

Reclaiming Your Power When You Are The Black Sheep Of The Family

[BY YUMILAH GOVINDEN](#)

I've always been the black sheep in my family. I've been witness to the "black sheep" effect and damages, be it myself as the oddball or others. Depending on the whims and evolution of our larger family dynamic, I would orbit around being included or not. It depended on many factors – my looks, was I trendy enough, social status, the house and car that goes with it, etc.

I've spent my whole life trying to free myself from the barriers and story-high construction I've built in my mind's architecture so as to fit in and belong. Today, I've gotten over them and all expectations I had of them. Each time I thought I was in and accepted, I would subtly not be invited to certain family occasions or left out of the loop on family news.

When I was younger, I was fat-shamed and was one of the reasons I was taught that I was not going to be a high-achiever. Today, I don't really know what the problem is...maybe because I've found out that I have a voice and I dare to use it. That I'm no longer trying to please or play the dirty game of false pretense.

Today is the day that I've decided that I won't be a victim of these so-called norms and values where there is no

compassion and tolerance. Today, I affirm that I am reclaiming my power as the black sheep and I claim my magnificence as a child of the universe and I have the right to this earth as much as anybody.

I've been confused and baffled many times by the attitude of my relatives and it took me years to accept the harsh reality that family can be toxic. Family can shut down your inner child, if not nearly kill her. Family can make you sick and can lead you to a path of self-destruction.

My coping mechanisms were bulimia and anorexia. I'm not a sociopath, I'm not an attention seeker...I was and will always be the one child in the family who is considered overly sensitive, and maybe my personality, temperament, or interests diverted from the norm. But that doesn't mean that I had to be off the family radar screen.

I believe that no child should ever have that feeling of non-inclusivity and being an outcast. As adults or elder siblings, we all have a responsibility toward the budding human being in our family and it is their responsibility to honour the soul and person as he is. Promoting all-inclusivity within a family dynamic – especially the larger family – is the first step towards empowering a child and helping her learn the ins and outs of self-love and self-care.

Why does human nature dictate that people have to slot into archetypal roles? Can't we just accept each other and encourage individuality? So many adults would not have had to stitch themselves back together from the effects of societal beliefs and family norms they felt as a child.

Until a few months ago, I was still trying to fit in. But then

I realised that I was being delusional and what I was doing was pointless – black sheep today, black sheep always.

I can't change my family and I should not change myself, I shouldn't ever have changed myself for people who have never been ready to see beyond and see me worthy of anything. If they disrespect the child that you were, how can they ever honour the thriving adult that you've become? When you realise that your cousin will throw you in the arms of a sadistic alcoholic or a compulsive liar and that just because you believe that family is sacred and family can do no harm, you will "give it a serious try."

Yes, family can be toxic and family can do irreversible damage if you don't reclaim your power.

I have given the keys of life to people with egoistic agendas and this might be the case for many of you out there. I take responsibility for my ingenuity and for choosing the good when there was none. I am guilty of having loved and trusted with no barriers.

But today, I reclaim my power.

I don't mind being a misfit and I won't beg for anybody's love, compassion, or care toward the human that I am. You can paint me black or whatever colour you want, you can play mind games and bring people down or up as per your insecurities and whims, but know that there is fucking unicorn under every black sheep's skin.

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