

Game & Story  
Fun for the  
Days to Come

An **Interactive Guide** for Family  
Members, Especially Children





May 2020  
Second Version

**"Game & Story Fun for the Days to Come" Guide...**  
Is an interactive guide for family members, especially children. It creates opportunities for expressing feelings and ideas towards crises, including Covid-19 and changes around it.



[Visit our Facebook page \(press here\)](#)

"Game & Story Fun for the Days to Come" Facebook page is specialized for parents and their children, as well as those who work in education and psychology.



## Introduction

### The Start of the Guide's Journey:

Following the return of a certain woman to Lebanon and considering the sudden reality the Coronavirus epidemic imposed on the entire world, she committed to solitary confinement at her home for fourteen days - in which creating this guide came to life.

Coming from an awareness of social responsibility and a desire to play an effective role to help in overcoming this crisis, we joined efforts and formed a team for the guide. We aim at helping others through this guide, especially in the absence of holistic resources that tackle the crisis's impact on us and our children both constructively and playfully.

Our efforts aim at bringing joy into our homes, where many families suffer from psychological pressures because of this new reality and its various effects.



— 3 —

### What are the Goals of the Guide's Journey?

This guide gives every family member, especially our children, an opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings towards this crisis and the changes resulting from it. It also indirectly motivates them to discover means of adapting to the crisis and grants them the freedom of choosing the methods they most desire to experiment with.



The guide includes **nine sessions**, and suggests activities that help with:

- Learning the **importance of time**, how to make the most of it, and creating alternative options for spending productive and fun times at home.
- Expressing **concerns** about distancing from loved ones and losing them.
- Realizing the **impact of change** on our lifestyle besides discovering and expressing our attitudes and feelings towards these changes.
- Discovering the **different societal roles** and appreciating their importance.

Although the guide touches on sensitive topics, we were keen while developing its methodology to create a safe space for our children and focus on extracting and building on the positives.



— 4 —

#### **Who Gets to Tag Along in this Journey?**

Participation in this journey is open to all members of the family, especially our children. We as parents are invited today to play with our children, laugh, think together, and share our thoughts and feelings with them if needed, which helps us reassure them and encourage them to express themselves.

#### **Getting Ready**

To make this journey easier for you, we will commit as a team to facilitating **weekly training sessions** through social media platforms where we will present the guide's methodology and answer questions.

If you are unable to participate in these sessions, you must read the methodology of the guide before applying the activities with the rest of the family.



#### **The Journey's Supplies**

Most of the resources needed to carry out the activities are available in our homes, and we can replace them with other materials. We also wrote the original Arabic version of the guide in a simple language that approaches colloquial and simulates most dialects of the region as possible. As parents, we can switch words to match our dialect and context.



#### **The Path of the Journey**

The guide's methodology gives us the freedom of applying the sessions in the sequence we see fit, considering the needs of our children and our current abilities as parents. We as parents must be willing and ready to address any topic because our attitude can easily influence our children.

To avoid adding any pressure on you, the guide allows you to choose the number of weekly sessions you wish to complete in a way that suits the circumstances of your family. We encourage every family to discover and complete at least one session per week. We also intended on leaving the duration of each session open for parents to determine it in a way that suits their routine, lifestyle, and children's habits.

This crisis will end, but there is no guarantee that we will not go through another similar experience again. This is an opportunity for us to spend time with our families and discover peace in life away from the stress of work and social commitments. Let's make the most out of it!

We as parents must be willing and ready to address any topic because our attitude can easily affect our children.

## The Team Behind the Guide

**Grace Kharrat, Grace Nakhoul, Lea Darido, and Maha Riachi:** Specialized experts in psychology, with extensive experience in psychosocial support. They designed and developed all the stories and activities of this guide following proper measures of psychological safety and wellbeing for children. They designed this guide as a practical solution for parents to solve current challenges resulting from the Coronavirus crisis with a focus on content that targets parents specifically.

**Khaled Al Hamwi:** Illustrator. He created the guide's characters and illustrated their stories.

**Elissa Shamma:** Graphic designer. She outlined and designed the guide.

**Mireille Abi Khalil:** Education expert. She is the woman who returned to Lebanon and suggested creating this guide. She was the technical coordinator for the guide's development process. She also helped with the development of the activities and lead a detailed revision of the terminology and steps available in this guide.

**Hassan Hmedoush:** Conflict resolution trainer. He joined Mireille in creating the methodology of this guide and in the revision of its terminology and steps. He also suggested many additions to the sessions.

**Sara Roma Semaan:** A psychologist who volunteered to translate the guide into English.

**Shahed Atieh:** A digital learning expert who volunteered to copy-edit the English version of the guide.

A special thanks **Christina Njeim Chiha, Caroline Wakil, Mona Hassouna, Souraya Hamoud, Lena Rizk Khoury, and Yves Abi Khalil**, who took the time to either try out the sessions or revise them and shared with us valuable and constructive feedback.



## This Guide's Methodology

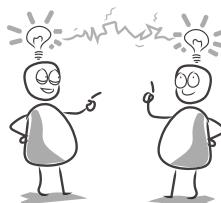
We adapted the guide's methodology from a summer camp guide for children called "**Hawli w Hawalaye**" given its simplicity, practicality, and alignment with educational methodologies based on proper social and cultural learning principles.

The methodology unfolds in four gradual steps covered in most of the activities, and they are:



### 1. Guess What? - Motivation & Engagement

Guess What are introductions that grab the attention of our children, stirring their curiosity and interest in a fun and enjoyable way. These introductions motivate our children to be active and to get moving, preparing them for the next steps to come. There are many motivation tools like stories, songs, riddles, games, pictures, movies, and many more that children enjoy, and that prime them for the upcoming steps. We adopted two primary tools of motivation in this guide: the game and the story.



### 2. From Me & From You - An Exchange of Thoughts

From Me & From You encourage conversations between family members, building on what they achieved in the first motivation and engagement step. These conversations become tools for expressing opinions and feelings.



### 3. A View from the Clouds - Connecting to Reality

At this step, our children need time to reflect on how the two initial steps of the activity connect to reality and to see this reality in a more comprehensive way through elements inspired from daily life like an account book or a mailbox. We use these elements in a different way that introduces joy and new perspectives. We tap into the imagination to step back from reality and observe our life as if we're on a cloud, from above we see what we cannot see when living in the middle of our reality.

Our role here is to ascend to a clouds' view with our children and view our reality with joy. There are no limits to how creative we can be when viewing our world from these imaginative clouds!



#### 4. For the Days to Come - Initiative to Choose

This step is when changes happen in our reality because of the hands-on experiences our children lived through the activities of this guide. These changes may happen directly after the activity or in the days to come. We might not observe the changes as it depends on our children's desire, will, and capacity. Our children can notice the changes that happen to different aspects of their lives and adapt to them all by themselves.

It is essential to go through all four steps when doing any of the activities and not to settle with doing an incomplete version of the activities. Only all four steps together can create the emotional balance that preserves the psychological wellbeing of our children.

**It is essential to go through all four stages when doing any of the activities. Only all four stages together can create the emotional balance that preserves the psychological wellbeing of our children.**

## The Journey's Stops

We go through this journey on several **stops**, so each activity is a **stop**. The activity can start with a **story**, and it can start with a **game/experiment**. In stories, we accompany Sun and Hazelnut, and with them, we experience various interesting situations and adventures.

This section provides you with a summary of the nine sessions of this journey's guide presenting their purposes and the major topics tackled through all 4 steps in each session.

### And Time Passed Quickly

We created this activity for children who have experienced significant changes in their daily lives because of the Coronavirus crisis or because of any other crisis that may have occurred. 'The Treasure' story tackles wasted time and how to make the most of the critical times despite the hardships we face in them. It also promotes having fun, helping others, and actively sharing our daily activities with others while adding our special twist to these activities. The steps that follow in this activity encourage us to become innovative in creating activities that agree with our present or future life circumstances. We aim at accomplishing continuity between what is of benefit and what is fun so that time passes quickly, and our life transforms to include more beautiful moments for us and everyone around us.

### Golden Time

The story of 'The Wings of Speed' focuses on the concept of time and its importance. It tackles how to spend one of life's most valuable currencies that is time. The characters of this story (the eagle and the turtle) represent the concepts of speed and slowness given that these two concepts are essential factors to time management. The greatest treasure of life is the treasure of time, a treasure that we cannot replace even with the most valuable of treasures. The steps that follow the story create a chance for us to gain time despite its speed, a chance that we otherwise miss because of personal or external factors.

