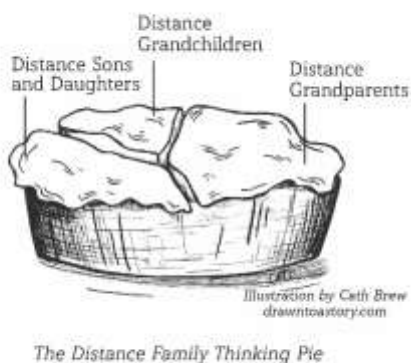


The Distance Family Thinking Pie: How Big is Your Slice?

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The Distance Family Thinking Pie is a symbolic reminder that each generation of thinks about each other according to their own set of scales. The slices of thinking vary in size.

A healthy understanding of The Distance Family Thinking Pie delivers realistic expectations of each generation. This in turn contributes to emotionally resilient distance family relationships.



Let's consider how The Distance Family Thinking Pie is divided between the generations.

Distance Grandparents

Distance Grandparents consume the biggest slice of The Distance Family Thinking Pie. They think about their distance children most, followed closely by thoughts of their distance grandchildren. They worry, they grieve, they feel the void: their distance family is

constantly on their minds. When they wake up each morning one of their first thoughts will be, *are there any messages overnight from the kids?*

Distance sons and daughters

Distance sons and daughters think about their Distance Parents often, but not as frequently as their parents think about them in reverse. There is a middle-size slice. Keeping with the same example, first thing in the morning, distance sons and daughters have a full to-do list. They don't necessarily have time to ponder about their parents as they are rushing to get on with the day. There is only so much space, or 'bandwidth', as they would describe it.

The only time the size of the slice of The Distance Family Thinking Pie increases for the sons and daughters is when perhaps a parent is unwell and uncertainty about their future is a lingering concern. It is then the slice sizes of The Distance Family Thinking Pie are adjusted.

Distance grandchildren

Distance grandchildren consume the smallest slice of The Distance Family Thinking Pie. Most distance grandchildren don't think about their Distance

Grandparents much, but it doesn't mean they don't care. Let's face it, most of us didn't think about our grandparents much at the same age. Their brain space focuses on many other things and that's perfectly normal. Once again there are exceptions to the rule. I have come across grandchildren, more especially those who grew up geographically close to their grandparents and later moved away, who are very devoted to their Distance Grandparents. They are constantly thinking about them. However, they are the exception.

Pie reflections

The purpose of talking about The Distance Family Thinking Pie is in no way to critique each generation's efforts. It is there for one purpose only: to highlight the reality that the quantity of distance family thinking varies between generations. This provides a context for realistic expectations of each other.

There is no right or wrong answer about what is the appropriate amount of thinking to dedicate to your distance family. If the family is functioning well and everyone's needs are being met as best they can be, that's an excellent result. However, if distance families are not functioning so well it might be the portioning up of The Distance Family Thinking Pie isn't quite right. Reducing your expectations of the other generations will likely find you thinking less about what you have no control over.

Helen Ellis is the founder of DistanceFamilies.com and the author of the [Distance Families Book Series](#).

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