

Understanding the Strengths Your Family Offers You

Objective

To identify how your family offers you support and nourishment along with the normal hassles and struggles of family life.

What to Know

Your family can be a source of comfort, love, support, and fun for you, but it probably doesn't always feel that way. Do family members sometimes disappoint you? Do you frequently argue with one or more family member? Do you bicker with your parents or fight with your siblings? Do you often feel like your parents don't accept or understand you?

This exercise can help you get in touch with the strengths and support that your family offers you.

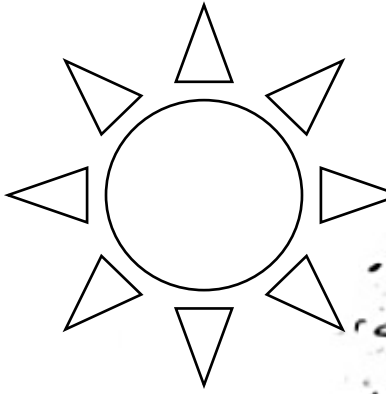
What to Do

On the next page, among the leaves of the tree, fill in the boxes with the names of your family members. Include anyone you consider part of your family.

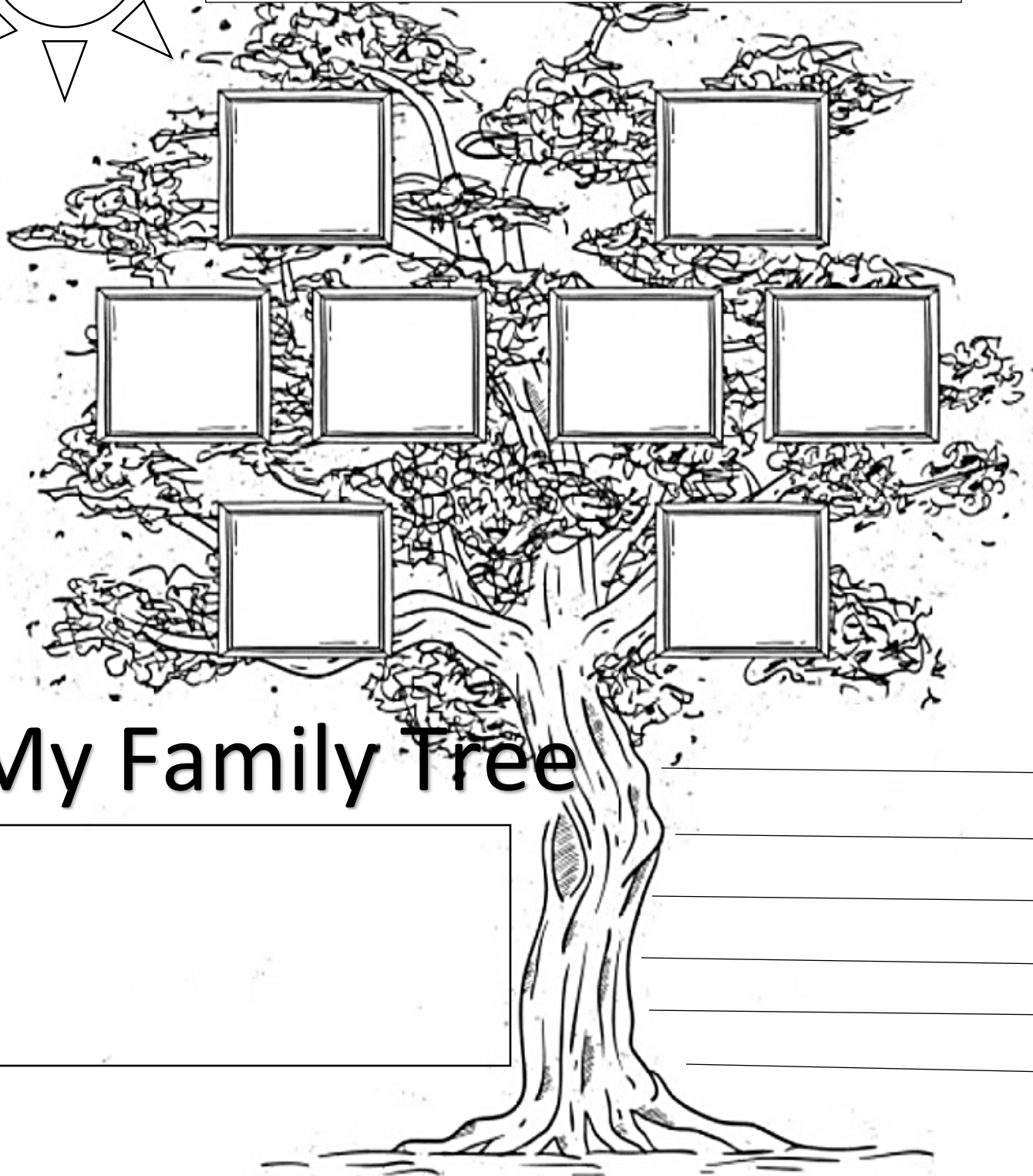
Imagine this tree represents your family. The tree is solid, well-rooted, and can withstand the worst storm. There is true strength and support here. On the lines to the right of the trunk, write down positive things about your family. In the large rectangle near the roots, write down the things you like and/or appreciate about your family.

Now, think about the warm rays of the sun that nourish your tree. Close your eyes for a moment and imagine how the sunshine feels on your face as you look up toward the sky. In the box at the top of the page, write down some things you and your family can do to nourish and strengthen your tree.

Be creative with your tree! You might use colored pencils or markers to color the tree, or draw a face on the sun. Decorate the page however you wish. You can share your tree with your family and ask them about the positive things they think nurture your family.



What will nourish and strengthen your family tree?



My Family Tree

[A large empty rectangular box for writing a name or title.]

[A series of five horizontal lines for writing notes or descriptions.]

Reflections on This Exercise

What was most challenging about completing this exercise? What was easiest? Describe.

What else can you and your family do to strengthen your family tree? Are you willing to share your ideas with your family? Why or why not?

How helpful was this exercise? _____
(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What did you learn from this exercise?
