

Ask the Guy's Guy: Partner Verses Parents, How to Help Post-Holiday Stress?



By [Robert Manni](#)

Question from Emma B., “Hi Robert. I took my partner home for the holidays and things didn’t go well. My parents and partner did not get along well and I was stuck in the middle. Do you have any suggestions of how to handle the aftermath and to keep the peace between all the people I care about? Thanks!”

Post-holiday tension, how do I keep

the peace?

Hi Emma,

This is a great question about situations that often occur, but are rarely acknowledged as potential relationship deal-breakers. And unfortunately, there are no definitive answers when problems arise, because no two families or situations of this nature are alike. Every family has quirks we have to deal with, but for a relationship to flourish, it's critical that there are positive dynamics between our partners and parents. After all, when in a serious relationship, we're usually in contact with family on a regular basis.

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I've never had an issue with my partner's parents, but I did have a few relationships end due to underlying tensions between me and members of my partner's family. In one case, they drank and got high too often, even for my taste. On top of that, when they drank they had a tendency to become verbally abusive. Another time, my partner's brother pulled me aside at family gathering to threaten me if I did anything wrong to his sister. Unfortunately, at the time my partners became defensive and less than empathetic with me. Over time, both relationships ended. Looking back, I'm glad they did.

Without knowing the specifics of your situation, if your partner is not connecting with your folks, regardless of the reason why, you're caught in the middle which puts a strain on you and your relationships with both your partner and parents. You need to find out what happened. It could be bad chemistry, polarizing political views, cultural differences or your parents' perspective about the relationship. Get your partner's take and also broach the subject with your parents if they have not already talked about it with you. The issue could be the result of an innocent comment, or it could be

something more deep-seated.

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Whatever the case may be, if you value your relationship, get to the bottom of things right away so any negative feelings don't have time to fester. If you do everything in your power to broker peace and things ultimately don't work out between your partner and parents, you'll have a choice to make. At least you'll know you did your best to find a way for things to work out between them.

I hope this helps. Good luck.

Your Guy's Guy

[Robert Manni](#)

If you would like relationship expert Robert Manni to answer your online dating/relationship questions, please email gillian@nvmediainc.com

More about the Guy's Guy:



Robert is the host of Guy's Guy Radio, featured on Blog Talk Radio and available on iTunes, Stitcher, and TuneIn. The weekly podcast features interviews with relationship coaches, entertainers, authors, wellness experts, spiritual teachers, sports personalities, and a weekly "Guys' Guy's Guide" exploring current guy-focused topics.

His novel, THE GUYS' GUY'S GUIDE TO LOVE, praised as the "men's successor to Sex and the City," has been developed into

two feature-length adapted screenplays, a scripted television series (pilot and treatment), and a series of non-scripted Guy's Guy show concepts.

Robert has appeared on broadcast television (NBC's Morning Blend, WPIX11 Morning News) and is a frequent guest across a spectrum of satellite, terrestrial, and web-based radio programs and podcasts, as well as a contributor to Huffington Post, Thought Catalog, Cupid's Pulse, GalTime, is a featured expert on GoodMenProject and YourTango. He was also named a Top Dating Blogger by DatingAdvice.com.

Robert developed the Guy's Guy Platform to help men and women better understand each other and bridge the growing communication gap between the sexes. He continually creates a fresh, robust palette of timely Guy's Guy [content focused on life, love and the pursuit of happiness](#). Whether it's navigating the challenges of dating, relationships, friendship, career or wellness, Robert explores ways to help both men and women be at their best so that everybody wins.