



DYS FUNCTIONAL families AL

No family is perfect, but when a family is truly “dysfunctional,” the consequences run deep. Does your household experience a lot of conflict, secrecy, unhealthy boundaries, and unmet emotional needs, all with a hefty dose of denial sprinkled on top? If so, it sounds like your family is dysfunctional.

It’s also common for family dysfunction to involve verbal/physical/emotional abuse, substance abuse, neglect, abandonment, addiction, personality or mood disorders, unsafe environments, or a toxic relationship between parents or siblings.

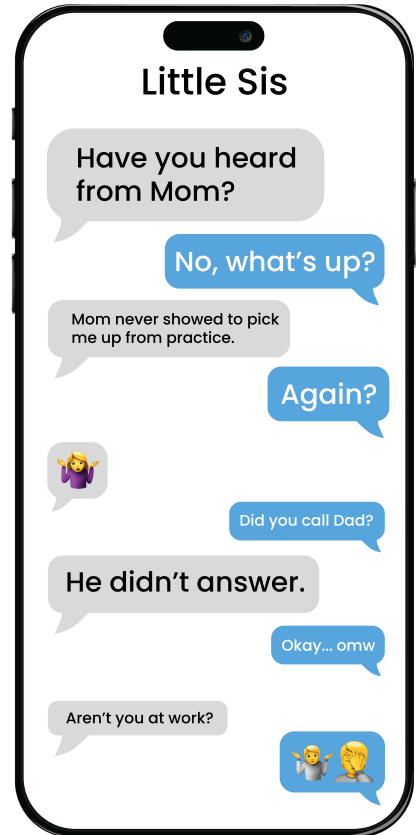
Some parents are directly responsible for causing and perpetuating the dysfunction in their family, and if that’s the case you may feel angry or betrayed, in addition to feeling scared. No matter who is to blame for the dysfunction in your family, it’s ok to acknowledge that you are going through some challenging things. There is no need to be fearful or embarrassed about reaching out for help!

How Does A Dysfunctional Family Affect Its Members?

Family dysfunction happens when one or more members of a family unit is unwilling or unable to care for their mental health, leaving their loved ones with a lack of support and the added burden of accommodating (or avoiding) their unhealthy behaviors. This absence of a strong support system impacts everyone physically, emotionally, and spiritually. How are your family dynamics hurting you?



The range of family dysfunction is broad, from total neglect to emotional unavailability. If your parents or guardians are failing to feed, clothe, and shelter you, the physical toll on your body is the risk of malnutrition, illness, or not having the security of a locked door. Some dysfunctional families may keep their children clothed and fed, claiming that's "all they have to do," but emotional neglect can also result in problems like eating disorders, depression, anxiety, or self-harm—all of which are very hard on your body.





Emotional

When the people who you rely on aren't willing or able to be there for you when you have big feelings, you learn to see your emotional needs as unimportant. If you can't express sadness or frustration without your mom cutting you off and accusing you of being ungrateful, you learn that your sadness isn't welcome at home--you might as well keep it to yourself when you're sad. If you have nobody to tell when you're hurting from a breakup or anxious about an exam because your dad is passed out on the couch while your mom works three jobs, you learn that you're alone and need to fend for yourself. Any form of emotional neglect can result in feeling abandoned, feeling like a burden, feeling ashamed or unworthy of emotional support. You could even develop issues like depression, anxiety, CPTSD, eating disorders, and more.



Perhaps the most dysfunctional member of your family uses religion as a way to justify their behavior, saying, "Honor your mother and father," even when they are mistreating you. Perhaps the church you've attended since you were born does nothing to help your family when your parents go through a messy divorce. Perhaps you prayed every day when you were young that your mom would be healed from her addiction, but she just kept ending up in rehab. However spirituality shows up in your experience of family dysfunction, you could end up feeling small, unworthy, alone, and disappointed when you should feel loved.

Spiritual



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HOW TO DEAL WITH A DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY

Living in a dysfunctional family can wreak havoc on your mental health, and it's vital that you learn to take care of your mind if you hope to break the cycle of dysfunction someday. It's not your fault that your parents have let their own issues create chaos in your family, but you can't control them or their actions. What you can do is create a better path forward for yourself. Find supportive friends and community members, talk to your school counselors, and find a therapist who can help you start to establish healthy boundaries and coping mechanisms. Without help, you run the risk of perpetuating the unhealthiness in future relationships. What does taking care of your mind look like?

Professional Guidance

Do your best to make and keep appointments with your doctor or therapist to combat the negative impacts of family dysfunction on your physical and mental health.

Caring for Yourself

Make essential self-care tasks your priority. Eat when you're hungry, stay hydrated, and get good rest whenever possible. Always hold a space for the simple things you enjoy to help you stay grounded as you heal.

What's Faith Got To Do With It?

Losing faith in people usually means you lose your faith in God a little too. After all, where was He when your parents were fighting in the next room? But reconnecting with your faith can be a great way to process the love you deserve even though your family couldn't give it to you. Through faith you can learn that you're never alone, that there's always hope, and that your needs deserve to be met. There are people who care and who are ready to pray for you anytime. Love is available to you right now, this minute. You don't have to wait for it.

Love is available to you right now, this minute.

*get
prayer*

Send your prayer requests today!

**Real
People
Praying.**



Next Steps

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