

MY PARENTS ARE DRIVING ME CRAZY

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Lize van den Bergh



"IT FEELS LIKE MY PARENTS ARE PUTTING A LOT OF PRESSURE ON ME!"

It is normal for parents to want you to do well. But, sometimes you might feel like you cannot live up to their perceived expectations.

So, what can you do?

- Understand their fears, background and hopes
- Talk to your parents about feeling pressured
- Discuss realistic expectations
- Communicate often regarding your academics and other pressures
- Try to remain as calm as possible

Sometimes, you may find your parents are not receptive to the above-mentioned open discussions. If you attempted this approach and things didn't go as well as you had hoped, try the following:

- Accept that you and your parents don't see eye to eye
- Focus on what is in YOUR hands
- Take responsibility for your studies
- Take responsibility for how you communicate academic news to your parents/caregivers
- Do not take responsibility for how others react

Did you know?

It is normal and 100% okay to have different ideas about things!



“You may give them your love, but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts.”

“You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.”

*Kahlil Gibran
“The Prophet”*

As a student, you might find that you are discovering new things about yourself as you are increasingly exposed to a variety of situations. Although this can be exciting, it may create challenges; not only within yourself, but also in your relationship with your parents/caregiver. They might not understand the “changes” you are going through, which could lead to conflict.

Some areas that you may start exploring or discovering:

- Religion/spirituality
- Values
- Belief systems related to sexuality, race or gender



This stage of finding your identity can evoke a mixture of feelings for you and your parents. Children learn certain behaviours, beliefs and attitudes from their parents and when they start questioning these, children could experience guilt or shame while parents can become fearful and angry.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

STAY CALM

Adjusting to these changes is possible, with patience, empathy and time. Here are some guidelines:

Understand your change

Is it a true change of a belief or were you influenced by others.

Understand your family's perspective

Often parents are just modelling their parents' behaviours and beliefs. Parents often worry if they see any changes in their children. Most parents want the best for their children and they often believe that they know what that is.

TRY NOT TO BE JUDGEMENTAL

Communicate, communicate, communicate

Talk to your parents about your viewpoint and try to stay calm. Do not be judgemental – they are entitled to their opinion, just as you are entitled to yours. Keep in mind that, although you may have been feeling this change for some time, it will probably come as a shock to your parents when they first hear of it.

Nothing drastic needs to change

Just because you have a different belief system doesn't mean you cannot continue having a relationship with your parents.



Please note:

If you need assistance with dealing with abusive parents, please book an appointment with a mental health professional.

What are you fighting about?

What is your side of the story?

What is their side of the story?

Can you compromise?

YES



NO



Can they compromise?

NO



YES



Communicate what you are willing to do and commit to it.

Learn to accept the current situation if neither party can compromise and rather choose your reaction towards it.

Acknowledge their willingness to compromise

What will the impact be if you resolve this issue?

What will the impact be if you do not resolve this issue?



RESOURCES



WEBSITES

www.myhorridparent.com

www.mindtools.com

www.skillsyouneed.com

www.mayoclinic.org

www.wehavekids.com

au.reachout.com

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APPS

Cognitive diary CBT Self-help

Build confidence

Mindfit

I can make you confident

Personal growth & success - build confidence

New Day Assertiveness Booster

BOOKS

"The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook" by E.J Bourne

"The Assertiveness Workbook: How to Express Your Ideas and Stand Up for Yourself at Work and in Relationships" by Randy J. Paterson

"When I Say No, I Feel Guilty: How to Cope - Using the Skills of Systematic Assertive Therapy" by Manuel J. Smith