### The Cup of Change

This activity aims to aid our children in expressing their feelings and discovering their stance towards the changes that they now observe in their lives. We accomplish this discovery through an experiment made with eggs placed in different cups that contain different liquids. We observe the changes in each of these eggs depending on the different liquids we place them in. These different liquids represent external changes in our lives. We then make a thoughtful analysis and comparison of our current situation and the different circumstances we are exposed to, and how to deal with these circumstances. This activity gives the opportunity for our children to express their emotions around these changes.

### A Shake and a Scale

This activity urges our children to express what positive and negative changes they are experiencing because of the crisis. We accomplish this by having our children shake around the ingredients of a salad, which results in both a positive and negative outcome. Afterwards, we help relate this metaphor to our children's current circumstances. We conclude as much as possible from this salad mixing what negative and positive outcomes we experience (and by that we mean what surprising or touching

events in our lives that result in both positive and negative outcomes). We then have our children rate these changes by themselves from a scale of 1 to 10.

#### **Focus on the Helper**

This activity answers many of our children's questions around disruptive and negative news they may hear or watch during tough times. It also directs their attention towards the positive and allows them to appreciate the unique roles with their society. The story 'A Standing Helper' remains an open discussion between parents and their children around the emotions of fear and sorrow. The story stresses the idea that giving help is one way by which we can face our problems. It is possible for anyone of us, no matter how young or old, to be of help to others. The following steps in the activity allow us to discover and appreciate the unique kinds of help individuals offer in our society. Then, we open a discussion with our children around which ways they desire to be helpful in their environment.

#### **What Connects Us is Stronger**

This activity deals with children's fears of being distanced from their friends and loved ones. The story 'The Hidden Message' tackles our children's longing for their loved ones and their questions about the continuity of these relationships despite social distancing. Our children then experiment with different ways of dealing with this distancing and what emotions these ways may create, both positive and negative. The aim of this is to equip our children with the tool to create their own ways of dealing with the distancing, ways to decrease its negative impact, and build on the positive.

#### **The Hidden Tie**

This activity presents a simple approach to dealing with the fear of loneliness or separation through its story 'The Hidden Tie'. This story is a heart-to-heart narrative that strongly speaks to our children's imaginations, enabling them to connect with its characters. This story leaves us all, young and old, able to see how connected we remain to the people we love through a hidden tie. We feel this hidden tie deep in our hearts, even though we cannot see it or touch it. The activity then engages us to write messages or letters to the ones we love. This brings us to connect the moral of 'The Hidden Tie' story to our lives and allows us to discover this tie in reality. In this way, we help reassure our children of their constant connection to the ones they love.

#### **We Left Our Mark**

This activity aims at tackling fear around absence and the memory of those we have missed through an adventure presented to us by the story 'They Left and Left Us an Adventure'. This story leaves a special message to both children and their parents in a time where speaking about separation (death, distance, absence, etc) is necessary. The story deals with the concept of absence in connection to the importance of the roles we all play in each other's lives. The steps that follow in the activity further reinforce the significance of this connection, by recalling our memories of how these people have

affected our lives. We conclude the activity by considering what impact we ourselves have on other people's lives. We remember how important our existence is, especially to those who love us regardless of the role we play in their lives, whether in our environment or our societies.

#### **Worth the Wait**

This activity tackles distancing from friends, loved ones, and social life. It also tackles boredom. The story 'I Cannot Wait' represents the time we spend waiting, a time that is real and that we cannot change, but a time that is only temporary and so makes us hopeful. This story is told by a father who is sending a message to those who are waiting and feeling bored! His message comforts us and reminds us that when it seems impossible to change what is happening in our lives, it is wise to turn inwards and discover who we really are. As for the following steps of the activity, they tackle the different reactions we make when bored and what hidden needs might be behind some reactions. We try to identify these hidden needs and express them.

## For Parents

We may consider the activities in this guide as life experiences from which our children can learn to adapt to new circumstances. To increase the likelihood that our children benefit from this guide, it is useful during the activities to make sure you do the following:

- Encourage them to sit freely and in a way that frees them.
- Change your tone during storytelling so that your children enjoy them better.
- Play music. Music can create an atmosphere of joy and interaction while carrying out activities
- Pause for a while after storytelling until the story is well absorbed by your children.
- Share with our children and help them sufficiently during the activities of this guide, whether in the preparation of the salad in 'A Shake and a Measure' or when ascending to view things from a cloud.
- Use words that better suit your children's understanding and culture.
- Listen attentively to our children and be non-judgemental of what they say, of their thoughts and of their feelings.
- Limit your strong reactions, especially those that drive them to silence and make them hesitant to express themselves once again.
- Be honest, transparent, and avoid using obscure language with your children.

### When Our Children Express Their Feelings

- Our children may feel disturbed during crisis times and may not be able to express it. This state may be manifesting through continuous anger, arguments with parents or siblings, or certain physical symptoms such as sighing and stomach or abdominal pain,

In case physical symptoms appear in our children, we can best help them if we ask them to:

- Identify in which areas of their bodies they feel pain or irritation.
- Ask them to imagine that they are letting go of these troubles through breathing, exhaling their pain away.
- Reassure them of our love and trust for them, as well as reassure them that they can safely share with us those things that are bothering them so that we may help them overcome them.
- Play games with them that they love, which distracts their attention from the stress and physical pain for a while.

- We must try to find out what our children most desire and need as they express themselves to us. For example, if our children tell us that they hate staying at home, we can then try and find out more: What exactly bothers them at home? What exactly do they need? What do they desire? Then our children can actually receive whatever they desire or need, which could be connecting with their friends, or playing some sports. They might just need to break the routine or get some time alone for themselves.

- In case of anger, we can help our children by giving them the time they need for us to listen wholeheartedly to them, encouraging them to express their emotions with clarity. It is essential not to take the things they say personally, especially if there are some unexpected expressions they may use.

Anger and fear are two different and natural emotions, but our children may express both fear and anger in the same manner. If our children are fearful, they may express that through what may seem as furious reactions without cause. We may be ignorant of the reason they are behaving this way. Even if we were to ask them why it is they are behaving this way, they may answer us and say, 'I don't know'. Anger may result from fear of the unknown, and from feeling insecure or a lack of belonging. Children can feel fearful since their infancy; however, they require time to learn how to deal with this emotion properly.

- When our children feel any emotion, but lack the ability to identify or verbalize it, we can help them identify their emotions by asking them to clarify questions first like 'What is bothering you?', 'What do you wish was different?', or 'How can I help?'. Afterwards, we can restate their answers while naming the emotion, and checking with them if our suggestion is accurate.

### For example,

If our child was crying, screaming, or complaining about his/her siblings, we can say 'I think you're angry because your brother took your toy, am I right? Let's think together how we can solve this problem' Or if our child wakes up and comes to us crying, screaming, or throwing things on the floor, we can calm him/her down saying: 'You didn't find me in my room this morning, I know you might be afraid, but do not worry, I am here for you, come, let us put things back to their places'

In case you find real difficulty in dealing with your children, and we know for sure that these things can be very difficult, you can try to cool things down by continuing to shed light on the positive, or you can seek professional help.

If you feel you need urgent intervention, you can seek professional help.



### **When an Idea Occurs to Them**

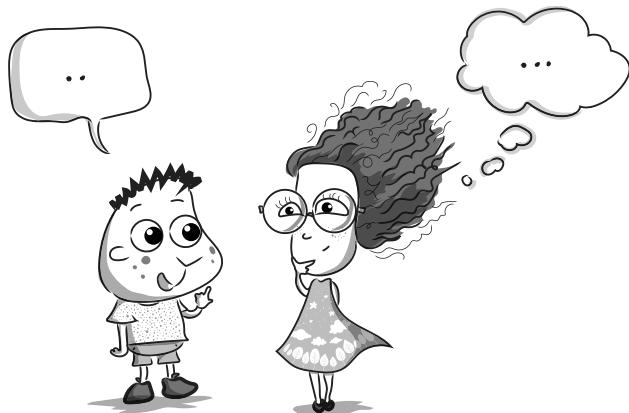
• We can notice that sometimes it is very hard for our children to express exactly what is going on in their minds. Let us avoid twisting what they tell us to suit what we want them to mean (to suit our own comfort).

