

Module 11: Using Rituals to Cope

This module focuses on:

Meaning making and spirituality refers to the creation of understanding regarding what is important to the family and to the explanations used by the family to justify both positive and negative events that affect the family. It encompasses the symbolic meaning of rituals to the family.

People resources delineates the people who are often included in the traditions and routines of the family, the extent and quality of immediate and extended family relationships, and the availability of people outside the nuclear family whom the family feels that they could call upon in times of stress to support the family's ritual life. The intent of this dimension is to assess the degree to which the family is or feels isolated from other people who do or could help them out if they needed the help. By help, we mean lending or giving resources such as money or time, helping accomplish things that need to be done, offering advice, visiting, helping out with day-to-day needs such as shopping or taking care of children, introducing other people who might be helpful to the family, etc.

Coping. Incorporating what is known about individual stress responses, models of family stress management have been developed with the ABCX family crisis model as their foundation (Hill, 1958). For many families living in disadvantaged communities, daily living depletes coping resources (B), thus, when faced with a traumatic event (A), coping resources are often insufficient to match the stressor demands (C) creating a family crisis (X). By conceptualizing family rituals "as a crisis-meeting resource" (B) within the ABCX model (Mullis & Fincher, 1995, p. 481), rituals and routines can be structured to help families improve coping with stress and other intense emotional states. Rituals and routines can aid families in feeling and being safer, in using others for support, in making and carrying out deliberate choices, and in developing shared family beliefs and values.

Module Overview

Session Number

4	Feeling Safe I
5	Feeling Safe II
6	People Resources
7	Life Choices
8	Spirituality and Family Values
9	Things Get in the Way



Objectives:

- To increase each individual family members' sense of safety.
- To improve the parents' ability to help their children feel safe and the children's ability to look to parents for protection.



Threads:

- This session continues to help families develop narrative skills through storytelling.
- This session begins to build family stress inoculation skills. Three aspects of stress management are incorporated.
 - o The first is attunement. The observation given as homework is used to help family members recognize others' distress cues.
 - o The second is the relationship between setting firm limits and safety. This might be a good time to introduce the issue of parental/caregiver guilt over the children's exposure to trauma and how this guilt can undermine setting and enforcing appropriate limits.
 - o The third is coping, in this case, relaxation skills. Families are encouraged to practice these skills at home. There are also multiple opportunities during the remaining sessions that these skills are taught or practiced. These skills are important for the family's ability to recognize and co-regulate the expression of intense emotions during the family trauma narrative.



Preparation:

- Send out postcard to remind families of group.
- Prepare all materials.
- Food and facilities planning and preparation.
- Decide on facilitators' roles.
- Update on the status of each family in the group.
- Anticipate any problems that might arise during the session.



Homework Due:

- Job Charts
- Observation



Session Overview:

Activity 1	Family Meal	30 Minutes
Activity 2	Sit Back, Relax	40 Minutes
Activity 3	Telling Family Stories II	15 Minutes
Activity 4	Knowing the Limits	25 Minutes
Activity 5	Closing	10 Minutes



Homework to be Assigned:

- Relaxation Practice



Materials:

- Tables (1 for each family)
- Centerpieces
- Nameplates and session schedules (1 for each family)
- Place settings/Napkins
- Nutritious meal/Drinks
- Tape recorders and tapes (1 for each family)
- Sets of toy fencing (1 for each family)
- Plain business cards
- Sheet protectors
- Star stickers (1 pack for each family)



Handouts:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Conversation Prompts | M1.S4.Prompts (Avery 5371) |
| Setting Limits Handout | M1.S4.Setting.Limits.Handout |
| Stress | M1.S4.Stress |
| Relaxation | M1.S4.Relaxation |
| Relaxation Routine Worksheet and Log | M1.S4. Relaxation.Routine.WS |
| My Safe Place | M1.S4.Safe.Place |
| Family Rating Form | M1.S4.Feedback |
| Participant Log | M1.S4.Log |
| Clinician Rating Form | M1.S4.Clinic.Measures |



Posters:

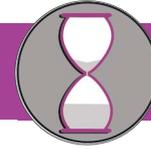
- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Rules Poster | Group.Rules.Poster |
|--------------|--------------------|



Books:

- The Tales of Peter Rabbit or El Cuento De Pedrito Conejo*

Activity 1: Family Meal



30
Minutes



Goals:

- To facilitate an intimate family interaction.
- To increase awareness of the importance of routine within each family.



