

We Have Kids

When and How to Cut the Ties of Bad Family Relationships

L IZETT • MAR 8, 2022

I'm passionate about health, wellness, social issues and relationships. I offer relatable content and solid advice.

What Is Family?

In just a few words...family defines us. Our first relationships were our family relationships. It's a significant part of who we are to the core, because our past is an integral part of how we view ourselves and the world.

An interesting aspect about families is that people can tolerate more bad than good, and even a strained family relationship can be considered satisfying. *'My family drives me nuts, but I love them!'*

Families can simultaneously be the ones to cause you distress, but are also there by your side in tough spots. That's a fair trade: Take the good with the bad. It's when the bad outweighs the good, or the *bad* is abuse, that we have to evaluate the health of that relationship for our own wellbeing.

Unconditional love is the key ingredient in a healthy relationship; one of acceptance and expression, the ability to agree to disagree at times, and mutual respect without having to change or control each other.

These are ideal conditions though, and for some, it's never been this way with certain family members.

These unbalanced relationships are the worst to endure because family means so much to us personally and within our culture/society.

Unfortunately, many people are faced with the excruciating decision of whether or not to continue an unhealthy family relationship with a parent, sibling, grandparent, son, daughter, or step-family members.

If you feel that you have to cut ties, it's usually because you've endured years of discontent (or even abuse) and you have no other choice. Many who are reading this have endured too long.

Just because someone shares some DNA with you they get to take your stuff? Call you names? Demean you? Sabotage your relationships and career? No way!

– Dr. Phil McGraw

Evaluating the Relationship

Chances are you've been evaluating the strained relationship for a while, but committing to cutting the ties brings on feelings of guilt, failure, shame, emptiness, doubt, abandonment, and even grief.

Deciding to face these feelings and manage them is a brave step.

No matter how strained, intolerable, and/or abusive the relationship is, it's a difficult decision to make. Asking yourself the questions below can help.

- **What's the history?** Psychologists have an old saying: "The best prediction of future behavior is past behavior." Having extensive history is what hurts the most when breaking up with a family member, but if that history has been chronically negative, this can make it easier to make an informed and intuitive decision. It will be hard to let go of the relationship or put some distance between you if there were good times along with the bad. It can still be difficult to cut ties if it's been a long, torturous road. Even familiar abuse and patterns are hard to break away from. Sometimes it helps to put it all on paper— one column for positives and one for negatives—so that you can see both sides objectively. Or give a point system to each good thing and each bad thing. Sometimes a really bad thing is much worse than 10 good things. Watch out for patterns that show the relationship is getting progressively worse. Also, if they keep insisting they've changed, then keep your eyes open to determine if their actions show that is indeed true. Even if they have changed, the relationship dynamic can remain the same.
- **Who else is affected by this relationship?** Sometimes, breaking ties with one person means you could have the entire family upset with you. Remember, other family members have likely contributed to the abusive person's tactics as well. They may not be prepared to face that- you are disrupting family patterns. Be prepared and know that not everyone will understand your decision. It's important to find a way to manage other family relationships and evaluate the effects on others as well, but you are not responsible for everyone's feelings. Don't hesitate to cut ties if the only reason you are keeping contact is to please the "family" or someone else in the family. Group enabling is sad but common within families.
- **Consider the kids.** If you have children, explain in age-appropriate language to your

kids why they may not see their grandma or aunt for a while. Kids tend to get caught in the middle— some family members use them as pawns so be as honest as you can with them, considering they often know more than they let on.

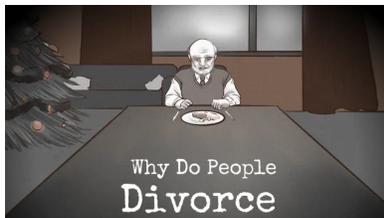
- **How is the stress affecting your personal life and current family?** Many people get confused and think their parents or the family they were born into is more important than the family they build for themselves. This is wrong. Your original family should never get between you and your current family. Your wife/husband and kids now take precedence over your mom and/or dad, so don't tolerate original family members if they negatively affect your current family. Preferably you, rather than your spouse, should handle your own family members.
- **What's your role?** We take on a label or role from an early age in the family unit. Sometimes we get stuck in that role and transfer it into our lives beyond the family. Breaking this role and its effect on our lives may require distance or cutting ties to make a clean break and change our habits, not only within the family, but in our current relationships. Your role in the family could be "the baby", the "troubled one", "shy one", "the black sheep". Or you might be "the fixer" and "mediator" - one who keeps the peace at all costs, taking care of everyone else. Sometimes a family needs a "scapegoat", one to blame everything on. Those willing to speak up, or the squeaky wheel, are usually the people who are ostracized and shamed. Don't let the family problems fall on your back. Do the roles you have in your current relationships (work and personal) resemble roles you play in your family?
- **How do they feel about you?** The best indication of how another person perceived us is how we feel when we're in their presence— more specifically, how we feel about ourselves in their presence. I know that I feel small, invisible, and out of control when around a certain family member. I realize that's how they likely view me, either on a conscious or subconscious level. Ideally, family should be based on unconditional love. If you're not feeling the love, then what are you feeling? Sometimes it's helpful to ask yourself when was the last time you felt loved by that person, without strings attached. If you feel awful when that person is around, it's probably triggered by their ugly feelings about you. Picking up on subtle cues may help you realize the truth of that relationship. In other words, the feeling may be mutual, they just may show it in passive-aggressive ways. Keeping that in mind, remember that it's not your fault they feel this way.
- **Are there any boundaries?** One thing many families have in common is a lack of boundaries: People say what they want, do what they want, and respect is nowhere in sight. That can work for some. However, it's unhealthy to equate a lack of boundaries with unconditional love. Specialists agree that for children, having boundaries gives a sense of being loved, and childhood is where some of the mayhem started between family members. If you're still undecided about cutting off the relationship, setting healthy boundaries now can show you where you stand. Although, it is more difficult to set boundaries with family than with any other people because patterns are ingrained for generations sometimes. As a child, you quickly realize adults set not only the rules, but the boundaries (or lack of) as well. We were often taught unhealthy boundaries from the people we needed them with. When the child becomes an adult, they are able to set their own boundaries.
- **How close are you?** Often, moving away symbolizes a new life away from our family. It

can ease tension by being located cities or states away! If the person you have problems with lives far away or you don't see them often, you can tolerate them only periodically and carry on with life as usual. A quick visit with the negativity and drama – maybe two holidays each year– might be manageable. If it causes too much pain and drama, keeping in touch (even through emails) may not be worth the hurt and pain.

- **Is resolution possible?** Some families refuse to speak about issues at all. Perhaps the same issues come up repeatedly then a possible resolution may be a big, fat NO. Sometimes the answer is "no" right now, but can change later down the road. Don't bother hashing out major issues between the person and yourself– you've probably tried this in the past and walked away with a big heaping serving of that person's denial, hostility, and self-preservation. As children, we are powerless against family members because we're too young to have a voice or shamed and guilted if we express ourselves or our needs. Sometimes that pattern follows us into adulthood. Remember, any decision can be temporary. If the ties are cut right now, they may be mended later. Cutting ties isn't always an open and close, final case.

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One more thing: Sometimes, instead of having an issue with one person, the problem lies with more than one or even an entire branch of the family. In that case, it's best to evaluate the issues as a whole. It could be that letting go of an entire chunk of your family is necessary.

Daring to set boundaries is about having the courage to love ourselves, even when we risk disappointing others.

– Brene Brown

It's Okay to Say Goodbye When...

- The relationship is physically or mentally abusive. Don't downplay the effects of these kinds of abuse, especially long-term. It may take counseling to realize you've been abused. We may think of abuse as "this" or "that", but there are many grey areas where abuse is defined by us personally. Just as trauma doesn't have to be something BIG, it is something that we're personally unable to manage.
- It causes enough stress that it affects important aspects/areas of your life, like work or home life.
- You find yourself spending a lot of time thinking about, ruminating about the sour relationship, and losing sleep over it. Don't underestimate how lack of sleep and stress affect your health.
- The relationship is one-sided when there is no valid reason why there isn't some effort made by the other person.
- Patterns repeat themselves. You set boundaries for instance, and the other person respects them for a couple of weeks then completely disregards them or they keep coming back to ask for money or do them favors. It is their way to confuse and use emotional tactics to keep you "hooked".
- The relationship is only about borrowing money or bailing them out of trouble. Don't get dragged down with them or involved in risky business and legal trouble, even if they are family.
- The person is using gossip to manipulate and control you and/or other family members against you.
- All contact with them is negative. They only call to bring you down and put you down, too. They focus on their problems without concern for your time or how you are doing.
- There are negative consequences every time this family member doesn't get what they want from you. They find ways to punish you if you don't play their way.
- They play childish games— the silent treatment, blame games— and there is no talking to them. It's their way or no way.

Most people know intuitively when it's time to cut ties. Listen to yourself.

Cutting people out of your life doesn't mean you hate them, it simply means you respect yourself. Not everyone is meant to stay.

When You Decide to Sever Ties with a Family Member...

1. **Try it out... less contact** through calls, visits, and emails. This is especially important when the relationship represents emotional ties. Breaking the pattern of mental/psychological abuse helps to shed light on how the person affects you so you can make clear-minded decisions. In therapy, I ask clients if they could give themselves 6 months off from the relationship. This is often enough time to gain a better perspective.
2. **Heal yourself first.** Sometimes working on ourselves and boundaries with others in our current relationships has a domino effect and can help give us the confidence to do the same within family relationships. Cutting ties for the sake of healing yourself is a worthy cause too. Instead of focusing on the other person, focus on your healing and you'll get much further in your personal journey and healing than you can imagine.
3. **Set a few boundaries/skip a holiday.** Sometimes it's not necessary to cut ties, just adjust them. Even giving a few ultimatums is okay. Check in with yourself; how you feel before you decide to go to a family event or see the family member. If your body is tense and you feel awful, respect that. It's often about listening to ourselves. Try skipping a holiday, not taking calls from the person if you don't want to. Minimize the feeling of obligation to them.
4. **Keep a neutral position.** If certain subjects always end in an argument, avoid them and keep the conversation neutral. If a family member insists you agree with them or insults you when you don't, keep your distance.
5. **Limit contact to times when something major happens.** Send an email to let the family member know you are pregnant, someone died, you got a great new job, or you're moving to another state. You might consider including them on family group emails but avoiding one-to-one exchanges. Keep the messages and announcements positive.
6. **Know that it's difficult.** Death is final, but cutting ties is like death without the closure. Give yourself the love and time to grieve because cutting ties is a grief process. You will probably feel the worst when the first birthday or holiday rolls around, but you can prepare yourself by practicing self-care rituals as well as journaling. Remember that these unpleasant feelings are less harmful than if you had kept the relationship intact. Feelings like guilt and shame are part of the problem, and they are finally unraveling themselves and slowly being released. Many feelings you may experience were the way in which family-controlled you. They must be released to heal.
7. **Focus on who you have and who you are.** Having a good support system of friends or other family members makes cutting ties easier. Maintaining your values is a part of who you are. Knowing who you are, what you stand for, and who supports you is your North Star, your compass.

8. **Don't pretend everything is okay.** Don't minimize your thoughts and feelings by pretending everything is ok. Pretending and avoidance are common in dysfunctional families. Speak up!

This content is accurate and true to the best of the author's knowledge and is not meant to substitute for formal and individualized advice from a qualified professional.

Please join the discussion and read the excellent comments below.