**For example,** they may ask about a certain matter such as the Coronavirus. Avoid cutting the subject short by telling them that no one will get sick with the virus. Creating false expectations instead of realistic ones might increase the questions they dwell on in their minds, which might increase their fears.

Let us answer all their questions in a logical and realistic way, suitable to their age. Let us give them the needed time and walk with them step by step in line with their language to help them overcome their worries.

• Take into consideration that in spite of the intended meaning of each story or activity, we may discover that we each have our own unique thoughts and responses based on our personal experiences, inclinations, and imaginations.

**For example,** if the story speaks about people who are travelling abroad, one might think they are doing so for work, another might think it is for the sake of tourism or for moving somewhere new, or we might think of unexpected things that do not otherwise occur to us.



- For this reason, we stimulate our children's imaginations to have them come up with new ideas and suggestions. We ask them open-ended questions that invite more than one answer and that inspire them towards analysis and expression. (Closed-ended questions may have only one answer, like yes or no, and may hold only true or false)
- We give them the time needed to discover the activities, while respecting their individual pace that may differ from child to child.
- Be ready for some of their questions about an activity even after a week or two of completing it.

**Be ready for some of their questions about an activity even after a week or two of completing it.**

### **When They Ask**

#### **1. Mom/Dad, when will all of this be over ? Will I be able to celebrate my birthday ? (A question from Jade)**

I do not know sweetheart. Nobody knows. This situation is new for all of us. But even now, as we speak, there are many men and women, scientists, doctors, and nurses, working to make sure that it will be safe for everyone to go back to school, work, birthday celebrations, games, restaurants, and gatherings as soon as possible.

#### **2. Will we be infected with the Coronavirus? (A question from Johan)**

We are trying our best to prevent being infected by the virus. We are washing our hands frequently and thoroughly, and we are staying at home. And when we need to go out, we are wearing masks and gloves and physically distancing from others. All these things help keep us and others safe. If we do get infected with the virus, we might not feel any differently than we would if we were infected with the regular flu or cold. And if we need any help, there are amazing doctors and nurses who know how to take care of us.



**3. Why do we have to wear masks when we go out? (A question from Nicolai)**

If we have the Coronavirus symptoms, we wear masks because we need to protect other people from getting infected. And if we are not infected, masks will help us remember not to touch our faces, which stops the virus from entering our bodies through our noses, mouths, and eyes, especially when we have a strong itch that we cannot resist.

**4. Why is everything so boring? (A question from Johan)**

Can you clarify to me exactly how you see things as boring? (We then give our children the chance to identify the reasons for their boredom). Things might appear boring now because there are many rules around things we are not allowed to do. We cannot go to school or to work, play with friends, or visit any closed spaces like libraries, restaurants, and playgrounds. This may make our days seem really long. Sometimes, when I say that I feel bored, it might mean that I in fact feel sorrow or anger or distress. Sometimes I might just need a hug or for something to make me laugh.

**5. But since I am at home, why do you not play with me often? (A question from Johan)**

I previously got used to focusing on my work during work hours, then giving you all my attention when I came back home. As for now, being at home all the time does not mean that my work or other things I had to do all the time have disappeared. I still have to do these things and it is necessary for me to do them while at home.

I know this is confusing and upsetting for you because it is confusing and upsetting for me too. Let us identify what time I will be able to play with you and record it in a place that we will both be able to see every morning. Every time we look at it, we will remember that we will get to play together, and that will organize our time. We can create many games to play. How about we read 'The Treasure' story tomorrow? (We say this excitedly so that the child senses the parents' great longing for spending time with them)

**6. Why did you previously scream at me? (A question from Nour)**

I was truly upset that you had (spilled the water/broken the dish, etc...), although I knew it was by accident. I did not mean to scream at you, but the words came out of my mouth before I could stop them. I am sorry, I know this is happening a lot lately. I have some mixed feelings because of the changes happening in our lives, and sometimes I accidentally scream at you.

**7. What is the reason that you (mom) and dad scream at one another? (A question from Yasmine)**

Yes. Everyone in our family, including you, has feelings of worry and anger during these strange and difficult times, especially since we are staying together in one small space for a long time. So, there are many deep emotions in this small space and often these emotions do not get expressed in the way that they ought to. The argument that happened between your father and I was big (open your arms at the same level horizontally, not too wide apart), but the love that is in our family is this big (open your arms to the greatest extent).

Your father and I apologized to one another and laughed about what happened yesterday. Arguments happen sometimes between those who love each other, do you not think so? (This question gives the chance for our children to express their fear around their parents' relationship to one another, or the relationship of the child with any of the family members.)

**8. Mom/Dad, are you scared? (A question from Francesca)**

Yes, I do feel a little scared sometimes. It is okay to feel fear, this situation is new for all of us and new things can often be scary. But we have to go back and think about how safe and warm we are in this house, how much love there is here, how many people in the world are currently helping others, how much goodness there is in the world, and how many amazing things there are going on even when bad things are happening. When I think of all of that, I feel better.

**9. Will you come with me to pee-pee? (A question from a child that used to previously use the bathroom all by himself for years until now)**

I will come with you and wait for you outside the bathroom door and will not leave until you come out. -No, I do not want that. I am scared and want you to be inside with me, dad/mom! Okay, let us agree on something and that is that only today will I accept to go in with you, but you have to promise me that it will only be this one time. What do you think? Do we have a deal? (The parent raises their hand and give a 'high five' to their child to confirm the agreement. It is better that the parent does not enter the bathroom with the child before he/she verbally agrees to the arrangement).

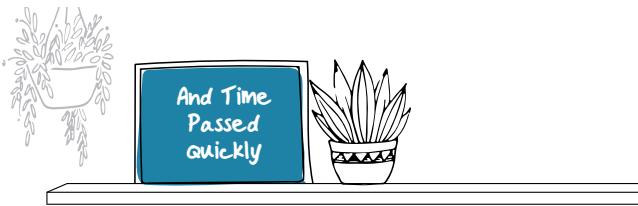
**10. Mom/Dad, will you also die? (A question from Joseph)**

Nobody now knows what will happen later. But I am in good health now and so are you! And I look forward to being together for a long time, and I will do my best to stay your parent for the longest years possible, so much that it is hard for me to count them all. And you should not forget 'The Hidden Tie' (the story from the guide). There is nothing that can separate our connection, not even death can stop our strong love for one another because our love is the strongest thing in the universe. (Then you can suggest to them to read together the story of 'The Hidden Tie').

## "Game & Story Fun for the Days to Come" Sessions



—19—



<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing the concept of how to make most of our time.</li> <li>Creating alternative options for spending productive and fun times at home.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coloring pencils</li> <li>Papers and a pencil</li> </ul>
<b>Guess What?</b>	<p>We tell the story:</p>   <p>When the quarantine was suddenly required because of the Coronavirus outbreak, Hazelnut and Sun were at their grandma's and grandpa's house. They had to stay confined in the countryside because momma and poppa are heroes on a noble mission to help other people. Hazelnut and Sun are so proud of their parents, and they really love their grandpa and grandma too. They felt so secure at their grandparents' home in the countryside. However, in the beginning, things were very difficult and boring because Hazelnut and Sun did not have their toys or books with them.</p> <p>With time, Hazelnut and Sun noticed that their grandma and grandpa have a great routine and so many things to do all the time. They noticed that their grandparents were actually not much affected by the quarantine. Grandpa wakes up early. He goes out and brings groceries and things needed back home. He prepares breakfast and then takes</p>

