providers. Families vary in how much they utilize these formal resources. Your family would best fit which category:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| We almost never seek formal resources. We don't see them as necessary to the care we need. | We seldom use formal resources. We view them as not necessary to the care we need. | We use formal resources on a moderate level. At times they are necessary to the care we need. | We use formal resources fairly often. They can be helpful to the care we need. | We initiate and use them frequently. We find them additive and important to the care that we need. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

3. Informal Utilization

Informal resources would be such things as family, friends and neighbors. Families vary in how much they utilize these informal resources. Your family would fit which category:

Choice 1:

Where are you how?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

- We don't use informal support from family, friends or neighbors.
- We use little informal support from family, friends and neighbors.
- We use informal support systems to a fair degree, obtaining some support from friends, neighbors and relatives.
- We use informal support systems quite a lot. We obtain quite a lot of support from friends, family and neighbors.
- We use informal resources to be a very important part of our support system. We obtain a great deal of support from friends, family and neighbors.

4. Decision Making

Making decisions is a part of daily life. Your family has choices about jobs, homes, rules, financial considerations, vacations and the like. In your family, decisions tend to be made:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

Decisions tend to consistently be made by specific individual(s) with no discussion or processing of issues or feelings. There is little variance to this way of decision making.	Decisions are discussed at times but mostly specific individual(s) make the decision.	Decisions just seem to happen. Each family member makes decisions that are important to them. Discussions about decisions is seldom.	Input into the decision is fairly important and is often encouraged. At times we discuss decisions and at times they just seem to be made.	Decisions are made with lots of input and discussion. Decisions will fit the situation with many avenues of possible solutions being considered. The decision has a team feel to it.
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5. Change

Change and adjustments are such a part of life. We are constantly presented with new challenges that we must somehow cope with and adjust to. Change at times is easy to accomplish and at other times is most difficult. In your family:

Choice 1:
Where are you now?

Choice 2:
Where might you want to be?

We find that change and adjustment is very difficult to accomplish. We keep the old ways when possible.

Change and adjustment comes slowly but it does seem to come. Our family can make adjustments when needed but our preference is to keep the old ways.

Change and adjustment is something we're good at. We always seem to be changing, much of it not being planned.

Change and adjustment is something we don't especially resist. Mostly change just happens but at times we plan for change.

Our family is able to see needed change. We talk and process change. Anyone can bring up a needed change for discussion.

6. Communications

Each family is different in how comfortable it is with the giving and receiving of information. Some families openly give and receive information while other families don't have the need to share. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

We are a family where there is little sharing of information. We aren't especially well informed about each other. We tend to not share with individuals outside the family.

We seem to share information when it is necessary. We don't have a real need to be informed about each other but will openly do so when it seems helpful.

We share most information. We are fairly well informed about each other. There is a freedom to share information inside or outside of the family.

We share a great deal of information within the family. Information is given fairly openly with some given to all and some given only when asked for.

Information is considered to be somewhat important to family members. Information is neither discouraged or encouraged. We share information with individuals outside of the family.

7. Expression

Families all respond differently to the expression of feelings within the family. Some families encourage its members to express and show feelings, where other families are uncomfortable doing so. In your family:

Choice 1:
Where are you
now?

Choice 2:
Where might
you want to be?

Feelings are not expressed or shown much in our family. It is known when they are appropriate or not. There is not much encouragement to be expressive.

Some feelings are expressed and shown in our family. We tend to not discourage the expression but there are limits to our expression.

Without hesitation, feelings can be expressed in our family. There is a spontaneous and intensiveness the way they are expressed.

We are expressing feelings and emotions all the time. It is very important to our family that feelings are discussed and expressed.

Feelings are great. We feel that they are important to our family. They are expressed in a real way as a response to a need.

