



8 Ways to Deal With Family Conflicts During Family Gatherings

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Family gatherings can bring you and your family many cherished memories. However, there are often challenges when extended families get together.

Perhaps you or other family members have conflicts. Maybe there's a family member or friend at these gatherings that you simply don't get along with. Whatever the case may be, ***there are certain actions you can take to help keep conflicts to a minimum during reunions, holidays, or special events.***

Keep the following tips in mind before you go to family parties:

- 1. Make peace.** If there's an ongoing conflict that can't be resolved before the event, make it a point to put the whole thing on hold. Set those negative feelings aside for the time being and give yourself permission to enjoy yourself.
- 2. Remember the good times.** If one particular person is a challenge, try focusing on the good times. Maybe you've known this person your whole life. Surely there are good memories that you can focus on instead of the ones that are causing you trouble. It's tough to be the bigger person, but in the end, you'll feel better.
- 3. Focus on the food.** While you don't want to go overboard, food can be a nice distraction. There may be quite a spread of appetizers, main courses, and dessert items. Grab your favorites and enjoy. It can help you keep your mind off of the family conflicts.
- 4. Come to a quiet resolution.** If you simply cannot put a challenge aside, ***deal with the conflict one on one and with a cool head.*** Remember there's a greater good, and you won't be the one that goes down in history for starting a scene during that reunion or get-together.

5. **Stay away from others' arguments.** Do your best to stay out of other people's conflicts, even if you're just trying to stick up for somebody. Adding more fire to the mix rarely helps. Allow the people involved with the conflict to work out the situation for themselves.
6. **Take a breather.** If things start to get too heated for your tastes, temporarily remove yourself from the situation. You can take the dog outside for a walk or play with the little ones. It may be just what you need in order to clear your head and calm down. Decide to put aside your differences until the end of the party, or work out your problem in a way that doesn't involve fighting.
7. **Avoid turbulent topics.** If you know that certain topics of conversation are likely to cause a stir, make sure that you don't bring them up. If someone else brings up one of these forbidden topics, ***see what you can do to change the subject*** before the matter escalates into something worse.
8. **Adopt a positive attitude.** You might be tempted to go to events with a negative attitude. It's understandable, especially if you're going to be crossing paths with people that often try to cause conflicts. But if you focus on an optimistic attitude before you even approach these events, you may be able to get through them with a smile.

Family parties can be a wonderful time of peace and blessings. Focus on the *good* things about your family and you'll survive all the togetherness!