—20—

	<p>care of his plants. In the afternoon, he takes a nap and when he wakes up; he reads a book under the shadow of a tree and drinks some coffee.</p> <p>Grandma cleans the house every day and prepares food. She also waters the roses. After lunch, she gets some rest, then she plays sports or finishes a painting that she had begun sometime earlier. In the evening, she and grandpa watch the news on TV and play cards together and laughter fills the entire house!</p> <p>Hazelnut and Sun started thinking about how they too could organize their time and make the most of it to enjoy themselves in their stay at home.</p> <p>So, Sun started waking up early with grandpa and helping him with preparing breakfast. She learned all the gardening work, the names of the different trees in the garden, and how to take care of them.</p> <p>After lunch, she put aside some time for herself to enjoy. And sometimes when her grandma was painting, Sun would observe her and try to paint.</p> <p>As for Hazelnut, he started assisting his grandma in the kitchen, and he learned new recipes. He also started really enjoying reading with his grandpa under the tree.</p> <p>In the evenings, Hazelnut and Sun would play cards with grandpa and grandma, and solve funny riddles together. With time, their days became very organized and productive. They learned many new things while extremely enjoying themselves. They also learned how to make most out of the resources available at home to play beneficial and fun games.</p> <p>Because grandpa and grandma loved jokes and riddles, Hazelnut and Sun would play with them 'The Treasure' game. They would ask them to solve riddles until they finally get to the treasure. One of those times, the treasure was a colorful letter full of many drawings. Hazelnut and Sun had written the following in it: 'Thank you for the treasure that we found here.' What they meant was the treasure of organizing their time, playing and learning, enjoying and helping others, laughing, and making the most out of things, all at the same time.</p> <p>Having enjoyed themselves so much, Hazelnut and Sun started</p>
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Written by Maha Riachi	thinking of alternative ways and games to play with their grandma and grandpa, and with their momma and poppa every time they were back home.
<b>From Me &amp; From You</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did we love the most about the story?</li> <li>• How can we help Hazelnut and Sun find new games to play that we and our family can enjoy and make use of?</li> <li>• Let's think together, what are some ways Sun can enjoy her personal time alone?</li> <li>• How can we transform boring moments into positive ones?</li> <li>• What productive and fun things can we do both for ourselves and those around us?</li> </ul> <p>We leave an opportunity for our children to think of suggestions and share them.</p>
<b>A View from the Clouds</b>	<p><b>Account Book</b></p> <p>We invite our children to imagine that they each have an account book, like that of a minimarket owner. We ask them to make a balance check of this day or yesterday (for those who are younger), or of the whole week (for those who are older) and ask them to think of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you spend your time these days? What did you do? What were your activities?</li> <li>• What are the times you found productive and enjoyable?</li> <li>• What fun times and discoveries did you make during this day?</li> </ul> <p><b>What Did We Do Today? (An alternative activity)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We work with our children on making an activities' calendar.</li> <li>• Every morning we draw or write on the calendar whatever activities we want to do and organize our day.</li> <li>• Or we recall what we did during the day and record it on the calendar during the evening.</li> </ul>
<b>For the Days to Come</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We recall with our children the suggestions we made that would help Hazelnut and Sun. We choose games that we consider fun and useful, and that require materials available at home.</li> <li>• We then help our children in setting up the games and we play together.</li> </ul>



<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the importance of time.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kitchen boxes, tissue boxes, or any other box</li> <li>Coloring pencils</li> <li>Papers and a pencil</li> </ul>
<b>Guess What?</b>	<p>We tell the story:</p>  <p>Sun noticed that everyone at home and on TV was constantly repeating the word "time". And that "time" was always being discussed in phrases and questions like "How much time will we remain in quarantine?", "Will there be time for us to complete the school year?", "The time needed to wash our hands should be at least 20 seconds", "We should make the most of our time", and "This time is good for our families." Sun asked her dad: "Why is everyone talking about time, and why is time so important, daddy?"</p> <p>Her dad answered and said: "I will tell you the story of a turtle and an eagle. I read this story when I was young, and it helped me learn more about the value of time."</p> <p>There was once a water turtle who needed to lay her eggs in the sand. The turtle needed a lot of time to get out of the water and get to the seashore because she walks slowly on the sand. While she was crawling</p>

—23 —

up on the seashore, she saw a great big eagle in the sky; soaring by with swift speed, flying across enormous distances, and spinning like it's dancing with the clouds! The turtle thought to herself: 'How blessed is this eagle, he flies so fast and can see the whole earth from above, doing so many things during the day and having a lot of remaining time to enjoy... Oh, how great it would be not to have to worry about time!'

The eagle spotted the turtle on the seashore and flew down to see her with a mission to fulfill and said: 'You are very blessed. You can live both in the sea and on the land. Very few animals can live both in the sea and on land.' The turtle replied and said: 'I'm very slow on the seashore, and I need a lot of time when I get out of the water. As for you, you are quick and blessed, you never need to think of time because your speed saves you a lot of time up in the air.'

The eagle answered the turtle: 'I want to ask you for a favor and in return, I will give you whatever you ask from me.' The turtle thought for a while and when she decided what she wanted to ask from the eagle, she answered: 'Me? How can I possibly help you?' The eagle said to her: 'At the bottom of the sea, there is a cave, and inside that cave, there is a jar of gold, pearls, and diamonds. I want you to help me get the treasure jar and in return, I will give you whatever you ask from me.'

The turtle smiled and answered: 'I will get you the jar at the bottom of the sea, but you need to give me your speed in return.'

The eagle agreed without a second thought, and so the water turtle set out to the bottom of the sea to get the precious jewels for the eagle. And when she completed the mission and placed the jar on the seashore, she took the eagle's speed and the eagle took the treasure jar. The eagle was thrilled and went on thinking about how he can make the most of this treasure. He decided that he would decorate a palace nest at the top of the mountain with many pearls and jewels.

When the eagle started flying towards the place to build his palace nest, he sensed that his wings were very heavy and that his movement was slow. He was flapping his wings with much difficulty and flying only a very short distance in the air. It took the eagle a whole day to arrive at the nest at the top of the mountain. And when he sat down in his nest and relaxed, he started thinking about how it would ever be possible for him to build this palace. He would have to go down to the

—24 —

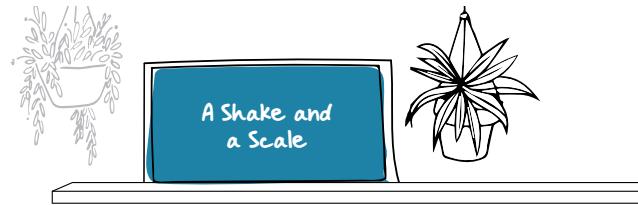
<p>Written by Maha Riachi</p> <p>seashore to pick up one jewel per day and it would take the entire day!</p> <p>The eagle realized that he had lost his time. The jewels will have to remain on the seashore, and they would no longer be useful to him. He wished that he would meet the turtle again, give her the treasure jar, get his speed back, and gain the gift of time again."</p>
<p><b>From Me &amp; From You</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did we love the most about the story?</li> <li>• Let's imagine how the turtle's life transformed after gaining speed on land.</li> <li>• In your opinion, how can the eagle make the most of his time after losing his speed?</li> </ul>
<p><b>A View from the Clouds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the story of the eagle and turtle relate to our daily lives? When in our daily activities are we like the eagle, and when are we like the turtle or any other animal or person?</li> </ul> <p><b>The Treasure Jar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Together, let's make a treasure pot made of kitchen boxes, tissue boxes, or any other box we can color and decorate.</li> <li>• Let's draw or write on small papers everything that we have accomplished or learned in our lives at this point. Let's decide what is the most important thing we have accomplished and place it inside the box.</li> <li>• Let's think together, while being quarantined, how can we transform the time we have to be a productive and fun time that helps make our dreams come true? (For older children)</li> </ul>
<p><b>For the Days to Come</b></p> <p><b>TV time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We ask every family member to imagine that they are a TV reporter on a TV program sharing with their audience how they can make the most of their time in their daily lives.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing the impact of change on our lives.</li> <li>• Learning about our different stances towards these changes.</li> <li>• Expressing our feelings during this crisis.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>Material Used</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">• 4 eggs</td> <td style="width: 50%;">• Vinegar</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• 4 cups</td> <td>• Water</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Orange juice</td> <td>• Soda (like Coca Cola)</td> </tr> </table>	• 4 eggs	• Vinegar	• 4 cups	• Water	• Orange juice	• Soda (like Coca Cola)
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• 4 cups	• Water					
• Orange juice	• Soda (like Coca Cola)					
<p><b>For Parents</b></p> <p>In this activity, after 24 to 36 hours of placing the eggs in 4 different cups, we notice that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The egg in the water cup remained in the same state.</li> <li>• The egg in the orange juice cup got paler.</li> <li>• The egg in the soda cup changed color noticeably and may even have some parts of it melted away.</li> <li>• The egg in the vinegar cup turned white and had its shell melted away, giving it a different feel when we touch it.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>Guess What?</b></p> <p>Written by Lea Dardido</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We fill the four cups, each cup with one of the four different liquids: water, orange juice, soda, and vinegar.</li> <li>• We place one egg in each of these four cups.</li> <li>• When we complete this part of the experiment, we ask our children: "What do you expect will happen if we leave one egg in each of these liquids for an entire day?"</li> <li>• We listen to their answers and tell our children that we will wait until tomorrow to find out what happens.</li> <li>• We place the cups at a safe distance out of our children's reach.</li> <li>• After 24 to 36 hours, we bring the cups to our children and ask them to observe the changes that occurred to the eggs.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>From Me &amp; From You</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the changes we observe? What happened to each of these eggs in the different cups?</li> <li>• Let's think together: what is the reason for this change? why no change happened to the egg that we placed in the cup of water?</li> <li>• If we assume that the different liquids we used (water, orange juice, soda, vinegar) are different circumstances that we go through, how did each of these eggs deal with those different circumstances?</li> </ul>						

