

# SIMILARITIES

# 1



Family



## SIMILARITIES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“One of the things that binds us as a family is a shared sense of humor.”

*Ralph Fiennes*

### Reflection

Humor can draw people together if they all find the same jokes, riddles, or pranks funny. Do you think that humor can also set people apart? How do you think humor works to join or separate people?

### Action

Find a funny video, and show it to three or four people. Did they all laugh? Can you think of people who wouldn't find it funny? What would they think of it?

# SIMILARITIES

# 2



Family 

## SIMILARITIES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Give an extra piece of cake to a stepchild. ”

*Korean saying*

### Reflection

How do you think it would feel to be the child who got the special treat? Do you think the child could feel special in a good way, in a bad way, or both? What might other children in the family feel?

### Action

With a small group, write a script for a dinner-table conversation when one child gets an extra piece of cake. Talk about the different feelings that came up for the characters.

# SIMILARITIES

# 3



Family 

## SIMILARITIES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“The only thing that I ever get emotional about is my family. I am kind to everyone, but I trust no one. That keeps me from getting hurt.”

*Akshay Kumar*

### Reflection

Do you think the author trusts family members? Do you think family members were kind or hurtful? Can you tell from the quote?

### Action

Complete this sentence: “People who trust other people will...”

# SIMILARITIES

# 4



Family



## SIMILARITIES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Rarely do members of the same family grow up under the same roof.”

*Richard Bach*

### Reflection

Do you think that this applies to families who all live together in the same house as well as those who live in different houses? How could it be true in both cases?

### Action

Create an image of people who are living in the same place but not really living together. Would you want to live in that place?



# DIFFERENCES

# 5



Family 

## DIFFERENCES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Each day of our lives we make deposits in the memory banks of our children.”

*Charles R. Swindoll*

### Reflection

Do you think memories are stable over time, or do they change and shift as we move through life?

### Action

Identify a childhood memory and, with a partner, discuss whether that memory has remained unchanged or whether subtle or not-so-subtle changes have taken place over time. Describe those changes and what might have contributed to the shifts in memory.

# DIFFERENCES

# 6



Family 

## DIFFERENCES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“They came through you but not from you and though they are with you they belong not to you.”

*Khalil Gibran*

### Reflection

The author seems to be talking about parents and biological offspring. What does it mean that children do not belong to their parents? Do you think that parents belong to their children?

### Action

Quickly make a list of all of the ways people can make a family. Do you think that people in these families belong to each other?

# DIFFERENCES

# 7



Family 

## DIFFERENCES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Family quarrels are bitter things. They don’t go according to any rules. They’re not like aches or wounds, they’re more like splits in the skin that won’t heal because there’s not enough material.”

*F. Scott Fitzgerald*

### Reflection

This is a harsh statement about family disagreements. Do you think that anger in a family hurts more than anger with friends or acquaintances? Is it easier or harder to forgive family members?

### Action

On five different cards write five things that family members might argue about. With a small group, pick one and act out the disagreement. Then act out how the family might heal.

# DIFFERENCES

# 8



Family 

## DIFFERENCES

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Having children makes you no more a parent than having a piano makes you a pianist.”

*Michael Levine*

### Reflection

What do you think it takes to make a parent? Does it take as much practice to get good at it as it does to be a good piano player? Do you think some people are talented parents in the way that some people are talented musicians?

### Action

List ten things that you think parents should practice every week to be better parents. Are these things that adults did for you, or things that you wish they had done?



# BELONGING

# 9



Family



# BELONGING

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“We all long for something. I long to belong.”

*Jarod Kintz*

## Reflection

Is belonging a longing that everyone shares? Is longing for a certain type of family different from other types of longing?

## Action

Draw a pyramid and divide it into five levels from top to bottom. Beginning at the bottom, list your most basic survival needs; at the next level, list what you need to feel safe; then, what you would need to feel loved. What it would take to feel worthy and respected, and finally, what it would take to fulfill your greatest potential?

# BELONGING 10



# BELONGING

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“It doesn’t matter where you are. When you’re with people you love, you’re where you belong.”

*Courtney Carola*

## Reflection

There are many definitions of family, including those that we’re born into and those that we create. What people do you think the author had in mind when she wrote that quote?

## Action

Write a short story about the family you would create. Describe each character’s place in the family and their sense of belonging.

BELONGING

11



Family



# BELONGING

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“I would leave behind the nurturing of my family and my home, but in another sense I would take their protection with me. The lessons I had learned, the feelings of groundedness and belonging that have been woven into my character there, would be my companions on the journey.”

*Sidney Poitier*

## Reflection

Does our past determine who we are in the future? Do we have a choice about what to take of our past when we leave?

## Action

Find a photograph of a face. Create a story about the various features of that face. Imagine how that person's family experience influences how they appear to others in the present.

A HOME  WITHIN

# BELONGING 12



# BELONGING

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“It’s funny how sometimes the people you’d take a bullet for are the ones behind the trigger. ”

*Ritu Ghatourey*

## Reflection

What do you think of sacrificing oneself to save another? Are there situations in which you would not hesitate? Are there other instances in which this would be foolish?

## Action

With a partner, describe to each other a time that you “took the bullet” for someone else. Would you do the same today? Why/Why not?



# ACCEPTANCE 13



Family 

# ACCEPTANCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“My happiness grows in direct proportion to my acceptance and in inverse proportion to my expectations.”

*Michael J. Fox*

## Reflection

What do you think the author meant by this quote?  
What do happiness, acceptance, and expectations have to do with each other?

## Action

With a partner or in a small group, describe your efforts to accept the most difficult aspects of your family, and the ways in which your expectations have been changed by your acceptance.

# ACCEPTANCE 14



Family 

# ACCEPTANCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“But the people who mattered were the people you chose instead of the people who were yours by an accident of birth. Real family was heart as much as, if not more than, blood.”

*Martina Boone*

## Reflection

Do you agree? Is heart as important as blood when it comes to family? More important?

## Action

Make two columns; on one side list the importance of blood relationships, and on the other the importance of heart relationships.

# ACCEPTANCE 15



Family 

# ACCEPTANCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Acceptance is not love. You love a person because he or she has lovable traits, but you accept everybody just because they’re alive and human.”

*Albert Ellis*

## Reflection

Is it reasonable to think that we can accept others just because they’re alive and human? What is the difference between acceptance and love?

## Action

Using the members of your family as an example, describe the tension between love and acceptance. What gets in the way of acceptance when you think of various members of your family?

# ACCEPTANCE 16



Family 

# ACCEPTANCE

Mind

Body

Heart

Soul

“Happy or unhappy, families are all mysterious. We have only to imagine how differently we would be described—and will be, after our deaths—by each of the family members who believe they know us.”

*Gloria Steinem*

## Reflection

Who do you consider to be in your family? Are they all related by blood? Do you think that their ideas about other family members agree with yours? How are they the same or different?

## Action

Make a list of your family members. For each, write a short paragraph describing their perspective on you.