

Survival in Transition between Extended and Nuclear Families

(guide for psychologists and for people with changing family structure)

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Disclaimer

THE AUTHOR OF THIS DOCUMENT IS NEITHER PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL WORKER, NOR PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST, NOR PROFESSIONAL ANTHROPOLOGIST, NOR PROFESSIONAL PEDAGOGUE, NOR PROFESSIONAL LAWYER, NOR PRACTICING PARENT. ALL PUBLISHED MATERIAL IS BASED SOLELY ON AUTHOR'S MEMORIES FROM HIS OWN PERSONAL LIFE AND ON INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM OCCASIONAL COMMUNICATION WITH RANDOM PEOPLE.

Introduction

My personal background of dealing with different types of families is rather complex. Until getting 7-8 years old, I lived in 100% extended family. Later, until getting 11-13 years old, the family I lived in could be described as semi-extended. After that, in the period until getting 22 years old, the family was 100% nuclear. Then, I entered the business world in the role of regular low-paid employee with minimal practical qualification, and got in touch (in person and remotely) with multiple large rich powerful extended families. Gradually, by getting 30+ years old, I turned to remote job completely, and limited communication to the necessary minimum with those relatives who pressed me down. At the same time, I started travelling around the world actively, and entered in different relationships with young females who sometimes belonged to ethnocultural groups much more traditional than mine, much less educated than mine, and much more aggressive than mine. It is supposed that short summary of all this experience may be very useful for people living in similar situations and for professional psychologists (even if all published material is significantly biased).

If your extended family is becoming nuclear, or you have found yourself alone

- Such change in lifestyle often comes with migration from Southern countries to large Northern cities, or just from villages to urban areas. You should be ready that you, your partner, and your kids may have mental problems caused by lower amount of sunlight and lower amount of contact with nature. Travels to nature every weekend and far travels to natural locations in Southern countries every 2-3 months are strictly desired.
- Build friendly relationships with people working in local police, army, and state security agencies; informal protection is better than formal one. (In some first world countries, deep learning of local laws and regulations may be enough.)
- Devote more time to sports and self-learning, stay self-reliant.
- Always think about how your kids spend free time; they should be always fully loaded with positive communication, positive play, and self-learning.
- Replace “natural extended family” with “artificial extended family”: for example, you may visit every night/weekend such locations/events as folk dance parties, folk music concerts, temples of religions that practice proselytism actively, and cultural communication clubs of your ethnocultural group (or another one, if it is open for communication with aliens).

If your nuclear family is becoming extended, or you joined extended family

- Always keep direct regular contact with heads of the extended family, be ready for “political games around the throne”.
- Be ready to pass large portion of parenting responsibilities to elder members of the extended family and to other relatives. Later, be ready that your kids will follow cultural lifestyle that may differ from yours significantly.
- Explain to your kids the risks of possible sexual abuse coming from cousins and uncles/aunts. They should be prepared for such situations, and be ready to respond appropriately to protect themselves without breaking family relationships. In some of such cases, your attempt “to keep family” may be considered as crime; please, consult with a lawyer. (This item is based on information obtained from online communication just with two persons living in South Asia and Latin America.)
- Be ready to social, educational, and financial limits that may be imposed on you, your partner, and your kids by other members of the extended family.
- Some extended families may be connected to police, army, and state security agencies much more than you can imagine initially. Considering situations described above, you may want to keep for yourself, your partner, and your kids some “runaway option” to be able to leave the family completely and relocate very far, if the situation will be uncomfortable for you.