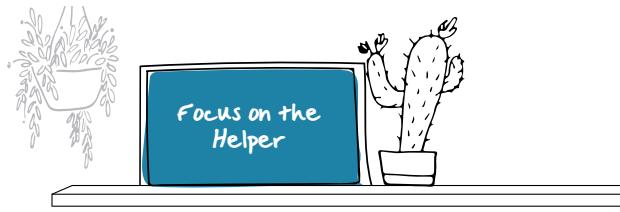
### A View from the Clouds

- We clarify to our children that the different circumstances we are now living have changed the course of our lives from the smallest to the largest detail. The egg experiment represents our lives. The egg in water lives in the usual circumstances and is not affected by any changes to its nature or to its way of living. As for the eggs in the other three cups, they adapted to the external circumstances that were imposed on them, either by changing a little or a lot.
- We can relate the water cup to our lives before the Coronavirus and the other cups to our circumstances and situations during the Corona crisis.
- We tell our children that we will do this experiment with ourselves this time, and so each one of us draws him/herself or writes about him/herself as we were before the home quarantine (Corona). We place the paper next to the first cup (water).
- We choose one of the other three cups to represent our current state during the Corona crisis that reminds us of the changes that are happening to us and our lifestyles during this time.
- We write or draw on another paper whatever changes to us or to our lifestyles have happened during the Coronavirus crisis.
- We place our paper next to the cup we chose to represent these new circumstances.
- When done with drawing or writing, we place our papers in a way visible to the entire family and we wait to see the changes occurring to them.
- Then we share with one another the different drawings and writings and exchange with one another how we feel towards these changes, reflecting on the following questions:
  - Were we able to adapt like the eggs? If yes, how can we observe this?
  - If no, how can we help each other to adapt to the current circumstances?



<b>Purpose</b>	• Expressing the different changes, both positive and negative, that have resulted from the crisis.		
<b>Material Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lettuce</li> <li>• Salt</li> <li>• Lemon</li> <li>• Tomatoes</li> <li>• Olive oil</li> <li>• Cucumbers</li> <li>• Pens</li> <li>• Coloring pencils/paint</li> <li>• Papers</li> </ul>		
<b>For Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>During the "Guess What?" step:</b> It is important to place the ingredients of the salad together without first mixing them. Have your children taste each of the ingredients separately, such as the salt and oil (to later again taste the difference after mixing the salad and its ingredients).</li> <li>• <b>During the "View from the Clouds" step:</b> Draw with the children a huge drawing of a temperature scale, numbering it from 1 to 10 degrees, so large that you can place it on the floor and have your children stand or jump from degree to degree.</li> <li>• We recall with our children what has most changed in our lives because of the Corona crisis like home quarantine, daily habits, hygiene procedures both personal and environmental, distance learning, distance from loved ones, playing only at home, sleeping hours, and other activities. We assess these changes with them by jumping from degree to degree on the large temperature scale game.</li> </ul>		
<b>Written by</b> Lea Darido	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparing the Salad (we can also add other ingredients):           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We wash our hands together.</li> <li>• We wash the vegetables.</li> <li>• We chop the lettuce, tomatoes, and cucumbers and place them on top of one another in a bowl, without mixing.</li> <li>• Without mixing the ingredients, we add the lemon juice, oil, and salt respectively.</li> <li>• We ask our children to close their eyes and taste each of the ingredients in the bowl.</li> <li>• Then, we have our children open their eyes and shake the bowl to mix the ingredients of the salad.</li> <li>• We then ask them to taste the salad once again.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>Guess What?</b>			

<b>From Me &amp; From You</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did we most enjoy during preparing and tasting the salad?</li> <li>• How was the taste prior to mixing the ingredients?</li> <li>• Why did we move around and mix the ingredients?</li> <li>• In our opinion, what resulted from the move and mix, both positive and negative results?</li> </ul>
<b>A View from the Clouds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We think of circumstances that shake up and move around our lifestyles, like the Corona mix-up:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has changed in our lives because of the Coronavirus?</li> <li>• Has anything good resulted from being shaken up by this crisis?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We record all the positive things we mentioned about the changes that occurred because of the Coronavirus.</li> <li>• Then we play with our children the "Scaling and Measuring" part of the game. We state to our children one by one the things we wrote and have them choose the degree on the temperature scale of how positive the change is (1 being least positive, and 10 being most positive). For example, "More time to play with my parents". We have our children think of how positive this impact from the crisis is and then we ask them to jump on the large temperature scale on whatever degree they find suitable. If the child considers the impact strongly positive, he/she may jump on the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> degree. If the child considers the impact slightly positive, he/she may jump on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree.</li> <li>• After jumping, we ask our children to share with us the reasons they chose a certain degree for a certain impact (the reason they evaluated it as such).</li> <li>• We continue doing the same exercise with the rest of the other changes that we wrote.</li> </ul>
<b>For the Days to Come</b>	<p><b>The Positivity Plant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We draw with our children a "Positivity Plant", and we hang it somewhere permanent. We prepare with them a few fruit drawings to keep aside. Anytime a "positive change" occurs to us during the crisis, we write or draw it on one of the fruit cut-outs and we hang it on the "Positivity Plant".</li> <li>• Anytime we think of a new positive change resulting from the crisis, we hang it as one fruit on the plant.</li> </ul> <p>We can keep the temperature scale aside for later use if our children ever desire to play with it again.</p>

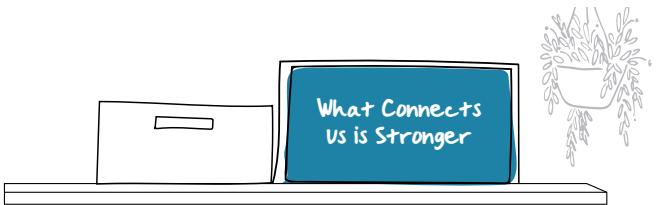


<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discovering and appreciating different societal roles.</li> <li>• Shifting our attention to the advantages of the current hardship.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Papers</li> <li>• Coloring pencils</li> </ul>
<b>Guess What?</b>	<p>We tell the story:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">              On one quarantine day, a family was all gathered together in the sitting room. Mom and dad were checking if there were any recent news about the Coronavirus, while Sun and Hazelnut were sitting on the carpet playing cards.              Suddenly, Hazelnut sighs and says: "I cannot handle the unpleasant news anymore, all the TV stations are saying the same thing". He covered his head and ears with his hands to not hear any of it anymore.              Hazelnut's momma tried to ease the situation for him by turning to his father and asking him while winking, "Hey dear, do you remember what uncle Fred used to say during tough times?". Hazelnut's dad understood what his wife was trying to do and so answered her: "Yes! There is no one funnier than uncle Fred". When Hazelnut saw his parents laughing, he lifted his hands from his head and asked: "What do you mean?". He had many questions in his head.              Hazelnut's mother pointed to the TV and said: "Hazelnut, Sun, search for the helpers". Sun answered and asked: "What's this? A new game?". Hazelnut added: "I see nothing other than frowning faces, sick people, or people wearing masks and gloves". Hazelnut's mother pointed her finger to the TV screen and said: "Notice the people behind those who are sick, who are they?". Hazelnut focused very well on the screen, then said: "A doctor and a nurse taking care of the sick person". The scene changed on TV and so Hazelnut and Sun's dad asked: "And now, behind the doctors and nurses, who can you see?". They answered: "Workers, cleaning the hospital floors". And in yet another scene, they saw first aiders exiting emergency cars.         </div>

