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# How To Deal With Toxic Family Members

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## We've all heard the saying "Family is everything," but what do you do interactions with your family cause you continual emotional pain?

No relationship is perfect and even the best familial bonds are tested with the inevitable ups and downs that are par for the course when quarrels arise. Yet, we often endure arguments and disagreements with our family members because of the ties we are taught to value and nurture at a young age. However, there is a difference between healthy and toxic а relationship.

A healthy relationship is built on mutual respect, trust, honesty and good communication. These relationships make you feel secure, free to be yourself and happy. Toxic relationships are usually built over time. It's not just the occasional blowup with a family member, but a recurrent problem that rears its ugly head whenever you are in the same room with that individual. These relationships often leave you feeling uncomfortable, unheard. devalued, drained and unhappy.

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So, how should you deal with toxic family members?

## **Start With Compassion**

Begin to reshape the frayed relationship with compassion. You cannot expect to change anything with your own toxic emotions compounding the issues you want to straighten out. Make a conscious effort to extend love and understanding then define and set some boundaries no matter what they are.

If you no longer want to chat about your personal life – don't. If you're sick of being the middleman in a heated discussion – stay out of it. Stick to your boundaries once they are set, expect and be prepared to stand firm against any pushback with your newly etched line in the sand. Remain consistent and remember it's ultimately up to you what you are willing to take on or talk about.



## **Stand Up For Yourself**

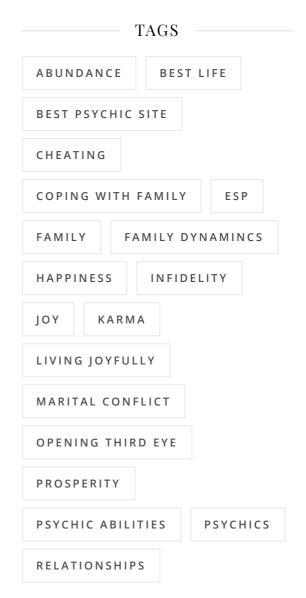
Communicate your distaste for the way you've been treated in an assertive (non-aggressive) manner. You may not change their conduct, but you can control how you react. Pretending everything is alright when a family member has upset you only reinforces their bad behavior where you are concerned.

## Don't Take On Their Drama

You must accept that your family member's issues are not your fault. We

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all want to extend a helping hand, but it important to realize your loved ones are in control of their own lives. Their drama is theirs to deal with. Take a step back if helping out is costing you more than you bargained for mentally, physically and financially.

## Take A Break

It's okay to take a break from any toxic relationship, including one involving a family member. Don't let feelings of guilt or obligation keep you from protecting your mental health and sanity. Sometimes the best course of action is distancing yourself from someone. Family bonds can complicated, but don't allow any familial connection to continually steal your inner peace and joy. Life is too short for toxicity!



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