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Wellness Wednesday

Like Harry And Meghan, It's OK To Take A 'Step Back' From Your Family

Meghan Markle has set quite the example since she stepped into life as the Duchess of Sussex. As a biracial American woman, she's modernized the British monarchy. She has also focused on the advancement of women through charitable causes and broken down myths about pregnancy after the age of 35.

Now she and her husband, Prince Harry, are demonstrating how to take care of your own mental health — even if it leads to some tough changes with your family. You've probably heard by now that the Duke and Duchess of Sussex announced on their Instagram page they'll be taking a "step back as 'senior' members of the Royal Family" in order to carve out a new, progressive role within their family.



While there's mostly speculation over what's occurring and we don't have all the details on their decision, one thing is pretty clear: They're slapping some boundaries in place. Jokes aside, this is a pretty valid move. Though Meghan and Harry may have a distinctly unique experience — given the fact they're navigating royal waters and all — what they're going through isn't all that rare. Most of us have probably dealt with iffy family dynamics at some point. Setting clear boundaries with your relatives — and telling them what you are and aren't comfortable with — isn't always the easiest, but doing so can make your life (and theirs) much, much smoother in the long run.

Here's why we need boundaries.

When we're young, our parents or guardians more or less govern our lives. They call the shots, and we pretty much go along with it. As we grow up, however, we start to become our own person. "We take in [information] from our family, but then we also take in from the world, and then we make sense of those pieces and apply them to who we are — and we start to learn more about ourselves within the context of all that information," said Mayra Mendez, a licensed psychotherapist and program coordinator for intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health services at Providence Saint John's Child and Family Development Center.

As we make sense of the world around us and how we fit into it, we develop a stronger idea of what we stand for and what defines us. And in order to meet what we want and need, like and dislike, we may have to make some adjustments — AKA throw up some boundaries — so we can live in a way we're comfortable with.

Without boundaries, resentment builds.

Think of a time someone crossed a line. Oftentimes, this plays out in someone forcing an expectation or obligation on another. Maybe your parents expected you for Sunday dinner each week, your sister put too much pressure on you to be someone you're not, or perhaps your partner forced their politics onto you. When another person is constantly telling you to behave or act in a certain way, it can be taxing. And that struggle to balance other people's needs and wishes with your own can cause a major build-up of guilt and resentment. Without a healthy boundary in place that essentially says, "Hey, please stop, this makes me super uncomfortable," negative emotions build and build until you reach your breaking point.

"If you feel guilty about something — that you really inside don't want to do — resentment starts to build, you start to maybe back away from the family, reject the family, speak angrily to the family — we get all sorts of really negative feelings that come out," Mendez said.

Jessy Warner-Cohen, a senior psychologist at Northwell Health, added that avoiding the issue is one of the worst things to do. Not only does it not resolve the challenge and lead to resentment, but it ultimately undermines — and sabotages — the relationship. Your needs are just as important as your relatives' needs, so any clashes need to be addressed.

Solid boundaries start with honest, open communication.

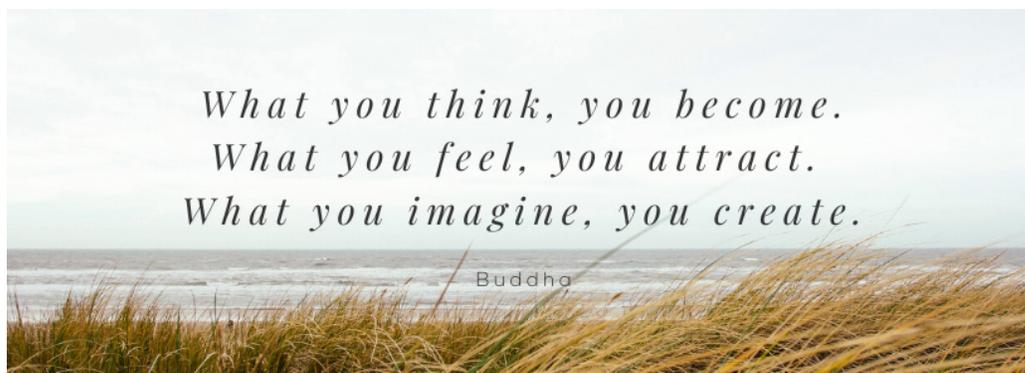
This is where healthy, fair boundaries come into play. But before you start building walls, you need to figure out, specifically, what's working and what's not working for you. "First, they need to look at themselves, look in the mirror," Mendez said. Once you've identified the issue at stake, try to determine why it's bothering you along with what needs to change in order for you and your family's lives to be in sync.