	<p>Their mother said: "Can you imagine the importance of people who help us in our lives?". Sun answered: "Their roles are very important. Without them, things would be very hard." Hazelnut agreed and said: "Then why are we talking only about those that help in hospitals. Some people help us stay home during the corona crisis too, like those who clean the garbage". Sun continued: "And those who work at supermarkets". And so Hazelnut and Sun started competing to see who can identify more helpers doing their job with difficulty despite the current circumstances.</p> <p>Their father with a grin on his face looked at their mother who was joyful and said: "we can say that behind every person helping is another person helping them too. The chain goes on forever". Momma continued: "As long as people are helping, we will do very well". "These helpers are the foundation", said Hazelnut as something deep within him changed. He then raised his head and said: "I suddenly feel so much better!". He looked at his parents and said: "Momma, poppa, you are the best helpers!"</p> <p>His dad answered with a smile: "This is how secure we feel when we know that many people are supporting us and taking care of us". Hazelnut bounced off the floor with excitement and said: "Now I know what I want to do when I grow up". Mom, dad, and Sun asked him: "What?". Hazelnut stood pointing his finger upward and said: "A helper!". His mother laughed and lightheartedly said: "We now have a standing helper".</p>
<b>Written by</b> Grace Nakhoul	
<b>From Me &amp; From You</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What drew our attention the most in the story?</li> <li>• Have we ever experienced a situation in which we needed help? What was that situation? Who were the helpers? Would we like to describe that scenario?</li> <li>• Who were the helpers that Sun and Hazelnut mentioned in the story? Can we help them by giving them other suggestions?</li> </ul>
<b>A View from the Clouds</b>	<p><b>Search for the Helpers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask our children to search for the helpers in their environment.</li> <li>• We give each of our children 3 to 6 papers depending on their age.</li> <li>• We ask them to draw on their papers the tools that the helpers use.</li> <li>• We ask the children to use the papers they drew on to have their parents guess through the drawings what each helper's profession is or the name of the helper.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We then exchange conversation and place each of these papers in a bowl.</li> <li>• Each one by turn pulls out a paper from the bowl and speaks about the role of the person they got and their importance in society.</li> </ul>
<b>For the Days to Come</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We can draw or write a "thank-you" message to these helpers.</li> <li>• Finally, we ask our children about roles that they would like to play now or in the future to help others. We also ask them if they have now any capacity and desire to play any role and how they would play it - within legal and safe measures.</li> </ul>





<b>Purpose</b>	• Expressing feelings around distance from loved ones.
<b>Material Used</b>	• White paper                    • Papers • Any carton box found at home    • Coloring pencils
<b>Guess What?</b>	<p>We tell the story:</p>  <p>The Hidden Message</p> <p>During summer, Hazelnut used to play with the neighbor's kids: Nour, Leila, Oliver, and Hope. He was especially happy whenever he played with Oliver, his friend from school.</p> <p>Because of the Coronavirus, Oliver and Hazelnut were no longer seeing each other to play as they used to, but they stayed in contact over the phone. Oliver called Hazelnut once to catch up with him and at the end of the call, Oliver informed Hazelnut that he will go up to the mountains with his parents where he will unfortunately have no access to a telephone.</p> <p>Hazelnut was so upset and told Sun what had just happened. His dad overheard him and immediately suggested that he writes a letter to Oliver. Hazelnut's father assured him he will give the letter to Oliver.</p> <p>A week later, Hazelnut called Oliver again. Oliver's mother answered and said: "Oliver is in the car and we are in a real hurry to get moving to arrive while it is still daylight." Hazelnut was silent, not knowing how to</p>

respond. Oliver's mother continued to say: "There is a surprise for you in a sanitized bag at your house's front door". Hazelnut put his gloves on and opened the door. He pulled out from the bag a letter from Oliver telling him all about their house in the mountains and how he will spend his days up there.

During the evening, as they were sitting, Hazelnut said to his mother: "Momma, I'm very sad and angry. I can no longer see my friend Oliver, and I also can no longer be in contact with him over the phone! I cannot understand, how can he leave me? Why does he no longer love me?". His mother answered: "Oliver surely loves you Hazelnut, but sometimes such things happen in life, some people become absent from our lives, others remain present. Circumstances are now different. We cannot get to see those whom we love. This might remain the case for a while. We can't know whether it will be a short while or a long while. But this does not mean that Oliver stopped loving you."

Hazelnut's dad added: "I, like you Hazelnut, miss my sister Huda. Remember when we gave her a farewell three years ago before she moved to a faraway place?". Hazelnut: "Right, I remember that. It upset me when that happened." Mom: "We were all upset. We cried and thought we could never see her again. We believed she would forget us. However, we stayed in contact over the phone and we still see her every once in a while." Hazelnut: "You are right, momma. I called her the day before yesterday and told her all about my drawings." Mom: "It's the same thing we are going through now. Because of the situation, your friend Oliver had to go to the mountains with his parents. But this situation will not last forever. Roads will eventually open, and things will be all right. We will see then what the circumstances will be and we will behave accordingly." Hazelnut: "This means I will still get to see Oliver someday. But nobody knows when that day will be. Am I right?" "Right", Hazelnut's mother assured him.

Sun jumped up saying: "And they might get a phone in the mountains. Then you will speak to him until you meet again. You will get to talk with him about everything happening during these times." Hazelnut sighed and said: "But this is painful, and I'm still sad because I love Oliver and will miss him." Dad: "I know, sweetheart; this is difficult. But think of all the times you have already spent with Oliver, and this might help you."

Before Hazelnut went to sleep, he held Oliver's letter close and started thinking. He then noticed something written on the other side of the

	<p>letter he had not previously noticed. He quickly flipped the paper and saw a small drawing. Written underneath was: "I love you so much. Whatever the distance between us, what brings us is stronger. Take good care, and until we meet again. Your friend, Oliver."</p> <p>Hazelnut smiled and felt comforted from his sadness. He learned that even though circumstances change, love always remains. He slept peacefully that night.</p>
<b>From Me &amp; From You</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What drew our attention in the story?</li> <li>• Let's think together, what was Oliver feeling a while after moving up to the mountains?</li> <li>• In spite of the disadvantages of being distanced from Oliver, were there any advantages to it that we can identify? What are they?</li> <li>• What are some ideas that can help Oliver and Hazelnut maintain their friendship, regardless of their distance from one another?</li> </ul>
<b>A View from the Clouds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does this story remind us of anything we have experienced? If yes, let's tell each other about this experience.</li> <li>• If we were in Hazelnut and Oliver's shoes, how would we have behaved? What would we have done instead?</li> <li>• Do we think any of our family members are going through similar experiences (distance from loved ones and friends)? How are they enduring it? Or what is it like for them to live this experience?</li> </ul>
<b>For the Days to Come</b>	<p><b>The Mailbox/ The Friends' Mail</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We create a mailbox from any carton box found at home and decorate it as we wish.</li> <li>• We imagine every person we love yet can't be in contact with during these times, and we imagine they sent some letters by mail.</li> <li>• Let's think together: who are the people who sent the letters? And what did they write in these letters?</li> <li>• We can dedicate a paper for every one of these people and write the following on it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their name</li> <li>• Their relationship to us</li> <li>• What we think they would say in their letters</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>We then place the letters in the mailbox.</p>

