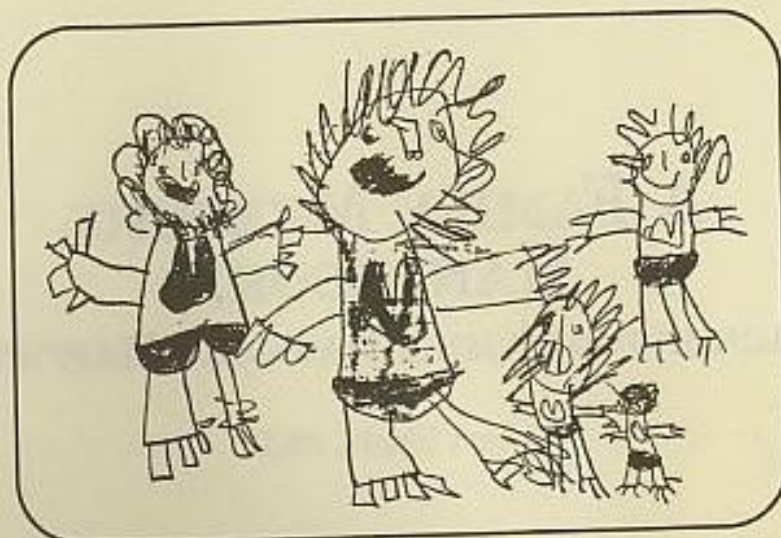


A FAMILY MEETING HANDBOOK:

*Achieving Family
Harmony Happily*

by Robert Slagle, Ph.D.





The characters in the cover illustration were modeled after a drawing by a six-year-old client who was depicting members of her family as they were about to hold their first Family Meeting.

TO ORDER copies of *A Family Meeting Handbook* from the publisher, please refer to final page of the text.

Copyright © 1985, Robert W. Slagle

Published by: Family Relations Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 462
Sebastopol, California 95472 U.S.A.

Illustrations and cover design: Robert W. Slagle

Typography by: Vera Allen Composition, Castro Valley, CA.

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book or portions thereof in any form whatsoever. No part of this book may be translated or appropriated by any means without written permission from the author. For information, inquiries should be addressed to Dr. Robert W. Slagle, c/o the publisher.

International Standard Book Number 0-9614218-0-0

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 84-82425

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Slagle, Robert W. (Robert William), 1942-
A family meeting handbook.

Bibliography: p. 145

1. Family. 2. Meetings. 3. Parenting. I. Title.
HQ734.S666 1985 646.7'8 84-82425
ISBN 0-9614218-0-0 (pbk.)

First Edition

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Printed in the United States of America

Foreword

This handbook is based on personal experience. I first became intrigued with the idea of Family Meetings when I was introduced to a family that held them. I was not impressed at first, but one aspect of this family's procedure stuck in my mind. Although there were seven children in the family, the father reported that family disturbances were rare. *What amazed me was the fact that the children were never punished unless they willingly agreed to the punishment.* The extraordinary fairness of this rule, along with my curiosity about how it could possibly work effectively, hooked me. In my own home, we began experimenting with Family Meetings when our two boys were about five and seven years old. Our focus was on fairness, "listening," and cooperation for the benefit of the family as a whole. After we established precedents and trust in the process, our meetings became easier. Before long, I began to wonder why more parents did not use Family Meetings. In our home, the effects of Family Meetings were unquestionably positive and successful.

I introduced the procedure into my family counseling practice. This was a rigorous testing, since most families that come to me for therapeutic intervention are in a crisis. A teenage girl has been arrested for alcohol and drug possession. A ten-year-old boy has become so hyperactive that he cannot be retained in school. What should a family do in cases such as these? Making Family Meetings successful is a relatively long-term venture. Family Meetings would seem difficult to apply in a crisis situation when there has been no preparation for the procedure. Yet, even under these trying situations, Family Meetings proved invaluable. In my service as a Marriage Counselor and Family Therapist, I have not seen even one problem that could not be handled by Family Meetings as described in this handbook. I have, in good