Lucia Demarco on August 24, 2020:

Please help my son takes all if my money, Because he manipulated me into letting him control Accounts!! He is spoiled but im so confused cause I did it !! But he lies and tells me there is money in the bank then there is not !!!

Franklin on August 16, 2020:

It's hard to let go... But enough is enough. I'm cutting ties

Rosie on August 14, 2020:

My life is a Trainwreck. But after reading through this..I guess I'm not alone

So much pain, and devastation, for so long..just don't know where to begin.

I do need counselling because I'm broken.

michmol on July 30, 2020:

Thank you for this wonderful article and advice. I have had a falling out with my sister and brother and their families. It has been such a horrible time, it is about 7 months since it happened and I am still dreaming and having nightmares about it all. I am not blaming my family. If I was upfront with the turn of financial events which impacted my family, it would have been a different scenario. I was ashamed and embarrassed that we got ourselves in a bad financial position. We did look after my elderly parents and nursing home costs etc. and wrong decisions contributed to the end devastating result. We had to sell a family holiday house that we lived in with my parents and unbeknown to my siblings my parents willed the home to us. The house was put into my husband and my names as we were the ones that financially helped mum and dad and were left with massive debt which contributed to us having to sell the home. My siblings wanted a third each of the balance of the house after the debt was paid. Keeping in mind though that my siblings have never

ever paid any money towards the up keep of the house, rates, water bills, absolutely nothing. We lived in the house and paid all the renovations, we paid for everything. My parents were determined they wanted us to have something. We did not look after my parents to get the house, mark my words, that was not in the equation. We just loved them so much and loved living with them. It was trying at times to be honest of course, they were elderly and mum had dementia. My dad was also very difficult at times but they were wonderful people. When we left our home in Melbourne, we let our niece live in the house - it was only a 10 minute drive to the city so it was in a good position. My niece was a life saver to me, as we had lost our daughter at the age of 18 to anorexia nervosa and i had to get out of that house. My mother in-law lived in the upstairs apartment of the house and having my niece live in the downstairs house was such a relief for us that there was someone in the house for my mother-law. We were so grateful to my niece that we let her pay the loan on the house and keep it. It was transferred to her in full. My parents were really not happy with me doing this. So they made sure the holiday house was left in our name so we could have this to leave to our sons. My siblings did not know anything about this and this is where the problem lies. They have both passed away and it was the will that showed the house was left to us. We sold the house and gave both my siblings \$40,000 each. They were not happy with this, they wanted nearly \$80,000 each. So this is where I leave the family.

stephanie on July 30, 2020:

Dear Magian A'dah,

I don't think you realize how much these emails helped me. You've help pull me through the hardest and most painful relationship of my life.

And I am so happy I did what you said because my ex wants me back now. I'm not so eager to jump back in to it after reading your insights about whether we really should be back together but he wants me again and I could not be more grateful for your help and support. Please keep sending them. You really are amazing! i highly recommend you contact he (mag1an@protonmail . ch)

-Stephanie

Rhi on July 21, 2020:

I came across this page as I was looking for a bit of reassurance after cutting ties with my dad. Thank you so much for writing it. It's helped me process things massively so I can begin to heal after years of hurt. Reading this has helped me feel lighter and a ready for focus on the self care side of healing. I'm lucky to have a great support network around me, and I feel ready to move on

joann malayao on May 23, 2020:

my sister and I used to live in an apartment together with her daughter who was closed to

me, when she moved to province and got a decent job she became proud of herself and so do I coz I really cared for her.

Seh was arrogant and egoistic, not listening to someone else's advice because she thinks she is better. Since I am the eldest, I tried to give her an advice and she was hesitant and said bad things about me. I was really hurt and I fought back with my words that had hurt her also. She said to me that I was envious because she had a good a good career , a daughter and told me that I could not bear a child because I have polycystic ovarian syndrome and the bad thing is she even cursed me and called me a demon. Should I cut ties off from my sister?? I would really like to do it, I want to avoid drama and chaotic relationship with her anymore.

jowana on May 23, 2020:

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D.B. on May 12, 2020:

Excellent article. It really hit home dealing with a fighting family, especially with a father. He never got along with his mother. You would think he'd make it better for his son and not want to continue that tradition, but he did. In his eyes, nothing I did was good enough. As a result, I eventually got out of that house and started my own life moving away and got married. Still married for almost 13 years and have a beautiful 8 year old son. I really want to cut ties with him because it's way too toxic now. I am hesitant because I don't want it to effect my relationship with my mom and other family members. Need advice.

Roselyn MC on March 12, 2020:

I needed this. I've cut ties with my entire family (mom died when I was young & dad a few years ago) and never felt better. I'm in my mid 40's and am tired of all the drama, blaming games and guilt trips my siblings and their family took me on. I'm still on the 'cutting off ties' process but already feeling very light. Thank you for this enlightening piece

Lafarae Warring Philadelphia ,pa on March 10, 2020:

The spread of this corona virus. Has people running scared, no one wants to die. Death is

part of the existence of all living things. Ironically man and woman experience death everyday in the manner that they treat each other. The death of a family is sad. Unfortunate that it occurs daily. Good luck with taking earthly possessions with you when you leave this earthly paradise. You will however take YOUR HATE WITH YOU. A fact I for one am grateful for. I am a member of the Warring family from Philadelphia. My grandfather sexually abused his female children. This was hidden of course. Most of my aunts chose who was protected from being abused by my grandfather. Then they decided a nice spin would be to add verbal and physical abuse to the list. You know what list I was on. After years of thinking this was normal ,acceptable ,then tiring and trying to be heard. Silly me thought I had a voice with these women. Ha silly me. I will say that the act of removing them from my day to day life has brought me such a GREAT sense of satisfaction. I am filled with joy and I am happy. Don't know why I waited so long before removing that dysfunction from my life. I will tell you it was no easy getting here ,but definitely worth it. People do not cheat yourself. Remove persons from your life that are detrimental to your overall health. LOVE YOURSELF you are worthy

Grace Marguerite Williams from the Greatest City In The World-New York City, New York on February 03, 2020:

My late father was a very smart man. He had toxic family members. He just CUT THEM OFF. He refused to have anything to do with them. Not my mother. The family in Wellford, SC just saw my mother as a service. They never loved her but used her. Tried to tell her that. The truth came out when I asked for help & NO ONE helped. I knew it all along. That so-called family in Wellford, SC are just vultures. I also told them that. To me, the family in Wellford, SC no longer exist. They are a bunch of toxic, dysfunctional parasites. Hopefully, this family will become extinct.

Grace Marguerite Williams from the Greatest City In The World-New York City, New York on February 03, 2020:

I have always known that my family in Wellford, SC were parasitic from the time I was 16. My late father knew it too-that explains why he hated them. He told my mother about it but she wouldn't acknowledge it until it was TOO, TOO LATE. My father schooled me about this "family." Even my youngest aunt disowned the family. Now my cousin in upper New York is helping them like my late mother did. This cousin refuses to realize how toxic & parasitic this family is.

Grace Marguerite Williams from the Greatest City In The World-New York City, New York on February 03, 2020:

It is so easy to cut toxic family off. I have cut off my toxic maternal family in Wellford, SC. All they did was taken advantage of my late mother. However, those selfish ingrates didn't even attend my late mother's funeral. Then the ingrates asked me to support them, I told them off, calling them a bunch of parasites. Then my cousin, who is the queen of the scammers, suggest that I pay for the family. I send her a letter, telling them how selfish they were & that I was CUTTING THEM OFF for good. I also told them to emphatically shove it!

Jodie Coleman on January 17, 2020:

I found out after my adopted son left at 17 to live on his own, he not only stole everything I had which included my husbands ashes got into drugs. we helped him out several time. he was the son of my deceased daughter. she had 7 children. He is now almost 28 and a 2 time felon for running crack houses. I found my biological sister after being thrown out of a foster home at 15 years old . forward to today. I will never help this kid out again. but sneakingly my sister has been helping him with money and places to live etc. so he is in jail again. and now I am getting calls from people saying they are my daughters kids. I have blocked everyone. trying to get information from my sister cause I am mad about this, she will not answer me and blocked me on Facebook. I have blocked all these people on Facebook because I do not know who they are and when this kids takes them for all he can I do not want to be involved, let them find my sister. she is smack dab in the middle of this !

Mitch on December 25, 2019:

Hi ...

I want to share my story. It's not about family though, it's about a friend. We've been friends for 10 years now ... were friends that is, because I decided never to see him again. As I grew older and started to read some ancient philosophy, especially ancient texts about friendship relating Socrates' theories, I realized that I didn't really love myself, meaning that I wasn't putting enough effort into surrounding myself with goods, especially good people. Instead, I would tolerate people hurting me, bad friends, bad women especially ... Abusive people who have attractive qualities, but always make you feel like dirt by doing nothing good for you while asking that you treat them like gods. This one friend was abusive in so many ways ... When we went out, he always decided where we should go and never agreed to alternate. During talks, if I ever voiced an opinion different from his, he would laugh at me and treat me like a total idiot, sometimes even get angry. He was mean to my other friends, talking behind their backs, ignoring them in person or arguing with them in a condescending manner, and in fact always made every possible effort to isolate me from other people. He doesn't love people in general, so I guess he wanted to hang out just with me, the one person stupid enough, lacking in self-respect enough to love him and tolerate his awful behaviour. Eventually, I started taking this goal of self-love more seriously, and I put a lot of effort into become a better friend, a better employee and a better citizen, just like Socrates taught. I made new friends, better friends, and I realized, by contrast, just how bad my bad friend really was. When you're surrounded with happy, loving, kind people ... when you become a better person yourself, then the bad person really stands out and can't hide her true nature anymore. It took me a long time to decide to cut all ties, because I didn't want to hurt the guy and I still hoped that he would change ... One day he texted me to hang out, and I told him : « Listen ... I can't do this anymore. When we go out, you're always abusive to me and you make me feel like trash. You snub other people and never make an effort to socialize. We can't even have a normal talk, because you get angry and say I'm stupid whenever I voice my personal opinions ... So I'm sorry, I can't hang out with you anymore, I'm sorry. » And you know what ... ? He never even answered. If he cared at all, he would have said he's sorry, ask for more explanations, tried to make it up to me in some way to save our friendship. Instead he just stone-walled me. But you know what? My new friends are so awesome ... So why bother? The emotional scar just won't go away ... but I really hope that one day, I'll forget all about this sad chapter in my social life. Hopefully the people sharing their stories here will heal also. In the meantime, I've started the process of systematically weeding out from my life all those

people that are mean to me. My lawn is starting to look quite neat, lush and green!

Love

Mitch

In the middle on December 18, 2019:

I grew up watching first hand my grandparents enabeling my cousins as they tried desperatly to keep them out of trouble and off drugs alot of bad examples set to not follow for myself and two other sisters .Fast forward 30 years we all have our seperate lives only communicating maybe twice a year as our family grows we have numerous events from weddings to baby showers new homes they dont even show any interest in so after not being on their radar I have been offened for years but kept on reaching out inviting pretending all was still ok .My dilema is as my parents are dealing with their own medical issues they shouldnt be worried about my sisters being on their binges and finanically unstable .We three sisters were brought up with values that my parents no longer hold accountable so not only am I the middle sister Im in the middle my family is divided over drugs once again I choose not to have my family around my sisters in the event they might show up for a holiday sober enough to put on a good front for a few hours .My children and myself hate the fact my parents are always gonna help them both no matter what but the flip side is Im told Im not Christian for turning my back on them and in doing so Im worst off then anything they are doing I never set out to be judgmental I only set out to get my sisters the help they needed to be sober to help with aging parents when needed and was later told Im causing all the family drama dismissing the facts of my disaproval or concern so I isolate myself from my original family and will just go about life with out a few of them trying not to be upset as I watch my parents enable my sisters and my sisters take full advantage of them Actions will speak louder then words unfortunelty time is not on anyones side .I love them all but will never put my kids or grandkids in a situation or relationship that is toxic to save grief to others sorry but not sorry

Alegriart on December 05, 2019:

"family are also there by your side in tough spots" but are they? that's the whole point of looking up this question - if they aren't there when you need them it's just a strain to have a relationship at all

disappointed a thousand times too many on December 04, 2019:

Great article and hits home for me.

