

FAMILY REUNION INSTITUTE'S

STICKY REUNION SITUATION

A VIRTUAL FAMILY REUNION?

February 2019

The Situation:

Cell phones, computers, virtual meetings and workshops are moving my family further away from reality. At our last reunion meeting they actually discussed a virtual reunion, saying it would work out better for the large number of seniors who are having a hard time attending in person. I think it goes against all that being family is all about. Is it ever appropriate to hold a “virtual family reunion”?

The Fix:



Bill Vargus

I agree with what is implied in the question: The purpose is to get everyone together, and a virtual reunion would defeat that purpose. The reunion, when conducted in an actual physical space, involves not just group events, but also mini-groups and workshops. And the reunion is a great time for people to talk one-on-one while at dinner, or in the hotel, or wherever. None of that can be done extensively using Face Time or Skype. Also, some families change the location of the reunions from year to year and set aside time for touring the host city. The together time, whether in a group setting or individually, can help forge bonds that result in a connection that continues after the reunion. And while we'd like to make things as easy as possible for the older generation during the reunion, they are the very folks who are least likely to be inclined toward using the technology necessary for a virtual reunion, anyway.

The Fix:



Doug Harris

I totally agree with Billy's response. A virtual reunion is like comparing crackers and cheese to an all-you-can-eat buffet of sumptuous dishes. They're both food and appropriate, depending upon the situation, but one is more satisfying and lasting.