Materials:

Tables (1 for each family)
Centerpieces
Nameplates and session schedules (1 for each family)
Place settings/Napkins
Nutritious meal/Drinks
Video camera, remote microphones, and tapes [Research groups only]



Handouts:

Conversation Prompts



Posters:

Rules Poster



Instructions:

Facilitators prepare room by setting tables (one for each family). A simple centerpiece for each table is a nice touch. A nameplate and schedule for the session's activities are also placed on each table. Hang poster with group rules listed in a prominent place where all the families can see it.

Food should be pre-cooked and ready to serve. Food can be served buffet or family style.

Latino Adaptation: Facilitators welcome families at the door and engage in small talk with families before start of group.

Parent(s) gather their children around a table and share a meal together. Before serving the food:

Lead Facilitator: *Estamos muy felices de que estén con nosotros esta noche. Ustedes decidieron empezar la comida con un Ritual de Apertura, así que comencemos de esa manera. We are so happy to have you back with us tonight. You decided to start the meal by Opening Ritual so let's begin that way. Proceed with ritual planned by the group.*

Como la semana pasada, dado que este es un momento del grupo, realmente queremos que todos formen parte de las actividades. Para ayudar a que eso suceda fácilmente, tenemos un par de reglas que están colocadas en la pared. Vamos a repasarlas otra vez ahora. Just like last week, since this is a group time, we really want everyone to take part in all of the activities. To help that go smoothly, we have a couple of rules and these are posted on the wall. Let's go over them again, now.

Ask each family the following question: **Así que, está pasando algo que pueda impedir la participación de su familia en el grupo de hoy?** *So, is there anything going on right now that might get in the way of your family taking part in today's group?*

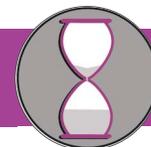
Co-Facilitator _____: *Primero, vamos a agradecer nombre de cocineros que prepararon esta maravillosa comida. Por favor pasen a servirse. Padres, pueden servir primero a sus hijos y luego prepararse un plato para ustedes. First let's thank name of cooks for fixing this wonderful meal. Please help yourselves to some food. Parents, why don't you serve your children first and then make a plate for yourself. Parent(s) should be encouraged to serve their children and then themselves.*

Co-Facilitator _____: *Para ayudar a que su familia pase un buen momento durante la cena, podrían usar estas tarjetas para hacerse preguntas los unos a los otros o hablar acerca de las ideas que hay en ellas. To help your family have a good time during dinner, you might want to ask each other these questions or talk about the ideas on these cards. Hand out conversation prompts.*

Note 1: Facilitators encourage and model appropriate conversation, sharing, and supervision of children. Facilitators try several methods to stimulate conversation including joining the family and modeling or use of conversation prompts. A facilitator might stop at the table of a family and offer encouragement, praise, and suggestions for managing different situations (behavior management, cueing, discipline). Work with families on interactions/behaviors occurring “in the moment”. Remember to be sensitive to and empowering of the parent(s).

Note 2: One facilitator should take on the role of process monitor making sure that the session runs smoothly and proceeds in a timely fashion. The process facilitator should encourage families to start finishing their dinner and cleaning up their tables after about 20 minutes to make sure that this activity is finished within 30 minutes and the group is ready to begin the next activity on time.

Activity 2: Stress Inoculation: Sit Back, Relax



40
Minutes



Goals:

- To introduce relaxation skills for families.
- To increase the families' skills for coping with severe stress and trauma.
- To increase skills for coping with threat.
- To tie relaxation and sense of safety together.



Materials:
Pens/Pencils



Handouts:
Stress
Relaxation Handout
My Safe Place
Developing Relaxation Routines
Worksheet and Log



Instructions:

Lead Facilitator: *Esperamos que hayan disfrutado su cena. Ahora es momento de comenzar nuestras actividades para esta noche. Si observan el horario ahora, les diré un poco acerca del grupo de hoy.* We hope you enjoyed your dinner. It is now time to begin our activities for tonight. If you will look at the schedule now, I will tell you a little bit about tonight's group. Proceed with introducing each activity briefly.

Antes de que empecemos la primer actividad de esta noche, quiero tomar un momento para que cada familia comparta su tabla de trabajo de la semana pasada. ¿Cuántos padres observaron a sus hijos? Before we start the first activity tonight, I want to take time for families to share their job charts from last week. Also how many parents observed your child?

Esta sesión se enfoca en la seguridad. Así que empecemos. This session focuses on safety. So let's get started.