Sorta brief background: I was abused in every possible way as a child by my parents (sexual, physical, emotional) from around 4 y/o until I was a teen, my other four siblings were abused to a lesser extent (some physical, some emotional). When I spoke up early on about my abuse, I was labelled a troublemaker, an evil child, mean, cruel, etc. YES, the

adults who were abusing ME were calling ME the troubled, evil, cruel one in the family. A dynamic that has continued.

Fast forward to adulthood, I became a successful therapist and social worker SPECIALIZING in treating child abuse and have had a 30-year successful career including lots of recognition, awards, and accolades. My parents and siblings (except for one sibling) STILL say whenever I bring up child abuse issues that I'm the troublemaker, evil person, something is wrong with me, etc. This after decades of being the stable one in the family, constantly bending over backwards to accommodate them, etc. They STILL invalidate my abuse and discount all of my beliefs despite everything they know was done to me in our family and my extensive professional experience and skill. BTW, they (parents and siblings who still protect them) are all a mess, financially, their marriages, families, etc. Finally, in my late 40s I have had enough.

For anyone out there who underwent childhood abuse by family and decides to pretend it never happened, "go along to get along" type of thing, be forewarned: YOUR NEEDS WILL NEVER MATTER TO A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO IS HAPPY TO IGNORE THE CRIMES OF CHILD ABUSE COMMITTED ON ONE OF THEIR OWN BY OWN OF THEIR OWN. No one is going to wake up one day and say, "we have been a shitty family to you," they will always blame YOU.

However, as we get older the difference will be that our tolerance for suffering changes because self-preservation and bodies dictate it must. My childhood abuse and the ensuing PTSD almost killed me and still affects me on a daily basis but at least now I no longer need to hang around a group of very sick people who treat me like shit just because they can.

Good luck to us all on the journey towards healthier living despite having had the misfortune of being born into dangerous families.

marlene beauchamp on December 04, 2019:

need help getting away from toxic family member

Keisha on November 19, 2019:

I read the comment an it was eye opening, i am jobless because of my family and that hurts.

My family also doesnt care for me or my mom, they hate us and my friends are hiding from me because of my family and their friends behaviour.

I never knew family could be like this.....

Pray for us

MMRC on November 15, 2019:

I never gave her or her kid my phone number but they would call my noisy neighbor and leave words. I move away never left my new address. But her daughter went on face book in 1997 and someone gave her my location. The guard down stairs but the call through. She's like her mother too stupid to get the message. I want no part of any of them. Hate you..

Michele on October 06, 2019:

Please proofread and edit the errors, far too many!

rosie.stinson@yahoo.ca on August 06, 2019:

Wow you could be writing this story for me. My oldest daughter who is now 50 fits the above to a T. Abusive verbally mean manipulative makes up stories with a tiny grain of truth in it. i.e., (when we were young we were so poor we only got dirty water to drink) . Now we didn't have a lot of money as I was a single mum but we got by. But even that was for a couple of years as I remarried and got a better job. My daughter even gets my other children fighting amongst themselves with her lies. The last couple of years I have had some health challenges. I.E Breast Cancer, Arthritis, Hight Blood Pressure. It didn't matter when I asked her to stop stressing me out. My doctor had told me stress was killing me). and we should try to be positive. Next thing I know she getting sympathy for my Breast Cancer but at the same time telling family I deserved it. It was only when my granddaughter wrote to me and told me I should be ashamed of myself and it wasn't all about me. That was it I gave up. I told them I was changing my phone number and blocking them on facebook. My other children not only agreed with me they said it was about time they were sick of seeing her emotionally abusing me.

Your lover on July 31, 2019:

I love you so much that I sacrificed a lot for your own mother. She said things about my own child (supposed yours too) that would have gotten anyone else's face smashed in. This has been going on for years, and finally, after everything, I felt a change and with her out of the picture for just a few weeks, we blossomed like never before.

Now, even though you know she is a Narcissist I feel like I am "ONCE AGAIN" in the wrong for not wanting you to go around her. I can feel this slipping away. You do not speak to me about anything you guys talk about now, and if you do its lies. Do you honestly think I am to believe all this? You are empty inside. I wish you would just look. OPEN YOUR EYES!!! She wants you to be miserable as she is. She has never LOVED you as a mother should. She is too damn SELFISH so stop trying to please this evil. She has been this way your whole life, and you refuse to see it. It has and will always be about her. I want to grow more with you but I can finally see that this is just not only holding you back, but it is me as well.

PLEASE!!! PLEASE!!! WAKE UP!!!! That woman owes you so much. You did not ask to be born,

she owed you the unconditional love, not the other way around. Everything is a guilt trip. When confronted she projected, shifted blame, shame, guilt, all in one sentence. You cannot transform her, the first thing she said is she is NOT GOING TO CHANGE, and it was the last thing she said as well. I have so much to say to her, and the more you say nothing of the sort, or get upset at me for talking about these facts, the more you are shutting the door to our future, together.

Dw on July 15, 2019:

I wonder how many people have had this happen we have a family property owned by two brothers one has been charged with abuse of his wife;s sisters and has suffered as a consequence his offspring have been involved in every form of deviant behaviour from petty crime to armed robbery and choose an existence where employment and education is unimportant they are very manipulative to the point where they will use people up and deceive to get what they desire they now have been graced with earthmoving equipment and continually use this at night either to destroy the property or to deny us access to the house . When confronted they damage either your vehicle or home or drive around yelling abuse from their car shooting randomly at our house they are disconnecting the phone removing water from our water tanks and fuel from the car. Now for the twist the family of which my uncle has been jailed for abuse are now living at the address and still seeking some sort of financial or assistance which he allows and also commit to these tactics

Riverwatcher on July 12, 2019:

My father last saw my sons 45 years ago. One son, age 6, had many medical issues, the other, age 5, had to wear corrective shoes. At that time, he said to me that both boys were defective and not even worthy of a Christmas gift. He also told me that he was not releasing my trust fund because I refused to "get rid of the kids" (after my divorce, my parents said, "Surely you can find someone who will take them off your hands." This was not unlike them - my mother knew my father was raping me and did nothing except keeping me from seeing a doctor alone. That was the last time I saw my father.

The boys never got any gifts from him after that time. He wouldn't even send a Christmas card to a grandson in a combat zone.

My father passed away 15 years ago this coming November. He was ill both physically and mentally before he passed, but no care facility would take him nor caregivers work with him because he had physically abused so many people. So my uncle, who I had not seen in more than 30 years, called me. He wanted me to take care of my father. He said, well maybe your father would leave you something. I told him that my father had told me years before that I would receive nothing because I kept my children with me. I also told him that a mentally incompetent person could not make changes to a valid will He then said to me that he thought I wouldn't remember that. I also told him about my father raping me. He said that the family knew about that but that they didn't think it was their place to interfere.

He passed not long after that.

As much as I would have liked for my sons to have family, it was better that those people were absent. Both sons have achieved major things in their lives. My father was the loser.

I never got rid of the PTSD. I was very ill last year and in an ICU after surgery. I was barely conscious, but any time someone had to check my dressings or catheter when I was asleep, I freaked out. One nurse - thank God for her - picked up the situation right away, because she had been abused as a child.

The sad part about this - my mother was a school administrator whom people loved. And my father said the abuse was my fault because I wasn't the son he wanted.

Mg on July 10, 2019:

I don't know what to fucking do (sorry for the swearing). I need help. I have been struggling so much, and the past month, I have been relapsing. I think I have health issues but I haven't sought professional help because I don't think they can understand or fix my pain.. I don't even know if this is abuse but I hate feeling this way. I was adopted when I was 4 years old and I'm 15 years old now. From a young age I was sexually abused by my adoptive brother (not blood). He would say "don't tell them or you'll get in trouble". For awhile this continued and then it stopped. These memories were buried in the back of my mind and I hated him for it. As we got older we got along but the hurt I felt was still there. This might be the reason for my inability to trust people, especially since it was from someone I loved. His mother left him on the side of the road and I had always had empathy and said to myself that he did it because he "didn't receive love as a kid should at that age" I haven't forgiven him yet but seeing him everyday and knowing that this person broke my heart before any boyfriend or husband could just shatters me. We had a conversation one day, after he found out I was harming myself saying, he too wanted to take his own life. I know that we all have our demons and that what happened to me is unforgivable but I don't have it in me to hate him anymore for it, but I'll always be hurt and scarred from it.

My adoptive mother was emotionally, mentally and physically.. abusive. I hate myself so much and I hate the body I'm in and part of being apart of this so called "family" she would always be strongly critical of what I ate. I hate that she'd say "we'll send you back to the orphanage" or "you should be more like this person" or "I thought you said you wanted to lose weight" or "you can't play this sport, you should walk" and take away things from me to deliberately make me feel bad. She would hit me, throw things and pull my hair and then the next day spoil me with gifts, say sorry and then I'd forgive her and then it would happen again. The bad outweighs the good in our relationship. My adoptive dad would always side with her and he would take the shit she says to him.. They always say "you should be grateful" and they start to list everything they did for me.

I'm grateful for them providing for me but they always say I'm disrespecting them. I'm a very quiet person at home and I'm in my head a lot of the times and then they get shitty asking me why I'm like this and why I'm bitchy, when I just don't feel like talking. I found out that she was sexually abused as well when she was younger by her brother and a person she knew and the fact that I can't talk to her is saying a lot. My adoptive parents never bothered asking why and they blamed it on my hormones. I hate feeling like this every

single day and now they no longer want to financially help me with school because I don't want anything to do with them.. abuse or not. They are apart of the reason I feel like I can't talk to people, why I hate myself so much, why I try to skip meals because I don't want to be fat.

Lena on July 02, 2019:

My nasty brother has seen me for the last time, not that he is aware of it yet.

I dumped our toxic mother when I was 40 (53 now) and he continued contact with her. We had our own relationship which excluded her.

Now that he has realised what a pig the woman is, he has walked away as well and resents me for leaving so long before. He hates me for reason.

I've had cancer for 18 months and I have heard no good wishes from his family. His children have never thanked me for the gifts I have sent them over the years and I called him out on that. He said that I have to give them the gifts in person. NO. I will not let him control my movements!

He never introduces me to his friends if they are in front of us. I do that!

I have major surgery coming up and I don't want him around. Ever.

Van Mae on June 17, 2019:

Thank you for this article.

I cried and cried last night because after 14 years I have finally decided to cut ties with my stepdaughter who is now 17. When my husband told me we should cut ties last year I judged him for wanting to give up on his daughter. I said we got to keep trying. Last night I realized there is no winning.

Over the past 14 years, I have had the police called on me for false accusations of abuse. She has destructed my property, her mom has egged our house and vehicles. My step daughter has physical harmed my kids at times. She has also screamed and yelled at my kids, calling them names, and putting them down. She has told lies to my children telling them I went to jail for abuse and I will abuse them also. She hoaxes them into keeping secrets from me. She is vengeful and all around not a good influence on my girls.