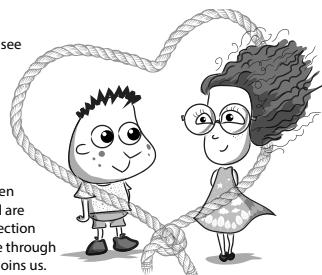


<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing concerns of distancing from loved ones and losing them.</li> </ul>						
<b>Material Used</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>• A rope or a thread</td> <td>• Tree leaves</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Coloring pencils</td> <td>• Beans (fava or white)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Papers and pens</td> <td>• Wooden spoon or tree branch</td> </tr> </table>	• A rope or a thread	• Tree leaves	• Coloring pencils	• Beans (fava or white)	• Papers and pens	• Wooden spoon or tree branch
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• Papers and pens	• Wooden spoon or tree branch						
<b>For Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the "Guess What?" step: We can replace the phrase "This hidden tie reaches your grandpa in the sky" with another phrase that is more appropriate to our beliefs and vocabulary that our children understand.</li> <li>• During the "View from the Clouds" step: It is advisable that parents initiate this activity and go first, in case children face difficulty in expressing themselves first.</li> </ul>						
<b>Guess What?</b>	<p>We tell the story:</p> <p></p> <p>There was once the Coronavirus and people were all confined at home. As the weather was getting warmer, momma and poppa decided to have some coffee outside in the garden. When Hazelnut and Sun woke up, they called to their parents, but no one answered. They searched the entire house for them but could not find them. Hazelnut asked Sun: "where could they possibly have gone?" It was before Hazelnut could finish his sentence that they heard their parents' laughter. They followed that sound, and it led them to the garden. As soon as they saw their parents, they sighed with relief, as if they could not breathe until they found them. Their mom was worried to see them this way and to see the anxiety in their eyes. She asked them what had happened. Hazelnut and Sun hugged their mom and dad as if it had been ages since they last saw them. They told their parents: "We woke up this morning and could not find you anywhere. We kept calling</p>						

you, but heard no answer." Their momma answered: "You know that we are always with one another no matter what happens." Hazelnut replied: "What do you mean? When we used to go to school, you were no longer with us. You used to leave us and go." Their mother tied something with her hands and said to them: "Come and see." They got closer to see what was between her hands. Their momma said: "I was your age when my mother told me the story about "The Hidden Tie". Sun interrupted: "But I can't see anything!"

Her mother answered her saying: "There is no need for you to see the hidden tie. People who love one another are tied by a special bond made up of love. Every relationship has its special tie that differs from other relationships. This means that the tie that joins you and me differs from the tie that joins you and your dad, or the one that joins you and your friends. All these ties are made up of the same thing that joins them: 'Love'." Hazelnut asked: "But how can I be sure the tie is there if I cannot see it?"

"Even if you cannot see it with your eyes, you can feel it in your heart," his mother answered. "Be sure you are connected to everyone you love. This means that when you're at school and are missing me, this affection is transmitted to me through the hidden tie that joins us. It transfers love and affection from your heart to mine." Sun replied: "And when it moves love into our own hearts, it means you too sent us back this love." Hazelnut asked: "Our dog Rookie has a hidden tie with us?" Mom answered: "Of course!" Sun asked: "What about friends like Nour and I?" "Even friends", mom answered. Hazelnut asked: "How far can this hidden tie reach?" Mom said: "Everywhere." "What if it breaks?", Hazelnut asked.



"It cannot break", answered his mom, "It is made of love, the strongest thing in the universe."

Sun said: "If we were to dive deep into the bottom of the sea, would it still be there?"

"Even there, it would still be tying us", her mom answered.

"And if we were to climb the highest mountain too, would it still be tying us then?", asked Sun.

"Surely it would tie us even up there", answered mom.

"What about if we were to fly on a plane to a very, very faraway place?"

"It would still be tying us then too."

"Even if we were to travel to the moon with a spaceship?"

"It would even still tie us if you travel to the moon."

Then Sun got the courage to speak up about something she was always hesitant to speak about: "Okay momma, then does it still tie us with grandpa in heaven?"

"Yes," mom answered, "it even ties us with those who have left us."

"Does being angry break the tie?", asked Hazelnut.

"Never," mom answered, "because love is stronger than anger. As long as love is still in our hearts, the tie always remains strong"

"Even if we were to grow old or to fight over a toy? Or when we go to sleep?"

"Ah, I remember now. You should have breakfast now", answered their mother as she tickled them into laughter.

After a long day, Sun slept and dreamt of hidden ties made up of many colors. The tie between her and her mother was pink and polka-dotted. The one between her and her dad was yellow and striped. The tie between her and Hazelnut was green and the one between her and grandpa was very long and blue. The tie between her and her friends was yet in another color, and the one with her friends' friends was yet in another new color. Then all the people in the world were tied together with ties that never end, made up of many colors. That night, Sun learned that it is impossible for anyone to be alone because we are all tied to one another through hidden ties that never break and never leave us lonely.

Written by  
Grace Nakhoul

\*Adapted from the  
story "The Invisible  
String" by Patrice  
Karst

#### From Me & From You

- What most drew our attention in the story?
- Let's talk about a time in our lives when we felt lonely and why. Who did we resort to then?
- If we have the opportunity to ask one additional question to Hazelnut and Sun's mother in the story, what would we ask?

<p><b>A View from the Clouds</b></p> <p><b>The Tie Bracelet</b></p> <p>"Let's see how many ties we can make as bracelets to wear or hang on the wall."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We give our children threads, ropes or strings with which they can make the bracelet ties.</li> <li>• We ask them to create a tie for each person they love (whether alive or passed away, present or absent)</li> <li>• The thread might finish and the child might not finish the tie. Then, we can tell them that we will complete the bracelet with a hidden tie encouraging the child to say: "This tie is between me and ---- its color is --- etc."</li> </ul> <p><b>In case we don't have any thread or rope, we can ask our children to draw a rope on a paper with colorful ties which they can then cut out however they desire.</b></p> <p><b>They can also add names to the ties.</b></p> <p><b>When everybody is done drawing the ties, we can ask them to color them.</b></p> <p>We then suggest the following:      "A word from me and a word from you. I tell you about my tie and you tell me about yours."  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child holds with his hands whatever tie they created.</li> <li>• The child places their finger on the tie and mentions the person intended, what they remember about this person, and what they love about them. The child also shares the reason for choosing that particular color for the tie, for example:          "This tie is between me and ....."          "It is (color) because this color....."          "I remember that this person....."          "I love that they....."</li> </ul> </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We use ropes or threads to hang up 1 to 4 of these shapes 6cm apart.</li> <li>• We prepare a tree stem or bark (30cm length) or a wooden spoon or any kind of wood.</li> <li>• We hang our threads on the stem or wood that we prepared.</li> <li>• We tie the wood/stem in such a way that our children can hang it somewhere.</li> <li>• We hang the wood/stem somewhere on the wall or ceiling or on a tree if available.</li> <li>• Whenever we desire, we can look at the shapes that represent the people we love and send them hidden messages in the air to let them know whatever we want them to know.</li> </ul>
<p><b>For the Days to Come</b></p> <p><b>Messages in the Air</b></p> <p>"We all dearly miss the people we love. What do you think we play a game where we send messages in the air to those whom we love?"</p> <p>Let's think together about every person we love but cannot see. What is a shape that represents our relationship with them (a star, a heart, a sun...)?</p> <p>Let's make each of these shapes with paper cut-outs or with tree leaves or with any kind of beans to represent the people we love.</p>	



<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing concerns of distancing from loved ones and losing them.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old papers</li> <li>Water-colors</li> <li>Coloring pencils</li> </ul>
<b>For Parents</b>	<p><b>During the "View from the Clouds" step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is advisable that parents participate in this activity.</li> <li>It is advisable that parents start by speaking about their own memories to encourage their children to express themselves.</li> </ul>
<b>Guess What?</b>	<p>We tell the story:</p>  <p>After a while passed of being quarantined because of the Coronavirus, Sun came to her dad and mom and said: "I am very bored. I have nothing to do today." Her mother thought to herself a little then said: "What do you say we take Rookie our dog and go have a walk together?" Though everybody was feeling lazy, mom insisted that they go for a walk and said: "It would be better than staying at home." Hazelnut excused himself saying: "I'm sleepy. I didn't sleep well last night. Go without me." So, dad, mom, Sun, and Rookie set off to go to the walk. However, they weren't feeling so excited at first.</p> <p>After walking for a while, they suddenly noticed an abandoned house. They decided to get closer to see it upfront. From far, the house looked tiny. But as they got closer, they were surprised to see how big it truly was. The entire house did not have any doors. Sun imagined how bored and lonely this house must feel, waiting for years and years to welcome somebody to live in it. When Sun saw the paint of its walls peeling and falling off, it reminded her of autumn tree leaves. She smelled moisture, like the smell of wet tree leaves in winter.</p>