8. Conflict

All families have some disagreements, some conflicts among its members. Each family has a unique way of dealing with, expressing or avoiding conflicts when they occur. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

Conflicts and disagreements don't seem to be very directly expressed in our family. We have specific ways to express and resolve conflict.	Conflicts and disagreements don't always seem to be directly expressed in our family, yet we seem to be able to process and discuss some issues.	Most conflicts and disagreements get expressed. We don't seem to control or process the expression of conflict. There seems to be some erraticness to how this is done.	We get some conflicts and disagreements expressed. Sometimes conflicts just seem to be expressed and sometimes we process them in productive ways.	Everyone participates in the process of discussing the conflict and suggesting solutions.
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9. Internal Support

A family supports its family members in a variety of ways. Support could be listening to each other, helping each other out, emotional support, economic contributions, giving praise and knowing we can count on members. In a sense this support makes members have a sense of belonging. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

We don't seem to look to one another for support, everyone is busy doing what they need to do.

At times we look to our family for support. There is a sense that family members can be understanding and available.

Support is available when needed. We feel like we can ask for support and get it. Everyone seems to be involved.

We feel like we have support that we need and feel like we belong to the family. We seem to get support on most all needs.

Support is something that is always there. The family is very predictable in how it gives support. There is a sense of belonging and certainty.

10. Connectedness

All families vary in their degree of closeness. Some families are so close that they seldom do things apart, where other families have more independence and distance. In your family:

Choice 1:
Where are you
now?

Choice 2:
Where might
you want to be?

We seem to be
real connected
with each other in
the family. Our
family values be-
ing together and
doing things as a
family. We are
very traditional.

We're fairly close
and connected to
each other. We
do have some
time to do indi-
vidual tasks. We
are a more flexi-
ble traditional
family.

We are connected
yet allow every-
one to grow and
have choice. We
cooperate to have
closeness.

We are not real
close and con-
nected with others
in the family.
We can cooperate
to have closeness
but at times we
do our own thing.

We aren't
especially con-
nected as a
family. Everyor-
does their own
thing. We have
lots of freedom
and personal
choice.

11. Mood

Each family seems to have an overall attitude or flavor to the way they think and respond. Some families will have an optimistic flavor to how they think and respond where other families maintain a cautious flavor. For example, there is an old saying about seeing the glass as half full or half empty. In your family:

Choice 1:
Where are you
now?

Choice 2:
Where might
you want to be?

We view life as being a struggle with many demands. Life can be very difficult.. We like the security in the traditional ways.

We view life as being a struggle where at times the old ways must change to meet the new demands.

We view life as being a place to discover. Life is a constant adventure where rapid change is a creative way to cope.

We view life as being a blend of having the ability to discover life with some planning and processing.

We view life as a place of challenge. If we are flexible and plan well, we will be successful.

12. Grief

All families have to cope with loss as they move through time. Loss could be the death of a loved one, loss of a job, inability to fulfill plans, loss of friends and other significant losses. Grief is such a part of dealing with loss. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

Our family has great difficulty dealing with loss. Healing is very difficult and slow for us. *Grief is not something we express.	We have a difficult time with loss, often focusing too long on loss. We can deal with loss but we are not good at expressing it.	We seem to move through loss slowly but we do express ourselves about grief.	We try very hard, and with some success, to let go of the loss and move ahead. We hurt and move on. We express most of our feelings.	We work very hard at moving ahead and dealing with loss. We see loss as a part of life and we want and do move beyond it as quickly as possible. We openly express our feelings.
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13. Leadership

Families will differ in terms of leadership within the family. Some families have clearly defined leaders and other families do not. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

No clear pattern of leadership seems to exist in our family. At times we don't need a person in charge since everyone takes charge of themselves.

When it's real important someone takes the leadership role. Leadership will change with the circumstances.

The leadership role is very clear in our family and seldom changes. Someone is always in charge.

In our family we know who's usually in charge. At times it can be shared but not always.

The leadership in our family is always shared. We all give input to help with decisions. Decisions are group decisions.

14. Clarity

Some families are very clear as to the rules for the family members, where other families do not have such clarity of rules. Rules could include expectations around the ways the family members interact with each other, with the outside world and complete tasks. In your family:

Choice 1: Where are you now?

Choice 2: Where might you want to be?

- In our family our rules are not defined. We don't talk or discuss how to interact with each other. It just seems to happen. The demands of the situation may control our reactions.
- We do not have many rules or expectations about how we interact with family members. Some rules are defined and others not.
- We do have rules and expectations about how we interact with family members. The whole family helped define these rules by discussion and listening.
- Our family does expect certain behaviors from our members. Family members can give some input to help define them.
- Our family seem to have clear expectations and rules and the family members follow them. We operate the ways our family has for years.