I have gone to countless parenting classes, read countless books, seen a counselor many times trying to find better ways to handle the situations. It has torn me and my husband apart. We split for a year. My oldest daughter cries and cries when she finds out her sister is coming for the summer. I am exhausted and just done.

Last night was the last straw when I tried to tell her - her behavior was unacceptable and she wouldn't let me speak and the screaming match began. That is not the person I want to be, and the relationship I want with her or my kids. Everything I say or do is perceived in a negative light and I finally accepted it is losing battle for me. Something as simple as "Can you not eat the pickles out of the jar and get a bowl" is perceived as me picking on her. I am deeply saddened, but I cannot go on any further like this. So am thankful for the article, understanding and support. Keep on writing. To all you step-moms who are struggling. I feel your pain. You are not alone.

Brittany R on June 13, 2019:

I am having issues with my mother and younger sister. My mom has her favorite out of us three girls. And it's our youngest sister. She is the one with the most kids and to my mom my sister and her kids do no wrong. My issues started 3 years ago when I moved from Tennessee to California. I was in an abusive marriage and tried to contact my mom often but no answer. When I go back to Tennessee last year she was happy then went back to ignoring me. She is always picking fights with me when I try to avoid her. Is it okay to cut all ties with her for the sake of my son and my health?

Alex P on June 07, 2019:

I live with my grandmother and my aunt and recently signed for the USMC. After returning from meps i found that they had unsuccessfully tried to sabotage my enlistment by smoking marijuana in my closet. I dont feel that i can trust them and ive run away once before only to be pushed back to them by the rest of the family. I dont know what to do anymore

Vickie on May 06, 2019:

I had a very strained relationship with my Grandmother my whole life. She was very manipulative and controlling. When you didn't do as she wished or argue her side of something she turned very ugly very fast. When I was 19 my best friend told me it was possible to live someone and not like them. That had a profound effect on me. Eventually I cut off communication with my Grandmother to avoid the pain she caused, not only me, but my Mother and later my son. I tried to have a positive loving relationship with her until I was 37. Severing a tie like that is very hard, but protecting my family from emotional harm was my priority. I always loved her and held not anger in my heart towards her, but a relationship was not possible.

Debra on April 21, 2019:

I have an adult child that we have in my opinion enabled since he was young. He's in his 30's now and my husband (his stepfather)& I have done nothing but try to help him. At first he didn't want to work or pay taxes or live like most people. However I didn't want to see him on the street so we gave him a job which he has done for us in our company. For a long time now though he has been making me feel abused and guilty like I owe him something , which he denies and say oh I need nothing but asks for s raise which is not

happening. Says oh I'm just another employee here and had started calling me by my first name. Wants to takeover girls job whom we laid off recently because of downsizing. Want same money we paid her which was more than what she was worth.thinks he should be able to smoke pot while Working. I have tried and so has my husband tip toeing around his feelings cause everything we say is manipulated around to guilt . Then laughing at things I say to him hoping he'll see the light. All a bunch of crap. Tired of it. Trying to reason and help him when he says I'll just go s...t in the woods. Haha always talking about not wanting to be Around. Wish I had the strength to cut off ties. Don't think he realizes he is dispensable. I know he is my child but do I have to like him when he makes me miserable most days.

Jaan on March 06, 2019:

End of day we forgive family not only fam hurt us outsiders, our best friends etc all does. We shld not get effected by words,behaviour of fam or outsiders etc. Learn to voice out if they did not treat us nice.the way the behave we never know whats they gg thru.best not to get involve with things which doesnt concern us n not our business.best only speak on important stuff which concerning us but not to be toooo involve in ithers affairs. Those r the things i learned. Oh yes never need to feel bad or fall fr the sweet talk it doesnt mean watever is being said we must act or feel its our responsible to do so. to each on its own.. I love myself more so i just keep them in my prayer.

If something being said dont react answer directly with smart words.

End of day its family who will have to managed our death.

Parent on February 24, 2019:

Life is not about quitting. Sometimes God brings people into your life that are difficult and ungrateful and they despicably use you. Cutting ties is a cop out. Overcoming is the answer.

There is almost no situation that cannot be overcome. If you are in a situation where you think the answer is to quit... just remember Jesus died to save your soul while you were still a sinner. Sometimes (excluding criminal abuse) you have a crisis to bear...and it just might be there to make you stronger. So buck up, bear the cross, while still being true to yourself. There are manipulators and evil people out there... be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove. Study the Bible and become wise.

Mum in the middle on February 21, 2019:

I have a rather difficult situation in which my mother is house bound and requires full time care, she is living at home and being cared for by my brother and his girlfriend. The trouble is this brother is violent and aggressive as well as smarmy and none of the family want to be around him. He has also said that my brother can't visit. I asked him the other day to give us some space to visit mum and he refused. Admittedly my brother didn't word the

request well, but even when I requested him he refused. I then told him that he was not altogether innocent in this and when he pushed I told him that he had been violent many times in the past. To which he lost his temper, denied it and stormed off. I then had a very long and calm conversation with his girlfriend but when I tried to chat to mum, she refused to talk to me because I had upset her golden boy. So we have not seen mum since she came out of hospital and I'm very worried about how she is dealing with this.

Eva Hilton on January 28, 2019:

How can I break ties with my sister when she keeps calling me and playing mind games with me and downing me and my boyfriend and making everything about her and if I don't do something for her she brings up our parents that are with the Lord .

B on January 16, 2019:

I was so isolated due to the ambient abuse thru out many years wiyh my own family.I had to cut ties or i was gonna end up dead,the abuse was making my health in great danger,i had no other choice.The sad part is they just continue on not feeling anything as i struggle just to get outta bed,cry myself to sleep.How cold people can be its frightening.I have no support system and the isolation has left me with no one to turn to.I wouldn't wish this abuse on anyone,and if your health is being effected by it and your wondering if u should cut ties,dont hesitate,i waited over 12 years and it ate me alive..save yourself.Godbless.

Princess on December 31, 2018:

I just ignore the family and sibling negative remarks, emails and blaming and shaming of myself and others. I have learned that everyone is different and it is easy to blame others for their lack of low self confidence and selfishness. After many years trying to get along with my siblings, I have learned it doesn't matter what they say, do, or when they call me with hostile shaming remarks, I just say good bye nicely and wait for them to recover. Since I am older now, I cannot let them cause me stress and upset me. So, I do not return phone calls sometimes, and I just simply email them or text them that I am busy, or have plans and always write emails with love, thank you, or God bless. I find that some people will never change and like to be miserable, are mentally ill, emotionally unstable and my siblings blame our parents, who have passed, for their insecurity and bad choices in life. Life is their journey. I also try to set the example by ignoring their negative remarks and keep smiling and being positive. Even when one brother is too talkative and acts like he knows everything while he is unemployed and broke, I just know he is mentally ill and has a problem with being positive. Then, I have a sister who brags how rich she is, then begs me to help another sibling by giving her money to pay bills, she is being very manipulative and insecure. Then, she apologizes to me, with an excuse why she is so negative. At this point, I just ignore her. It really isn't my business what an adult sibling says, think or does, they should know what is considered correct etiquette and how to treat their family. Surely, you do not owe anyone anything as an adult, be aware of blamers and gossiping siblings who put you down behind your back or to you own children. They are just jealous and I know I am more confident and are much happier then they are. Even if they are doing financially well, that doesn't mean they are happy people. Ignore them and surround yourself with loving, positive people, and don't let anyone hurt you constantly, life is too short. Take

Psychology courses and see if your siblings, friends or significant other are bipolar, manic, drug addicts, alcoholics, abusers, manic depressives, manipulators, and have criminal offences, etc. It helps, so you don't feel it is your fault they have mental illnesses that you don't have. I sometimes think that deep insecurity is a learned behavior and some people gage their confidence from how others, that are close to them, treat them. Don't let this happen to you. It is better to be alone, find new friends, then with negative, verbally abusive and manipulators that say, I love you but really don't know how to love in a positive, supporting way, continuously. Truly the best present in life is being happy and being with loving family and friends that supports you 100%.

There is nothing better than support from those who truly know how to be generous without expecting something in return. I have a few friends who are like that, and I am now much happier and do not need the "family" as they may think I need them. My parents did favor me because I was trustworthy, financially supported them when needed, never was negative, was easy going, and I never borrowed money from them. I just thought my parents needed their money. However, my siblings, all of them, took advantage of my elderly mother and she told me how they used her credit cards, used apartment for business, borrowed money, and called her saying negative things to her like what a bad mom she was and she needs to admit it. People are who they are, they don't change unless they want to. A selfish person is that way for many reasons. Since I have taken action to stay away from family outings most times and holidays and birthdays, I feel like I can be more relaxed, have lower blood pressure and focus on my life with my children. You can do it too. Make sure that you keep positive and loving even when others are not. This sets a great example to others and helps you feel better about yourself, which in turn you will be happier. Look at people like Oprah and Arnold they didn't have helpful family, and look how they succeeded in life. Not perfect of course, but nothing deterred them from their goals. Take care and be at peace.

Stanleybillins on November 16, 2018:

Tried to get custody of my son when mother didn't want him as 6 mo. old even though he was with me (she wouldn't sign papers) she spitefully took him back and I had no real relationship with him since. I reached out but he's 30 now and hates me. Should I leave him alone?

Anon. on November 10, 2018:

I was never close to my half-sibs, but last year things got so bad after my maternal half-brother got into a big fight with his sort-of-fiancee to the point the police were involved and I'd never felt more need to try distancing myself from said half-brother. I honestly feel for the sort-of-fiancee more because I know the half-brother recently started putting more stress on a few of the adult females in his life (myself included). My folks would like me to refer to him as my brother, but how can I ever again when I know I have paternal half-sibs and I'm at the point if I don't see him at all that day, it's generally a good day? I even removed both parties from my contacts and wish they would move so far away they'd BOTH have to get new jobs.

My parents won't even listen when I gripe about my half-brother, so at this point, if I ever

move out to live on my own, I'm making sure neither my maternal half-brother nor his kin ever hear from me again! Also, I may adopt a bit later in life, so I don't want anyone that's ever gotten in trouble with child support or wound up in a squabble requiring the police in the lives of myself or my potential adoptive progeny because, safety. I have done a little research on adoption and know better than to punish them corporally, so anyone I need to keep an eye on said adoptive progeny WILL be screened.

Stasia on November 08, 2018:

I was sexually abused by my babysitter until I was 8 yrs old. When I finally found the courage to tell my family at age 21 I was hoping for some kind of outrage, justice or support. In the end I was on my own, because it was too uncomfortable for them to acknowledge my pain and their failure to protect me.

My little sister was the golden child, as children we did not get along. After I left home I spent the next 20 yrs trying to make up for not being a great big sister, perhaps overcompensating for my parents. She is a lot like my mother, expects you to read her mind and doles out the silent treatment and withholds information as her favorite forms of emotional control and punishment.

Recently her fiancé sexually assaulted my childhood best friend, my sister stopped speaking to me and is now pregnant. No one told me about the baby, I found out on FB. My mother isn't trying to be hurtful but she hurts me without even trying, my father is just along for whatever my mother wants, and my mother is supportive and protective of my little sister. Once again I'm on my own.

The idea of spending the holidays with them is too much to bear. After 39 years I think I'm ready to pull the plug on all of them. Everything else in my life is stable, positive and successful, family is the only pain I suffer from.