	<p>They also spotted a brick tent. As they got closer to it, they saw a staircase leading downstairs underground. They were at first hesitant to take it, but dad had a strong curiosity about what was downstairs. Dad put on his adventurous look and said: "Let's go downstairs to see where it leads us!" Mom said as she went down: "It looks as though there used to be a school here."</p> <p>After having said this, Sun's imagination started going wild. She started picturing room after room, imagining the children that used to sit at their school desks. Sun said: "Momma, come and see; somebody has drawn on the wall here." Her mom saw and said: "It looks as though two lovers have passed from here."</p> <p>As they discovered the place, they saw many drawings on the walls. Mom and Sun had fun making up stories for each of the drawings. When they finished seeing the entire place, Sun asked her mom: "Momma, who do you think drew all these drawings?" Her mother answered: "It is possible that many people have been in this place before and we cannot find out who they were. But every person can leave a unique mark special to them. And that mark reminds us that that person has been here before."</p> <p>Sun replied: "I thought leaving a mark for people to remember me means I have to become a doctor, architect, or lawyer. Or that I have to invent something new or become famous." Momma answered and said: "You could be a cleaning lady, a gardener, a mother, or even just a sister, and people would still remember you. Nobody leaves this world without leaving a unique print."</p> <p>Sun got excited and said: "Let's leave some marks here for people after us to see and enjoy, same as others have left their prints for us to enjoy." They each chose a spot on the wall to leave their mark. They even left an extra spot for Hazelnut to leave his mark next time they come with him.</p> <p>And so, everyone left their print in that place: mom, dad, Sun, and even Rookie the dog. They also wrote a sentence on one wall: "We've passed through here and left you a print to remember us with." They drew underneath it a drawing of their family, with Rookie and Hazelnut that was still home.</p> <p>On their way back home, Sun asked her dad a question that had been continuously on her mind: "Poppa, do you think the people that used</p>
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	<p>Written by Grace Nakhoul</p> <p>to attend this school are still here (alive) today?" "They might be or they might not," answered dad, "They might have left, but they surely left us an adventure." He said this as he tightly hugged Sun. "True!" replied Sun, jumping with joy.</p> <p>Sun couldn't wait to get home, tell Hazelnut her brother all about this adventure, and go yet another time with him so he can too leave his own mark there!</p> 
<b>From Me &amp; From You</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did we most love about the story?</li> <li>• Had we been there with Hazelnut and Sun's family in this adventure, what questions would we have asked?</li> <li>• How can there be a unique value or significance to any kind of work we may do in our lives – whatever that work is?</li> <li>• Can we give examples?</li> </ul>
<b>A View from the Clouds</b>	<p><b>The Adventure of Memory Fishing</b></p> <p>We suggest to our children: "How about we go for an adventure?! We will go memory fishing together."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's think of things (material things, smells, certain foods, stories...) that remind us of people we no longer see (whether with us or not)</li> <li>• Let's think of something that reminds us of them, or draw this memory on a paper.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We place the things and drawings we collected together in one place.</li> <li>• We sit together and each person chooses one thing they collected or one drawing they made and talks about:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who does this thing or drawing remind us of?</li> <li>• What is the story behind this memory?</li> <li>• What is the print/mark this person left on our lives?</li> <li>• What is a certain event that we cannot forget about this person?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>This part of the activity ends when each family member spoke about all of their selected things/memories (or at least one thing for each family member).</p>
<b>For the Days to Come</b>	<p><b>My Fingerprint</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How about we each take the time to draw our fingerprint?</li> <li>• Let's place ink on our fingers and stamp them on a little paper.</li> <li>• We draw a similar picture of our print on a bigger paper, inspired by the print we stamped on the small paper.</li> <li>• We each draw on our large print what things we think make us unique and different from others, as well as what things we will leave behind that will always remain.</li> <li>• We hang the drawing or keep it to add more to it anytime we think of something new.</li> <li>• Do we observe any changes occur within ourselves after this activity? What are they? (We can think about this part and answer at a later time. Or we can keep the answer to ourselves and choose who we particularly want to share it with)</li> <li>• It is possible that we do not observe any changes.</li> </ul>



<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing our feelings during the quarantine.</li> </ul>
<b>Material Used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reusable material found at home.</li> <li>A copybook or stack of papers.</li> </ul>
<b>Guess What?</b>	<p>We tell the story:</p>  <p>The Coronavirus was still around when Hazelnut, Sun, and Rookie were playing ball outside in the garden. Mom and dad were in the kitchen preparing lunch together. Suddenly, they hear Hazelnut screaming. Mom runs outside quickly and dad follows her to see what is happening. Rookie had the ball in his mouth, he was running all over the garden, and Hazelnut couldn't get hold of him!</p>

— 45 —

Hazelnut got furious and started stomping his feet on the ground, saying: "Sun doesn't know how to play ball, Rookie thinks he's the best player, and I'm not happy playing with them anymore!" Dad arrived outside, put his hand on Hazelnut's shoulder, and asked him: "I feel there is more to this than playing ball. Tell me, what is truly bothering you?" As soon as dad finished said these words, Hazelnut broke out with tears and said: "I cannot handle this situation anymore. I'm stuck at home and I miss my friends, grandma, grandpa, uncle, and aunt's house. It's true that you are here with me but I still feel lonely." Mom, dad, Sun, and even Rookie surrounded Hazelnut around the stairs in the garden, waiting for him to calm down.

Then his mom asked: "Do you remember when you were younger and used to ask me to get you some ice cream? We would walk a certain distance and you would keep asking me if we are there yet. And then you would ask again: "Momma, it's taking very long, how long do we still need to get there?" And the distance was far for both you and me and it would take a very long time. And you wouldn't stop asking until the ice cream would arrive between your two hands, remember?" Hazelnut answered: "Yes, I remember."

"And do you remember the feeling you would get as soon as you received the ice cream?" mom continued, "I would look at your face and see that you had forgotten all about the lengthy walk and the time it took us waiting. All you cared about at that moment was the ice cream you were eating. It was worth the wait." "I don't understand what you're trying to say, mom", answered Hazelnut.

"I'm trying to say that sometimes in life we have to wait a long time to get something we desire, and we may have to wait longer than we expect. But be sure that whatever we desire will still be there waiting for us. All there is to it is that we have to wait a bit to get it, whether because of distance or because of time."

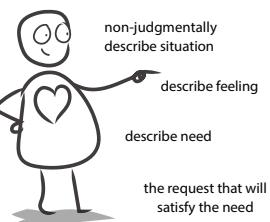
"But I feel bored, and I miss how things used to be," replied Hazelnut. Dad smiled and answered: "My child, sometimes when you can't go out, you go in and discover what's inside."

Sun said: "I don't understand."

Dad laughed and answered: "Let's all go inside the house and I'll tell you. It's a new story!"

Written by  
Grace Nakhoul

— 46 —

<b>From Me &amp; From You</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What most drew our attention in the story?</li> <li>• What do you think of Hazelnut's reaction? What did he really need?</li> </ul> <p>• Have we ever waited a long time to get what we wanted, like Hazelnut and the ice cream? How?</p>
<b>A View From the Cloud</b>	<p><b>Puppet show</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's try to go "in" and discover ways to make a puppet out of things we find at home.</li> <li>• Let's imagine that this puppet is living the same circumstances that Sun and Hazelnut did during the Coronavirus times. Let's create scenarios for these dolls where they react in a way to certain circumstances that does not reveal their true feelings toward those circumstances.</li> <li>• Let's consider the figure below and use it as a staple of how to express our feelings and our needs in a clear way.</li> </ul> <p><b>For example,</b>      "When I see.../hear... [non-judgmentally describe situation]      I feel...[describe feeling]      Because I need... [describe need],      For this reason, I want/request...[the request that will satisfy the need]"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is in our opinion the best scenario? The one where we clearly express or the one where we react without clarity? And why?</li> <li>• Do we want to consider some other scenarios?</li> </ul> 

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observer – without evaluating</li> <li>2. Tell your feelings – without using "I"</li> <li>3. Express your need – without talking about action</li> <li>4. Request – without demanding</li> </ol>
<b>For the Days to Come</b>	<p><b>My Inside Journal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did we discover we can do differently throughout this activity?</li> <li>• Let's put a special notebook or drawing book aside to journal in and decorate it as we wish.</li> <li>• Let's think of what we've discovered "deep inside": whether things inside our homes or our inner thoughts, feelings, and capacities. Let's record what we've discovered in our journals.</li> </ul>





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