

Survival in Transition between Extended and Nuclear Families

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

Author: Kamil Rafikov

ORCID: 0000-0002-7828-2488

Email: mailbox@kamil-rafik.com

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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 AND PUBLIC NEWS.

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 (although "technically", it was the same one). After that, in the period until getting 22 years old, the family turned out to be 100% nuclear. Then, due to conflict with direct relatives, 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. (Some of them were for me not so distant genetic relatives.) 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 my experience mixed with information from occasional communication with random people and public news 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 developed 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 positive self-learning. It is supposed that in some developed countries, self-learning in childhood may be discouraged by the mass educational system. In such case, putting kids to some out-of-school courses is the only option. Also, in some developed countries you should be ready to pass large portion of parenting responsibilities to different social institutes, and generally to the state; theoretically, you should be ready that kids may be taken from your family and passed to another one at any moment. After getting 18 years old, your kids may follow one of extreme life paths: they may either leave you completely with relocating far far away, or stay with you for 10-15 years more and expect to be supported in the same amount as in childhood.
- 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 everything is going fine and you feel yourself “alone at the top of the world”, then it probably means that you entered “territory” of some of local powerful clans already, and all your personal life and business activity are observed actively. So, you may be “eaten” at any moment.

If your nuclear family is becoming extended, or you have 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 cultures and lifestyles that may differ from yours significantly.
- Explain to your kids the risks of possible sexual, psychological, and physical 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.
- If everything is going fine and you do not meet any of issues listed above, then it probably means that your new extended family is going to break down soon, and if you expect from your new relatives some assistance, they may tell you strict “no” and disappear completely at the most critical moment.