Adelaide Frueh from Lemon Grove, California on October 24, 2018:

After many years of indecision concerning my older sister, I am beginning to make peace with the fact that we do not really have much in the way of mutual interest or support. Our mother was mentally ill and abusive, and my sister was sometimes abusive to me as well physically and verbally, but often just ignored me completely. After she left home I went into foster care and we did not see each other and talk but a few times for over 30 years.

Now I have moved back into the region (but not the same state, thank God) and at first I had hopes of having a real sibling relationship. As my husband and I are better off financially than her and her family, we hosted her at our home several times per year and paid for her travel. I also went down to her city several times per year and paid for most expenses for both of us. But in spite of all that, she never returned my phone calls or emails. She would call when she needed money. She did not acknowledge my birthday or holidays, although I sent her family gifts and cards.

A year ago her husband died and left her and her daughter without any money, as they lived paycheck to paycheck and he had no savings or insurance. My husband and I sent money to her every month for rent and food, and sent meat care packages and pet foods for the cats and dogs. And I called (left messages) and visited several times and really tried to be supportive. But she would not return my calls, and then once a month she would call or email to say that the Social Security benefits had not yet kicked in, and that she would be evicted and the power shut off if we did not send money. And we would send it because we have it and because she is family, and we did it in a positive way, not at all grudgingly. We gave up stuff on our end to do it, but she is family.

Now the emails have stopped so I assume she has gotten her Social Security, and the whole experience put me face to face with the fact that there is not really anything there. For whatever reasons, my sister and her husband and daughter never seemed to take an interest in reaching out (other than for money). And now I feel I am done.

To be up front, we have never had much in common. We have diametrically opposite political and social views and in general I feel our value systems have little in common. We do not have common interests. And we have no other social ties in common. When we would be visiting, my sister would say hurtful things some times from our childhood--she would speak glowingly of the person who sexually abused me for example, as if he was a really wonderful person who did all these positive things for us. I did ask her not to do this as that was not at all the way I experienced him, but she would keep doing it anyway, and when I came away from the visit it would take me days to get over how upset I felt.

I know I can only present my side of things, but I really did try to be there for her and have some kind of sister thing going. I realize it has been hurtful, and there were good reasons I stayed away in the past. I have found some peace recently understanding that it is all right not to want to see much of her. I think I will see her again, but not very often, and I will not expect anything, and will not give as much either. And I will know that it is okay to step back and cut it off if I need to.

Mary on October 23, 2018:

My mother was abusive, I was the scape goat out of 6 children. Today, my parents are gone, my oldest sister still feels entitled. My favored younger sister still feels entitled. My two younger sisters spent a day making fun of me. When I called them on it and said I didn't like being treated that way, the youngest sister apologized. The younger favored sister held a grudge, tried to ruin our anniversary Hawaii trip with us by bullying me and verbally abusing me like my mother did. The next morning I told her she needed to stop or we would take them to the airport and they could get their own car and accommodations. She stopped, but still held a grudge. During a visit a breakfast was arranged with the oldest sister and the two youngest sisters. I packed up my grand baby, who I was watching, and set out to meet them. They texted that they were at a different restaurant but couldn't give me the exact name or address so I couldn't find them. I met them later at a nieces house. Then they all ditched me there and went to Costco. I called them in this and told them I didn't appreciate being treated this way. The oldest and youngest sisters apologized. The favored younger sister held a grudge. I'm of the mindset to give all of these relationships a long rest.

Travel Chef from Manila on October 20, 2018:

It's really hard to cut family ties as different issues may arise like being an irresponsible family member. It's sad that sometimes these family ties hold you back from being you or stop you to grow. In some places, children are required to take care of their parent when they grow old. While in some places, parents still take care of their children with their own family. These are just two situations that can destroy other family members lives.

Amy on October 20, 2018:

I'm 20 and live with my parents. My mother is manipulative and controlling to the point that I want out. It's a repeating cycle of abuse and I doubt it will change. It went from reading my diary (tearing out the pages and burning them) to transferring funds (over \$10,000) from my bank account to the one she shares with my step-father.

I financially can't support myself to move out and don't have a job since my mother has made it clear she doesn't want me to have one (probably so I can't be on my own). I could move in with my boyfriend (who my family hates) and we've looked into the financial "burdens" we might face, but I know that my family would disown me. I need distance, but don't want to cut all ties.

My family says that they'll always be there for me, even if I leave and have to move back in. But my parents have made it clear that if I have to move back in after leaving they will purposely make my life more difficult. They're already doing it with my relationship with my boyfriend since I stood up to them and said that I want to continue a relationship with him. My dad has even encouraged what I consider cheating, saying I can be in a "relationship" with my boyfriend but he has to be okay with me going out with other guys. If I've said I want to be in a relationship with one person, what makes it okay to go on dates with other people? First I'm taught that it's not okay to cheat, then encouraged to do so?!

I will admit that there are some problems between my boyfriend and I, but my parents refuse to talk to him. My counselor told them during a session they joined that *they* had to be the ones to tell my boyfriend they didn't want him on any of their property for at least 6 months. They said/acted like they would in front of the counselor, then got home and said Dad- "Yeah, right. If we tell him that he'll say we're controlling you. I'm not going to tell him." Mom- "He should know he isn't welcome here, we don't have to tell him." Yet, they complain about my boyfriend "not keeping his word."

A few days ago my mother confronted me, asking "what are your intentions?" The conversation ended up being so stressful that I hit myself. I wish she could see that what she does, even if she wants to say it's out of love, ends up hurting me. I normally hide my self-harm, so for it to get to the point that I hit myself in front of her takes a lot. I've also noticed that she seems to trigger it more than anyone/anything else. I realize it may be pent up, but it seems like she's always the one to break the last straw and send me over the edge.

I need distance. Living here is toxic for my mental health. But cutting all ties would be

worse for my mental health since I don't know entirely how my family would react.

Vicki on October 20, 2018:

My 17 year old grandson is abusing me. I plan to move away when he is 18, leaving him on his own. I'm older and now ill, and he has recently taken to calling me names, waking me from sleep to rant and stomp around over nothing, throw hissy fits if there's no money, if I don't want his friends to come over etc. He won't attend school, he gets into my things, has hauled away many of my things, broken things that will cost money to repair, etc. He kicked something and it hit my knee, cutting it. I tried counseling and they didn't do anything and released him, and I figure it's only going to get worse, I don't feel very safe around him, so I am going to be forced out of my home until I can be sure that he is off and on his own or living with other relatives.

Ellie76 on October 12, 2018:

I've been verbally and emotionally assaulted by my 96 year old father for the last time. I do not care if I ever speak to him or my siblings ever again. I am SO angry!

In the final years of my mother's life she suffered from dementia, so my three/four times weekly phone calls to her (from 1500 miles away) dropped off significantly. I was never close to my father. He is a functional alcoholic who physically, verbally and emotionally abused our mother through 67 years of a hellish marriage. His abuse did not stop at her, although with us kids it was mostly verbal and emotional.

When we visited in August, after my father was done making me feel like a piece of crap, he had the nerve to start in on MY HUSBAND, the LAST person who deserves his wrath! That was the end for me.

I am the black sheep, the outsider. I did not conform like the others. I wanted out, to get as far away from my family's abuse and dysfunction as possible, I left my small hometown and moved to another state while my siblings stayed to be *close* to family and, like our parents, work "good jobs with benefits" at a state facility, jobs they ALL hated.

I have never stayed in close touch with any of my siblings and when we visit I feel very much like that outsider. For example, at a gathering in August my sister had a small cake for my brother whose birthday had just passed and we all sang happy birthday. My birthday was two days later. Ouch.

Having a hard time dealing with this anger. Wish I could express more. Just needed to get some stuff out.

I wish you all peace of mind and love.

stevep on October 07, 2018:

Was am the oldest but guess I was always a disappointment to my family. I always had trouble in school but did graduate with a BS but just by the skin of my teeth. My little bother was the pride and joy and was everything thing my parents wanted but he never finished college. I left for the military and stayed 25 years. I came back home when things were promised but the reneged on. Since my two sisters and him are very close it's like a gang up on me. My brother will contradict anything I say and even insults my military service. Even when I tried to talk to my parents about the stuff I went through my last 8 years my parents would say "well your brother puts in some long hours too. I left the area for a year doing contract work in Saudi and came back nothing changed. I am really about to just leave and never contact any of them again.

bettybb on September 30, 2018:

I'm so tired of the pain I've experienced from my family.

I was estranged from my abusive and mentally ill mother for more than 18 years. She has borderline personality disorder, narcissistic traits, and is something of a grifter. Most of my extended family would have nothing to do with me after I cut my mother out of my life. She worked hard to turn people against me.

She never once tried to see my three children during that time.

My older brother, a felon and drug user, wouldn't let me see his children whom I was close to. After he died last year, two of his children, now adults, came back into my life. I also let my mother back into my life as I felt sorry for her. She's now 80-years-old, and her health is fragile. I figured that she could no longer hurt me.

I was wrong. They've brought me nothing but pain. My niece who said she loved me and wanted to be part of my life, really only cared about using me for money.

I told my mother about it in confidence, worried that my niece might have a drug problem, and she abused my trust and carried that info, and likely some embellishments, back to my niece. My niece suddenly quit speaking to me, breaking my heart.

My mother did that on purpose. She has also turned my younger brother's new wife against me. He'd married her a couple of days after meeting her, and I thought that was fishy. I told my mother and she took that information right back to her.

I will never tell her anything again. My husband said that my mother is my worst enemy, and I think he's right.

Besides that, I was repeatedly sexually abused by a cousin who's eight years older than me during my childhood. When I told my mother about it when I was 28, she didn't believe me and made excuses for him. I've told other family members, and they too apparently don't believe it or could care less as my abuser is on their Facebook friend list!

Last week, another cousin, whom I'd confided in a couple of years ago about my sexual abuse, invited me to his son's birthday party via Facebook's invitation system. I saw that he had also invited my abuser.

I'm now to the point of closing my Facebook account and not having anything to do with any of them. I just can't deal with the pain any more.

Payge on September 24, 2018:

My family's very dysfunctional.. I'm 18 and I've spent my whole life being emotionally manipulated and physically abused by my father. Since he's been married to this witch the physical part has stopped however we never have decent conversations. And I've been basically on my

Own since 15-16 even though I live with them. I pay rent I buy all my own things. I haven't been able to have my

Own clothes until I had a job before Then I shared with my step mom. She hates me, they always use me as the scapegoat in their live. Anyways once I move out for

School I'm nothing with them. All they want from me is money and for me to fail. This I don't

Feel bad about. It's my

Younger sister. She's 15. For about 4 years of her early life I took care of

Her and my

Brother. She's recently going through hardships she brings all on herself. Like she was raped, then seen with her attacker a month later. Lying about it until someone else said they seen her and she fessed saying it was her friends that forced her. I just don't know what to think she lies so much she steals so much from me

And we don't even live together. She's very mean to me. I just want to distance myself but the farther she goes the more I blame

Myself

SK on September 23, 2018:

Never knew how I was being treated till I got married, moved far away from home where my visit was not able easily and the thought of me visiting her over time grew hostile

inside never knew why until years later why I was feeling angry. Her controlling behavior, her abusive words, i didn't like it but put up with it because she is my mom. All the things i have done for her even going that extra miles never knowing why then and I was doing it to seek approval and love from her. Shame on her! I don't know what came over me, but one day while she was cursing me out on the phone, something came over me and I snapped yelling at her to stop telling me what to do, hung up the phone and haven't spoke/seen her since and that was 7 years ago.