15. Infringement

Families differ in how well they maintain their family style when outsiders interact with their family. When a family deals with outside professionals, individuals and agencies; pressures can exist to adjust the family to the style of others. In your family:

Choice 1:
Where are you now?

Choice 2:
Where might you want to be?

The family members, and especially the leaders, are the most important influence on the family. The style of the family is well defined and not easily changed. Outsiders do not influence the family.

The family remains the major influence on family style. At times discussion will occur to help change.

The family is influenced by members and outsiders alike. The family style is not well defined so that anyone can have a say. There tends to be a lot of change and individual influences.

The family keeps most of the decision about family style. At times the style is flexible enough to be changed by outside influences.

The family allows outsiders to give information but the family members are the final say. Outsiders can give suggestions about style. Change happens when agreement occur between family members.

16. Assertiveness

Each family is comfortable with their own style in expressing their ideas, needs and complaints. For example, some families are direct, assertive and clear about their needs. Other families are more quiet, less assertive and more indirect about expressing their needs. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

We aren't good at asking for help or complaining. We tend to say very little to others and deal with what we get.

We're not very assertive. We're not always sure of how to say or what to do to get our needs met. At times we may say something, but mostly we are quiet.

It seems that when there are really important things to be said, we say them. We accept we must push at times to be listened to.

We accept that we need to be assertive to get our needs met and to be listened to. We let few opportunities pass to let our feelings and needs be known.

We've practiced and have a lot of experience at being assertive. We know it's necessary to get things done.

17. Sense of Influence

Families take differing amounts of control over the medical, educational and therapeutic procedures they need to be involved in. Some families maintain great control, where other families do not. In your family:

Choice 1:
Where are you
now?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Choice 2:
Where might
you want to be?

Our family feels like it has no influence or input over the medical procedures. We do not see ourselves as having much say or much control.	We feel that we have little to no influence over procedures or directions. Our input is not especially important or taken into consideration.	We feel like we have some influence on decisions. We are listened to and have some control of what happens in medical treatment.	We do influence a lot of decisions and procedures. If we want something done it usually will be done our way.	We have control over the process. We are the final vote in what gets done. We very much have influence.
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18. Family Renewal

Families differ in their awareness of how to heal, rest and recover. Some families put effort and energy into this renewal where other families do not. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

Our family doesn't think or talk about healing or recovery. We seem to just handle the daily requirements. There is little sense of needing to heal or what is required to heal.	We at times remember that we need to heal and recover but we are not good at doing something about it. We tend to stay in patterns that are not healing based.	We attempt to make some time to heal and recover. Sometimes this is as a family and at times as an individual. We don't do as much as we need to do.	We always have some time set aside to recover and heal. We do a lot of this but really not as much as we should.	We see healing and recovery as important as anything else. We schedule time and energy to heal and renew. We have identified ways that work for us.
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19. Alternatives

The use of non family individuals or agencies to help with healing and resting is something families will utilize in differing degrees. For example, respite care would be an assistance for families with ill family members. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

Our family will not use other individuals or agencies to assist regardless of our need for assistance.

There are rare times when it is necessary for us to use other individuals or agencies for help.

At times we will use other individuals or agencies to assist with our needs.

Using other individuals and agencies is helpful, and we do it quite a bit.

We see the use of other individuals and agencies to assist with our needs as helpful. We use them whenever possible so as to help us share the load.

20. Energy Allocation

Families differ as to the priorities they set. Some families are good at setting priorities as to where to spend the available emotional and physical energy, where other families are not. In your family:

Choice 1:

Where are you now?

Choice 2:

Where might you want to be?

Our family does not select priorities. Some issues seem to take all the energy. We don't have a sense of what needs what energy.	We do some selection of priorities. We try to save some energy for the important issues, but this doesn't always happen.	We do plan and set priorities for our energy and resources. We're successful in keeping to the priorities some of the time.	We see priorities as important and work at both making them and keeping them. We're successful most of the time at keeping them once they are set.	We work hard at setting priorities that help us allocate our energy and effort. We are very good at keeping priorities.
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