Ahora es momento de que nos dividamos en pequeños grupos. Recuerden, cada facilitador tomará un grupo distinto, sólo por esta noche cada familia será un pequeño grupo. It is now time to break into smaller groups. Remember, each facilitator will take a different group, only tonight each family is going to be a small group. Facilitators should join their assigned family at this time. Facilitators move one family at a time to their designated areas.

Family Facilitators: *Esta noche nuestra pequeña actividad de grupo se trata de relajación. Vamos a trabajar juntos para aprender acerca de relajación y crear una rutina de relajación que usted y su familia puedan usar.* Tonight our small group activity is about relaxation. We are going to work together to learn about relaxation and to come up with a relaxation routine that you and your family can use.

Pass out the “Stress” and “Relaxation Handout” and spend about 5 minutes reviewing the importance/benefits of relaxation with the family. *Now let’s learn how to do it.* When the facilitator introduces the concept of stress, parent(s) are asked about times during the observation of their child for homework that they noticed an expression or behavior that indicated the child was upset, distressed or scared. Note that these might be cues to when to use relaxation.

Empecemos con un ejercicio que usamos con muchas de nuestras familias. Primero, vamos a prepararnos. Tomen asiento en un lugar cómodo. Voy a apagar algunas de las luces. Let’s start with an exercise that we use with lots of our families. First, let’s set the mood. Can everyone find a comfortable seat? I am going to turn off some of the lights. Introduce simple Deep Breathing activity and have the family practice for 5-10 minutes. A good breathing activity for families with young children is “Blowing out birthday candles”. Now introduce simple progressive relaxation activity and have the family practice for 5-10 minutes. A good relaxation activity for families with young children is “Cooking spaghetti”.

Discuss with the family which type of relaxation activity they like the best.

Using “My Safe Place”, briefly present the idea of guided imagery. Explain that this is another type of relaxation exercise. Then proceed with the “Safe Place” guided imagery activity. Have family members shut their eyes and imagine a place where they feel safe. Have them go to that place. Ask them to spend some time in that place. Have them look around. Have them identify the sights, sounds, smells, feel, etc. of their safe space. After a short time, ask them to leave their safe place and come back to the group. Discuss their experiences and have them share their safe places if they are willing.

Ahora, hablemos acerca de cómo podrían hacer esto en casa. Now, let’s talk about how you could do this at home. Work with the family to fill out the Relaxation Routine Development Worksheet. *Para ayudarlos a realizar un seguimiento de cuándo practican, por favor completen el Registro de Rutina de Relajación y tráiganlo con ustedes la próxima semana. Sólo completen el tiempo que practicaron cada día y evalúen cuán relajados se sienten cuando hayan terminado.* To help you keep track of when you practice, please complete the Relaxation Routine Log and bring it back with you. Just fill in the time that you practiced each day and rate how relaxed you felt when you were finished.

Note 1: Facilitators for each family should start wrapping up the discussions or games after 35 minutes to allow 3-4 minutes to transition back to the family meeting room.

Activity 3: Telling Family Stories II

15
minutes**Goals:**

- To reinforce family story telling.
- To help families create a shared history.
- To start families talking about mildly negative events.

**Materials:**

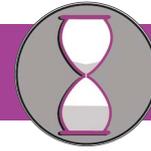
Tape recorders and tapes (1 for each family)

**Instructions:**

Co-Facilitator _____: *Esta noche vamos a tener la oportunidad de escuchar algunas historias familiares más. Por favor, reúnanse con sus familias y siéntanse cómodos. Ahora tomen unos cuantos minutos para pensar acerca de un momento cuando algo que daba un poco de miedo o fue un poco estresante le pasó a su familia en los últimos dos a tres años. Cuando hayan decidido algo para hablar, sólo pretendan que estaban reunidos y que alguien mencionó el tema. Tonight we are going to get a chance to hear some more family stories. Please gather your families around and get comfortable. Now spend a few minutes thinking about a time that something a little bit scary or somewhat stressful happened to your family over the past 2-3 years. Once you have decided on something to talk about, just pretend that you were sitting around and someone brought it up. [Facilitators should turn on the tape recorder for each family.] Allow about 10-15 minutes for storytelling.*

Note 1: Facilitators who are not talking should spread around the room, monitoring families' reactions and level of participation. A facilitator might stop at the table of a family and offer encouragement, praise, and suggestions for managing different situations (behavior management, cueing, discipline). Remember to be sensitive to and empowering of the parent(s). Facilitators should not become part of the family conversation but might want to gently encourage families to elaborate, to get everyone's point of view, to talk about how they felt at the time, etc.