I still have bitter feelings from all the flashback memories that trigger now and then. I don't know how to block them out or forget them, they just come to me. She will never apologize, have no remorse, she's the victim in all this not her children. She hasn't even tried to reach out to me or my kids, not a word. That tells me how little she even cares about me or them. Still now and then I wonder if I am to blame for breaking off ties with her.

Rhi on September 18, 2018:

Never assume a family estrangement is a simple matter of egos or petty squabbles. I have encountered many people in support groups (online and in person) whose choice to cut ties is based on personal safety. That includes myself.

Family estrangement is often no different than women leaving abusive boyfriends or husbands. You wouldn't tell a woman: "Forgive your husband / boyfriend for punching you in the face, raping you, and calling you garbage! You owe him a relationship!" So why would you tell adults that they "owe something" to abusive families solely because of genetics? There is no legal obligation to talk to blood relatives, so don't try to force contact.

My parents were emotionally, physically and mentally abusive throughout my childhood and teen years, including an attempt to have me kidnapped and indoctrinated in religion, "cured" of my attraction to men (and that's fifteen years before I transitioned). My "brother" is so violently homophobic and transphobic he would likely kill me, much like the violent assaults he has perpetrated. What, exactly, am I supposed to gain by contacting them? My death?

Estranged people I know tell me that meddlers and flying monkeys are among the worst problems. People assume they are "helping" while acting from ignorance or acting on their own personal biases. So-called "professionals" are among the worst because they are paid to take sides and could have influence in legal matters. Someone who blindly believes "family is everything!" would listen to only the family and not the estranged person, even though what the estranged person says is true. Someone who only hears the abusers' side might stupidly give information without permission and endanger someone's privacy, mental health or safety. There are cases of men believing the fictions of abusive ex-husbands and stalkers ("my wife won't let me see my kids!") then giving them the address or phone number of the woman who left, endangering the women or leading to them being murdered, cases of toxic parents calling people's landlords or places of employment to disrupt their lives (e.g. get them fired or evicted) to force the estranged person back into their control.

I'm sure that some estrangements are just minor arguments that got blown out of proportion. But don't arrogantly or ignorantly assume that accounts for the majority. Even if only a few cases of estrangement involve personal safety, people's choice to go No Contact ***must*** be respected. Even if there is no estrangement (someone wants to "go native" and cut all ties from their past), it must be respected.

JK on September 09, 2018:

I have 2 sisters, I'm the middle child. Always responsible with money, never in any trouble, closer to our parents. After our parents passed away about 9 and 10 years ago, there were behaviors about the estate that ended up with me cutting ties with my younger sister. She's a horrible person and I just decided that now that our parents are gone I don't have to put up with her hateful and abusive treatment. My older sister was also really nasty to me but seemed to be remorseful in the end. I've always been closer to my older sister even though I've put up with a lot. She is single (divorced) and has no children. She is intelligent, but has no common sense and I have realized recently (at age 64) that she is probably a narcissist. Maybe not a full on 100% narcissist, but enough that I've come to realize I have been apologizing all my life for any successes or happiness that she doesn't have or is a part of. I've been married over 40 years, we have 2 grown daughters that are pretty great grownups and a couple of grandchildren. Both our daughters and my husband are encouraging me to cut ties or at least drastically limit my interaction with her. Lately she has taken in the younger sister out of a fantasy of being her saviour and the reality hit pretty quick and I've been getting calls and texts on how miserable she is with her at her house etc. She criticizes and shames me for not wanting anything to do with the younger sister at the same time she's telling me all the terrible things she says to her and is regretting having her come stay. After a recent altercation not having to do with younger sister, and her typical nasty texting and accusations made up only to inflict pain and sound superior, I really want to cut ties. I haven't spoken to her or heard from her in a week. I know eventually something will happen, and she will call or something and decide she'll act like nothing happened and expect me to act that way as well. That ain't happening again. I'm done. I've seen the light. I just wish that I felt better about it. I don't know why I can't have a family of origin that is normal and cares about each other unconditionally. I guess that's MY fantasy.

SarahWilliams on September 03, 2018:

I was a band-aid baby, created via alternative means, to heal my parents broken failing marriage. It didn't work. Instead of being angry with each other, they turned their anger on me. My father wanted to give me up the day I came home from the hospital. He didn't want to raise me. My mother refused to get rid of me, so he was blamed me, literally, for everything that went wrong, ever. They then had my sister, who was their true biological child. She became the golden child and I became the permanent scapegoat, the whipping boy. They even imposed horrible punishments on me for very minor offenses, as a way of being an "example" for my sister, so they wouldn't have to punish her. My father told me constantly how much he hated me, how he wished I had never been born, and how his life would have been better without me. My mother encouraged this, because she said it was better he take his anger out on me, than her. He was controlling and mistreated me in countless ways, every day. He believed this was his right, for being forced to support a child he didn't want. When I became parent myself, he tried to control everything I did with my children, medical decisions, educational decisions, dietary decisions, vacation

decisions, and even where I decided to live. He also demanded I give him and my sister an monthly allowance as compensation for having me as a daughter/sister. I attempted to set boundaries, rules of behavior etc and demand respect. When I was 37 years old I discovered my mother had taken a inheritance left to me by a relative. She said I owed my parents, for the fact that they had fed me and clothed and sheltered when they didn't want to. Then my father began to demand time alone with my children so "they could get to know him", which I refused. Both parents have still refused to tell me who my real biological father was. I finally reached the conclusion that I was wanted by my parents; I was the thing they could mistreat, control, and bully and blame, instead of addressing their real problems and the real dysfunction in their relationship. I served a purpose, which is why they tried to maintain complete and utter control. They have called me "hateful" and "ungrateful" to anyone who is willing to listen. I hate being estranged from the very people who are supposed to love and care about me the most, but I don't miss their treatment. I do really believe I am stopping an bad cycle.

Emilyfitzgerald on August 26, 2018:

I have given my mother so many chances to be a part of my and my childrens' lives. Countless DCF calls and police showing up at my home (because she doesnt like my boyfriend). I am done. I have tried; offering family counseling, letting her see the grandkids, etc. Its just not worth my sanity any longer

So sad on August 26, 2018:

I am an adult with college age kids. I have always been close to my parents. Recently, I learned that my father is secretly a monster. He sexually abused my children for years. My whole family has imploded. And surprisingly...my mother, although horrified, stayed with him and defends him. I feel so betrayed by her. Filled with bottomless grief. Have cut all contact with him but now think I must with her as well. I am gutted.

Jayna on August 25, 2018:

I'm done. I'm done with the constant emotional pain this family gives me. I don't care if she's my sister. I want nothing more to do with her. I'm cutting off all ties today, and even if she's upset about it, whatever. It's my life and blood ain't thicker than water all the time.

Vicki on August 25, 2018:

It is ending today. I am 51, and enjoyed a few years that my sisters mental illness and anger were enough in check that I thought a relationship was possible. I was wrong. Since this is my older sibling, i've Had to be around this my whole life, including weekend psychiatric ward visits when I was in grade school. It hurts, but the constant going from "I love you" to "you're boring, I curse your soul" is more than I can bear. Except for my amazing husband of 27 years , i seem unable to form relationships where I am not used or taken

advantage of. I am a "fixer" and a "helper" and overcompensate for everyone's dysfunction, allowing people to take advantage of me. I am taking my sister back to the psychiatric hospital that I picked her up from, last night, and finally cutting ties. I cannot move forward with these chains any longer. If the guilt is too overwhelming, I will seek therapy.

Rose on August 12, 2018:

I am 27 and very unhappy with my life due to the poor relationships I have with my Mum, Dad and brother who is a bully.

I wish to cut them out completely as I deep down resent them all.

They have destroyed my peace of mind and sense of self.

I am looking forward to starting fresh by myself and no longer having these toxic people in my life. If theres a higher power out there please give me strength the start anew by myself.

BakerDiva on August 10, 2018:

I recently cut ties with my family 4 months ago. I am now 51. I've tried several times over the past 25 years, but one sister always reached out on a superficial level and draws me back in.

Without getting in too much details, I wished I did it 30 years ago. I am a much better person now to my teenage son, husband, and friends. I cannot emphasize it enough, be good to yourself and RUN. Don't wait till you're 50 to do it. Life is too short.

I wish everyone the best.

TryingToMakelt on August 06, 2018:

I have cut ties with my family and I wish I could cut their necks for what they did to me. I wish God had of pass over my soul when I was conceived because I shouldn't have been born. God has always given to everyone else and some people he just doesn't like no matter what you do. I wish I was Donald Trump and then I would get all God's love ❤️

Chellelynn on August 03, 2018:

My mother is a narcissist and has been one my whole life. I was verbally, physically, emotionally, and sexually abused by my older sister who is the "golden child". My memories resurfaced and I finally told my mom what happened, she doesn't believe me and doesn't want to discuss it. My sister claims she "remembers nothing" and offers no remorse. I have

had to "cut ties" with my sister due to my uncomfortableness around her and her lack of regard for me, my feelings, and my pain! My mother told me tonight that I am a embarrassment to the family and never to contact her again! She said "I was dead to her". This came about due to my anxiety I've been having over visiting my other sister in the hospital. I couldn't bring myself to go due to the fear of interaction with my abusive sister and narcissistic mother. Should I have gone despite my anxiety? I feel terrible!

gh on July 30, 2018:

My husband and I found out a year ago my nephew has been sexually coercing my daughter for the last 6 YEARS and threatening her with "you aren't really family" since she is adopted....my sister has known it for 4 (or parts of the abuse) and NEVER SAID A WORD! I hate her for this and can not forgive. I have cut ties with her family to protect my daughter...my parents don't know and am wondering if I should tell them.

melissaahopkins on July 25, 2018:

I made the decision to cut my sister out of my life. We were both living in the same house and it was constant stress and anxiety and we basically can't stand each other. When she moved out I cut our ties and haven't spoken to her since, nor has she tried to reach out either. My daughter is two, her and my sister were semi close because they lived in the same house and she did occasionally babysit and buy her clothes but always because she wanted to. She helped me a ton before she was born and when she was first born, but more recently took part in a few things that literally could have led to legal trouble. She also attacked me in front of my daughter one day and I have never ever put my hands on her. So anyway my question is, now that I have cut her out of my life because she is so toxic to me in almost every way, should I allow her to see my daughter? I allowed her to say goodbye when she moved out but since then there has been no contact and my parents are begging me to let her see her but in my mind... if she's toxic to me, she's toxic to my daughter and why would I go out of my way to be around her when it causes me all of these issues just to allow her to see my daughter. Another thing, she has my number, she has never reached out and asked herself to see her. It's always been through my mom. So If it's not important enough to her to pick up a phone why should I go out of my way? Thoughts and opinions please on me keeping my daughter away from my sister. When my daughter gets old enough and wants to make her own deduction, that's fine but as of now I'm supposed to protect her. Is this wrong?

Indian Girl on July 24, 2018:

I'm being abused physically by my cousin brother when I was 11 year old,,,I didn't say anything about it to my parents....i felt alone and worse..even my mother and brother kept torturing me till yesterday,,they are abusing me mentally since 2010.. Now I'm 23 I have degree my academics were weak because of their mental torture,,,I was with negative people. My life is ubnormal and unhealthy been depressed...i hate my life,,,I used to explode with everyone,,I'm alone..i really want to kill myself....i want to cut tie with family...i really hate them

Fed up on July 22, 2018:

I decided over a year ago to distance myself from my mother and siblings. I had 9 living siblings 2 died shortly after after birth which would have been 12 of us? I was number 10.