Remember: Boundaries are two-sided, and compromise is huge, Mendez said. You can't just determine what's best for you and call it a day. Talk to your family members about what's going on and try to work together to come up with a solution. Aim to be open and collaborative, not underhanded or dismissive.

Warner-Cohen recommended explaining your reasoning and offering actionable suggestions for how to move forward (i.e. "I can't make it for dinner every Sunday, but once a month might be a more realistic plan — what do you think?").

"The difficult part is negotiating differences in perceived appropriateness of boundaries," Warner-Cohen said, "as there may be incongruences that must be navigated." Some people's sense of boundaries, even the most toxic ones, may be totally integrated with their identity (and culture, like Meghan and Harry's case), so it can take some serious patience and negotiating. Ideally, your family will react in a receptive, responsive way — and you'll be able to establish some boundaries that work for everyone. Ultimately, you gotta do what feels right. Be compassionate, but always go with your gut.

Source: <http://bit.ly/36slrA4>



This Week's Exercise

SEATED LOWER BACK ROTATIONAL STRETCHES



HOW TO DO IT:

FOR THIS STRETCH YOU CAN SIT IN A CHAIR.

1. WHILE KEEPING YOUR FEET FLAT ON THE FLOOR PLACE YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEAD, ELBOWS OUT.
2. TWIST AT THE WAIST TO ONE SIDE AND HOLD FOR 10 SECONDS.
3. REPEAT ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE.
4. PERFORM THIS STRETCH THREE TO FIVE TIMES PER SIDE.

Source: <http://bit.ly/3aLZnnf>

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

VEGETARIAN ENCHILADAS WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND BLACK BEANS



Ingredients

- 1 cup red enchilada sauce, homemade or canned
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 1/2 cups peeled butternut squash, cut 1/2-inch-dice
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 jalapeno, seeded and diced
- 10 oz can Rotel tomatoes with green chilies
- 1 1/2 cups reduced sodium canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup cilantro
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp chili powder
- 1/4 cup water
- 8 medium low-carb whole wheat flour tortillas, I used La Tortilla Factory
- 1 cup reduced-fat shredded Mexican cheese
- 2 tbsp chopped scallions, for garnish
- reduced-fat sour cream, for serving (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Place 1/4 cup enchilada sauce on the bottom of a large baking dish.
3. Heat olive oil over medium-high heat in large skillet. Add onions, garlic, and jalapeno and cook 2-3 minutes until onions become translucent and garlic is fragrant.
4. Add cubed butternut, Rotel tomatoes, black beans, water, cilantro, cumin and chili powder and season with salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the squash is tender, about 30 to 35 minutes.
5. Place about a generous 1/3 cup filling in the center of each tortilla and roll, place on the baking dish seam side down. Repeat with the remaining filling.
6. Top with remaining enchilada sauce and cheese and bake, covered with foil until hot and the cheese is melted, about 10 minutes. Top with scallions and eat with sour cream, if desired.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 enchilada,
Calories: 185kcal
Carbohydrates: 29g
Protein: 13g
Fat: 6g
Cholesterol: 7.5mg
Sodium: 864mg
Fiber: 13g
Sugar: 2g
Blue Smart Points:3
Green Smart Points:3
Purple Smart Points:3
Points +:5

Recipe source:

<http://bit.ly/38Q865Z>