Activity 4: Knowing the Limits



25
Minutes



Goals:

- To increase awareness of the benefits of predictability and limits on sense of safety.
- To communicate family limits and rules publicly.



Materials:

Toy Fencing
Plain business cards or other small sheets of paper
Sheet protectors



Handouts:

Setting Limits Handout



The Tales of Peter Rabbit or El Cuento De Pedrito Conejo



Instructions:

Facilitator _____: Hand out “Setting Limits” and lead a discussion for another 5 minutes. Talk with the families for about five minutes on the importance of clear expectations and limits for family safety. Talk about predictability and knowing what to expect. Also talk about guilt and problems keeping high expectations when you are feeling bad about things that have happened.

Hand out Fences and Cards. Have each family build their fence. Explain that fences are for setting boundaries and so are limits. Have families brainstorm and write limits on the cards. From these cards, have each family decide on three most important limits for their family and put these inside their fence.

Then hand out the “Family Limits Worksheet” and have the families write their three limits inside the fence. On the other side of the worksheet, have the families list behaviors that fall outside the limit and the consequences for those behaviors. It might work best to talk through the worksheet and have the adults complete it as you talk. Put these sheets inside sheet protectors or laminate to take home. Facilitator should begin to wrap up this activity in about 23 minutes.

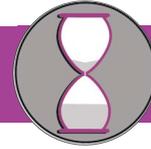
Co-Facilitator (Young Child and Babies) _____: Have the young children and babies join with a facilitator in the corner of the meeting room. Depending on the age of the group:

Young children: *Primero, vamos a tener un corto momento de cuentos. Por favor, siéntense en un círculo a mi alrededor. Voy a leer la historia de “El Conejo Peter”. ¿Cuántos de ustedes ya han escuchado esta historia?* First, we will have a short story time. Please sit in a circle around me. I am going to read the story “Peter Rabbit”. How many of you have already heard this story? Read story about Limits and Discuss. This should take 10 minutes. *Ahora vamos a jugar.* Now we are going to play a game.

Babies: Present the babies with a choice of 2 developmentally appropriate, safe toys to play with. The baby should pick one toy and play with it. When baby loses interest they can pick another toy to play with.

Latino Adaptation: Facilitators will need to be aware that “Setting Limits” might be dictated by acculturation level and generational/hierarchy of family (e.g., limits set by grandparents versus limits set by parents).

Activity 5: Closing

10
Minutes**Goals:**

- To increase sense of group cohesion.
- To practice planning and implementation of rituals and routine.
- To assure continuity from one session to the next.

**Materials:**

Job Charts
Star stickers (1 pack for each family)

**Handouts:**

Family Rating Form
Participant Log
Clinician Rating Form

**Instructions:**

Lead Facilitator: *Queremos agradecer a todos por participar en el grupo de esta noche. Ahora, es momento de finalizar esta sesión y al final de cada grupo hacemos unas cuantas cosas para terminar el grupo y prepararnos para el próximo.* We want to thank everyone for taking part in tonight's group. It is now time to finish this session and at the end of every group, we do a few things to end the group and to get ready for the next group.

Co-Facilitator _____: *¿Hay algo que todavía necesitamos hacer para finalizar las actividades de esta noche? Quiero dejar saber a cada familia que hicieron un muy buen trabajo.* Is there anything that we still need to do to finish tonight's activities? I want to let each family know what a good job they did. Tell each family, or a family member, one thing that they did especially well.

Co-Facilitator _____: Introduce and review the topic for next week. *La próxima semana hablaremos un poco más de seguridad y como hacer que las familias se sientan más seguras. Sabemos que todos ustedes se sentirán relajados luego de practicar toda la semana. Aquí tienen más copias de sus tablas de trabajo y más adhesivos para que puedan seguir trabajando juntos en hacer todo.* Next week we will talk some more about safety and how to make families feel safer. We know you all will be feeling relaxed after practicing all week. Here are extra copies of your job chart and more stickers so that you can keep on working together to get everything done.

Lead Facilitator: *Queremos asegurarnos que nos mantengamos en contacto durante la semana, así que uno de los facilitadores los llamará otra vez. Ahora, concluyamos con nuestro ritual final.* We want to make sure that we stay in touch during the week, so one of the facilitators will call you again. Now, let's end by closing rituals. Families share closing rituals, if desired. Cue families to acknowledge the end of group to other family members as well. *Por favor completen el formulario familiar de evaluación y luego entréguenlo. Gracias.* Please complete your family rating form now and hand it in. Thanks.

Facilitators complete participant log and clinician rating form.

**Homework to be Assigned:**

- Relaxation Practice