I spent my first 2 years in hospital as a sickly child who almost lost my life a few times in those early years. I was released from hosp aged 2 y/o. At that time they had had 2 more children, the last 1 died after living for a few hours. During that year my fathers mother & his sister said, "I was my fathers brother in-laws child". My aunt gave birth to a son 3 months after I was born & that's when my father was told I wasn't his child. The thing is my cousin and I looked similar in features back then? From that day on I felt that my father was treating me differently to the children? 2 years after my 4 birthday my eldest sister gave birth to a child out of wedlock. My grandmother & her daughter clamed it was shameful & disrespectful to bring up a barsted child. My sister agreed that the ugly little red head freakly faced thing should be adopted out. My father said, "nobody gives my first grandchild away, I will take her home before I allow that to happen. After my mothers 12th child died she suffered with depression & was hospitalized. during that time I was passed around to extended family & relatives until she returned home to look after her other children & later the grandchild became one of the golden children.

During the times I was living with other people. I was molested before I was aged 5? My memories after returning to the family weren't okay, I was abused and sworn at by my father for the 15 years?

The house was open to anyone that required a bed and somewhere to party for days & weeks on end.

My mother started bringing her side of the family back to an over growded house, her brothers & their kids. My parents & older siblings drank lots of alcohol and brought friends back to the house were us children lived. when i was age 9 years old, one of my older brothers brought his 15 y/o school friend home who had been kicked out of his current home? My brother spoke to our parents about this guy living with us, he was a "ward of the state" a child under welfare care. My world was turned upside down, I was being raped by this guy which went on for 4 years. I didn't like what was happening to me so I started to leave from the home?

I started rebelling and was leaving home for long periods of time. If I returned to the family, I would stay with the older siblings who were starting their own families. The problem their was this person my brothers friend was now classified as a brother and was allowed into their homes and it would start all over again. They said that they didn't know he was molesting me, even my mother. The last time my mother & I spoke of this was 20 years ago & she said, "forget about it now, it was a long time ago"? When it was happening I would sneak in her and dad bedroom to get away from my peditor? They would find me sleeping underneath their bed, they would say what are doing under there.

I don't know why I didn't tell them back then when it was happening maybe things might have been different?

I am older now & have had mental health issues to this day regarding the life of hurt and hate that I endured from my loved ones. My younger sister died last year & I decided that

that was enough. The next day I walked out of her house and have never returned.

My mother would be 90 years old or old now. When my sister died I offered to move in with her to look after her, she stated that several of her brothers grandchildren were coming to live with her, I stated can't I stay & help out as well. She started mouthing off, I walked out & haven't returned or made contact.

crashzero on July 12, 2018:

I don't want to be the responsible one anymore.

I live with 3 other brothers and have an older brother not living with us. My mom whom is going through cancer is living with us.

Scenario: Younger brother does drugs but is a good person walking on the bad side of the street. Other 2 brothers don't work, been out of work for about 3 to 8 years now. They only do odd jobs and don't even help out with at least utility bills. One brother I helped by letting him stay behind our house in a studio I built for rental.

So the 2 brothers fight with younger brother about drugs and think they have the answers, oldest brother doesn't like they don't help out. Today I told my mother out of frustration that I God punished me for having such a Horrible Family.

My dad passed away back in February 2018, as my older sister back about 3 years ago in August 2015.

Every time some fight or discussion comes up I get more depressed and making mortgage, car payment, and credit card bills does not leave me enough. People tell me I should evict them, but I have a very tamed heart and they know they can take advantage of me for that.

They are good brothers, but with problems they have given me to take care of as well LOL. I just said what I said to my mom about family out of frustration.

I am considering letting everyone just do what they want to do: drugs as long as brother doesn't drive my car, unemployed brothers let them find a job when they think they should, while I pay for everything. I give up. When I finish paying home, I'll just sell home and then I can feel comfortable about going my own way.

helpful on July 09, 2018:

About the sexual abuse from a family member: Here's what helped: Get a restraining order. You can file for one at the Court House yourself, just fill out the form. Some judges will make it so they are not allowed to come within 10 feet of you. Have a boundary. I had to

go to surgery, I was on chemotherapy for tumors & I was bleeding to death. But I didn't want that drunken family member, having sex with me hooked up to all those machines & IV's of whole blood, after a hysterectomy, while I was loaded up with painkillers. I didn't want to wake up from unconsciousness in the hospital with that dude pumping on me. So I protected me.

A lot of people in my family were either addicted to alcohol or drugs or they were afraid of the perpetrator. I showed up in court, our whole family ganged up on me but the staff protected me. The judge would only let in the jerk in the courtroom - to face my lawyer. I hired & retained a lawyer, with a prepayment. The rest of the family members to stay outside. The jerk threatened the judge & I got an instant restraining order, complete with police protection throughout my hospital stay. I didn't give a care what my family thought about me, they never protected me from him anyway. They let the abuse go on & on because they were "afraid" of him. Well, I decided either he kills me before I go to surgery, so I didn't have to go through all that hell & pain; or he gets locked up for trying to kill me - after surgery because I had a restraining order enabling them to do that. The police did a wonderful job, by the way & it was worth the expense I paid for the lawyer. I had peace of mind during that physically painful time. It helped me tremendously to heal during my hospital recovery - no more anxiety. That family jerk left me alone for 10 years after. You have to respect yourself & your body; if you want others to respect you. It's better to be respected than "liked". Some people only "like" the people they can screw & rip off. Think of how nice the Holidays will be, without that relative hitting on you & trying to feel you up. Get a therapist, who deals with incest & family sexual abuse, look through the yellow pages, you can make an appointment for once a month OR once every two months so you can afford it & get more guidance on how to stay out of trouble with sex offenders who are relatives.

Jillzy on July 09, 2018:

@ Donna Templeton. I know exactly how you feel! Email me if you need to chat with someone going through a similar situation. It's heart wrenching and consumes you with feeling so terrible. My best advice is keep your friends close, or make a new friend. My friends are my family now and without them I would be so much more depressed! My email is blackbutterflies1974@gmail.com

GeorgiaGal64 on July 08, 2018:

Thanks for this very supportive article. The balance, IMHO, is who is doing what? I am the "baby" of four, now three living siblings. Our living parent and only parent for most of our lives' is terminally ill. She lives with my sister 7 hours from me. I am single, no children, sister is married and retired. At first, upon learning of the illness to our mom, I was living across country. Happy. Engaged. I opted to move closer where I could find work (we are all at least master's level educated) and be able to visit several times per month to help in care for "mom." I left a career to move in with family to assist, but I need work, so I moved back to pursue this 7 hours away, again. The stress and bossy ways in dealing with my sister has caused me to wonder if it is really all me...Am I a leech, freeloader? I left a job to help out for almost a year. My sister has been great with caring for our mom. The other sibling is married/kids and lives across country with a medical practice and has been great in helping with medical care management for our parent and being kind to all.

Issue is that my sister is cutting me out of any financial support. I have felt like such a loser. Lately, my closest pal has suggested I walk away. This has decades of history and I think we all need to step back and see our own respective roles in any "damaged" relations with family...As well, I am now seeing we can be our own worst enemies in times of loss...Holding onto any pathetic treatment from family just to have a "family." My sister suggested we get therapy to look at why I am so angry. Just seems like "I" am the scapegoat, usually, and "I" am exhausted.

Relationships are work. Not to be abusive, however.

Leave to save your sanity, respect and give peace to that parent who has no say in all of the turmoil. Just not worth it.

Sara on July 06, 2018:

I've known my family is toxic for years but I'm worried about the long term effects of it. It's really hard because i am 17 and still have another year till I graduate high school.

StayC Beacon on July 05, 2018:

I've been sexual abuse when I was a child on my mom side(which ended, but they never did anything) and I have the verbally abusive problem with my brother, for years, over 10 years. People thought it was funny at first, but when they finally realize it was real, they started to feel sorry for me. Then they even try to call the police for me, because they knew that this is not normal and I needed help. I try to work it through, but its not working at all. My mom side of the family believes even if you get abuse in anyway, like sexual, physical, verbal we still have to be next to each other, despite the way you feel about that abuser, and if you complain, they'll say that you are acting like a child and need to grow up. (They won't be saying that, if the abuser was abusing them, I know.)

Living with abusive family member(s) is not normal and/or healthy. You'll never live a positive life when your around negative people like that. Also, you'll never heal. SO I decide to block him, every contact. Some of my family member thought it was stupid, but they don't understand how or what it's like to be abuse or how much I am hurt deeply inside. I know they don't care. So I decide to just cut it, and it felt great! I just regret not doing it earlier.

I've been stuck in the same way since the abuse happen. I never grew, nothing great came out of it. There's time I can't sleep. Been depressed, there's times, I really want to kill myself. Honestly, I'm not happy, not happy where I am now, not happy who I'm living with now. I know I say this multiple times, but it's really sad this have to happen, its not like I Hate him(or them) I just have to do what is necessary

to be happy and have respect for myself. I REALLY want my life to be positive and I am trying every way to fight the negative off. Its just this section feels like a heavy weight on me, so heavy that I can't breath. So, I'm just pretending to be happy until I leave.

After I move out, I will be cutting more family member out of my life for good.

amydean.home@gmail.com on June 23, 2018:

this is kinda scary to read as im doing something similar with my dad's side of the family. like i was happy with them but over things, things changed and i cant adapt to the new life. its just too much for me mentally so i need to end it to move on

Margaret Luebke on June 18, 2018:

i found my family was toxic but didnt know, they are not as emotionally aware or care you will never get satisfaction,just know that you are strong and involved and don't compare, you know you are different it's sad cuz it's your family but just love you and know you did your best and paige who gives a crap about grammar its the deep emotion and sharing that counts

Rochel Nich on June 15, 2018:

Stop trying to kiss your adult kid's a—.

ToxicSurvivor on June 13, 2018:

Cutting contact was my decision and I don't regret it. Unfortunately the person I cut contact with continues to lash out at me in many ways, usually through others, so the toxicity never truly stops. I hope when this person passes on (she is 92 now) that the toxic drama and and pot stirring and ongoing issues pass with her.

Paige on June 12, 2018:

This is a good article but I have to say that the grammar and spelling are really terrible. It was hard to read this without pausing a bunch of times to re-read. The information is helpful though, but it should be smoother when reading.

Gmoon on June 11, 2018:

KAT!

I'm 32, female, and am nearly the same situation as you, I would love to email with you to ask you some questions, tell you about my experience because I've severed the ties with entire family, and it's been a year now...particularly interested in talking about the fears and realities or pains of cutting off a family WITHOUT a personal support network of ANY kind to talk to, confide in, be unconditionally loved and understood by...I can identify exactly with that! not sure if we can private text here but if you want shoot me an email at thedollsboutique@gmail.com. Also, anyone else who identifies and wants to talk, you can

email me too! Thanks for this post, it truly resonates with my experience of the decision process involving weighing pros and cons, deliberating, checking all avenues of possibilities,...what I settled with was...the open possibility of mending it down the line sometime...when and if it is right, that possibility is what provided some solace and a sense of self compassion and love that has often helped me through incredibly tough periods of this process.

Kat on June 10, 2018:

My mother was emotionally and physically abusive to me until I was 32. I am 34 now. My first sister is also abusive to me. My second sister is very kind to me but always takes the side of my mom and first sister. She can never even acknowledge the abuse. She downplays it and tells me that they love me and it's not their intention to hurt me. My brother is only 17 and has been abused by my mom his while life and doesn't even realize that he's being abused. He is fiercely loyal to our mother.

At this point...I have spent over a decade tolerating the abuse for the sake of my siblings and my kids. sparing them the pain of dealing with a broken family. However....I can't do this anymore. I need to be happy. I need to learn how to be the self I should have been had I not had this ongoing trauma.

My eldest daughters birthday is in two weeks.there is a family BBQ. After that date I am ghosting all of them. I have I formed my father (we live in the same house) that I don't want to see them and when I get my own house he will be able to have them over and family gatherings and stuff. But until I have my own house holidays will be small and just me my kids my dad and my step family (his fiance and her two grown children are amazing people).

And I won't be attending anymore family functions or holidays at extended family either. I can see people one on one if they care to make an effort. Most won't. Not a big deal. I'm not close with any extended family so it's not really an issue for me.

What's hard part is....I don't have anyone I am close to. I don't have a best friend. I don't have a lover. I won't have many family members left.

I have my kids but they are my children. I will never be able to be totally open and intimate with them as they need me to be strong and together and their rocks. it is not a child's place to be the rock for their parent.

So...life is going to get very calm...but very very lonely.

Still....I do believe lonliness is better than being abused.

Priya on May 30, 2018:

What if my mom beats me and abuses me and i want to separate

Joy on May 16, 2018:

My sister took \$65,000 from my parents retirement account, making their retirement years mean and lean. Yes, they gave it to her but she played mental games with them.

After both parents passed away my brother, sister and I agreed to meet at their house on a specific day and go through things. My brother arrived a few days early. When I arrived on the expected day, my brother had already taken everything he did not want to the dump, loaded his truck with everything he wanted. My sister-in-law "allowed" me to choose items from the "Good Will " table. To make things worse my brother is very wealthy (2 million dollar homes).

My brother and his wife were not very nice to my mom during the last months she was alive, fighting cancer. My mom said my brother made her feel like excess baggage. She also said she hopped his wife ran off with a rich politician.

I still have to stay in contact with them until we sell my parent's house but it was good to vent. Thank you for letting me feel like someone is listening.

Reneygade on May 16, 2018:

I had a stroke, no biggie I'm fine but it's been weeks now, my 23yo kid is STILL FURIOUS with me. I had no control over this medical situation I had, I really wish I could change it but I can't. And no no she's not mad bc she's upset and scared lmao no she's mad bc her birthday lunch was ruined. Right, she postponed her birthday lunch for 4 friggin weeks and then didn't even bother telling me about it the morning she decided to come to town. Like I ruined her special day although 4 wks after the actual special day.. on purpose?! She got over \$1,000 in gifts, knick knacks, money, iPhone X, some jewelry MUST BE NICE, I've never got that much at once FOR ANYTHING! BUT I ruined it for her, even though I knew nothing about the special 4 week multi cancelled birthday lunch. Does this make sense to anyone? Like see, my birthday is in less than 2 weeks, so I technically I guess I could say SHE'S RUINED MY BIRTHDAY but I don't dare. Is this normal? I don't think it is and frankly, I'm livid. She's so unpredictable I don't want my 12yo daughter exposed to the 23 yo disrespectful trouble making older sister, life's hard enough, I have no trust nor faith in my oldest daughter anymore. I'm completely perplexed and can't understand how I ruined her birthday lunch, whatever it wasn't even her birthday blah blah blah BLAH. Can someone please explain to me how I can control a medical emergency situation whatever?

I swear this kid might be the death of me. I've never said it to her but that's how I feel, she's such a jackass to me, she would treat a rat better than she treats me. If I ever treated her the way she treats me, we'd never speak ever again. I'm sure of that. Bc she'd be mad of course. God help me-

Donna Templeton on May 15, 2018:

My mother and brother are thick as thieves plotting against me, together they have done numerous things that were detrimental to my life they treat me as the outsider and the one thats ok, little do they know that I feel suicidal many times due to me having this toxic family,it is the deepest physiological wound of my being ,I feel I may explode, lash out do something extremely destructive, they make me feel so low,I have tried to cut off but my mother always gets back in touch with me, I cant take it anymore, I am 47 and its still going on, so stagnant ,especially my hateful ,lying, resentful, bitter brother, who hates me for trying to be normal,poisoning her mind about me,her saying the critical things to him in a never ending cycle of hatred towards me!!! her daughter and his sister, they are so sick, cutting me out , doing things behind my back and slagging me off,right now I feel so horrible and have no one to talk too, one example of what they have done to me, is exile me abroad for 20 yrs, everytime I tried to come back they trew a spanner in the wheels in some way or another to drive me back, now I am back in the uk, they still want me gone.

Mark Gorman on May 11, 2018:

My younger Sister once said about me that I was so ugly that she was ashamed of the fact that I was Her Brother. It is just the way things are. This kind of criticism is aimed at me in the larger society so, to some extent, you develop a hard skin to deal with it. But when your own family finds you distasteful to the extent that not even they can stand the sight of you or to be seen with you, it raises a lot of difficult questions that need to be addressed. I have been sold down the river by people I thought I could trust. I don't have a grudge against my Sister or my family. I am glad that things are working out well for them and my nieces and nephews. My Sisters have married well. But, for my own sake, I need to walk away from them for good.

nope99 on May 11, 2018:

My sister spent many, many years getting high, being unemployed, lying about everything and "borrowing" money from mom. Mom passes away, I blocked the sister on the mobile and NEVER see her nonsense on group family texts. Works for me. The few times a year I see her, I put up with her nonsense, go home and forget about all of it. If you don't give folks power to mess with you, they can't.

Susan on May 11, 2018:

Your words helped immensely. I feel better about my feelings regarding these relationships, but unfortunately, I cannot continue one with either my sister and now it appears my mother as well. (But I did send a Mother's Day card with Love.) So anyway, thank you for the insights and I feel MUCH better knowing that I'm not alone. Again, Bless you and the work you do.

Zunilda on April 16, 2018:

I was not bathed fed or loved I was ignored like I didn't exist. It feels awful to know that everyone had love for each other but very toxic. I'm Abel to see this awful life I had know is time to let go and let God. I'm Abel to take care of myself with peace and loving my dog is

just right.

Rani on April 13, 2018:

Hi there

My dad passed on and left inheritance for four of his children

The thing is one family member who is the always asking for the house and he wants me and my family gone from the house

My two brothers stay somewhere else with their families but we have a mutual understanding that I take of the house as the troubled brother staying with us does not work some days and comes home drunk weekends he is emotional abusive towards me and my husband.

I tried calling the police but no help from them

What do I do as my husband and I contribute to most of the household expenses.

He does not want to sell his share of the house

And wants me to move out as he drives me insane and fights with me as I am and shareholder also.

Please help

Aab on April 11, 2018:

I have a codependent narcissistic toxic mother. She is needy, and has a victimhood and entitlement mentality. Stresses me out completely with guilt trips, begging, poor decisions and all around bs. I have an autistic brother that lives with her. We have a great relationship and are extremely attached to each other. I would love to cut my mother off but I can't due to him. I can't wait for the day that he can come live with me. Until then I have to tolerate her bs.

Lilly on March 27, 2018:

Wanda and Anonymous, I am stuck on the other side as my husband touched my daughter. He was convicted and went through counseling. He realized what he had done, and has changed his life, not only in regards for that issue and speaking out about child abuse, but also in advancing his education. If I had not witness this change I would have left him, but he is actively seeking to constantly make changes and enhance his life.

I am not sure as to your full situation as I can only imagine that they were a lot worse in nature. And I agree with you that it is something that should not be swept under the carpet - it must be dealt with.

Can you answer me this, if your abuser truly changed, would you estrange the non abuser because they were still together? (even if the boundary was to leave the abuser out of any conversions?) Would you consider speaking terms with the abuser if they truly have repented and changed?

Reader on March 25, 2018:

Your article is woefully ignorant. To say that families are the ones who are there for us in difficult times is to exclude all dysfunctional families that do not operate that way, and the people within those families that are not that way, and wish for something different, but don't have it.

Jane1963 on March 25, 2018:

I just did this with 2 older brothers. The only family I have. All have passed. They treat me awful and just put me down all the time. I'm 55 years old now. I feel bad for my 10 year old daughter. Her father is estranged. I try to make the holidays fun and festive for us but she saysI wish I had a family. She has no Grandparents...Aunts...Uncles. I do worry if something should happen to me..she has noone.

Luna Ray Davis on March 25, 2018:

Wonderful article. I've finally reached a point where I'm not compromising my well being any longer. Thank you for this affirmation.

Debbie on March 22, 2018:

I'm the youngest of 5 and my oldest sister and I no longer speak, although we live in the same street. I've tried to let her back in my life yet it always results in being verbally attacked and disrespected hurting my children and my heart. I'm in a healthy relationship and have raise two remarkable and successful (almost 21 year old twins) children after divorcing their father. My sister has had a string of failed relationships, two divorces, millions of dollars blown away, 4 grown children who struggle with her and their own lives. It's very sad. The rest of our family tolerates and enables her bad behavior. She now had no drivers license and no job and a court date relating to evading the police and driving under the influence. She's out of money. She will occasionally text me at early morning hours with cryptic and threatening messages. It still hurts but I know I need to be strong and maintain boundaries. Very sad and difficult but she needs to address her own issues and find peace in her life, own her mistakes and understand how she hurts others. Until then I will remain distant. We have tons of relatives and common people in the area who will say "oh I saw your sister" and I simply respond "oh we don't really talk" or "we aren't really in touch". Embarassingvat times- but I can't lie.

Cindy on March 21, 2018:

FemaleAdventurer, read your whole posting. What a journey you have traveled reaching a level of maturity to objectively step back and access your paths to follow. You must be a very intelligent person to look inward and decide what you needed and what you were willing to give and then act on it accordingly. It has taken me longer to come to the decision to love myself enough to take similar steps. It is hard, and it is sad, but it is better than being abused and letting the abuse continue. Let your friends become your family, developing a give (kindness and listening and appreciation of your friends) and take (accept help and appreciate it for what it is, kindness and love) relationship. People will let you down occasionally, but as long as they realize they let you down and make amends, you have a good friend and love in your life. When they don't care to say "I m sorry, forgive me?" they are not a loving friend and you are in a abusive situation, again. This took me a lifetime to apply to family, too.

Anonymous on March 18, 2018:

Wanda. Thank you for sharing your experience. I am dealing with exactly the same thing. How could those who raised and supposedly love you & charged with protecting your innocence align with a pedophile, criminal! Stand your ground. Stand on the side of the light & truth. We need to start our movement as child molestation survivors to protect innocence! No matter what it takes! #UsToo You are not alone. I am with you.

Wanda on March 14, 2018:

Was molested from the age of 5-15 by my 1st Aunt husband and it literally turned me into a horrible person later on in life because I carried it and still to this day are carrying it but the big bang of it all is when I sat down and wrote letters to my family member about the molestation and their responses were why didn't I say something back then or don't worry about it just that simple but I do worry about it because i'm still that little girl that will not trust anyone and will not allow anyone to claim they love me but my resolution is to just separate myself from them all because I feel like they all turned their backs on me and rather than deal with the issue they chose to sweep it under the rug and still until this day they have close ties to my abuser and I just don't understand how they can choose him over me.

Gratitude on March 09, 2018:

This article helped immensely. Thank you for the tools!

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