

When In-Laws Cause Stress... Watch This

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SUMMARY

Navigating relationships with in-laws can be challenging, especially when their behavior causes stress for your children. It's important to balance protecting your kids while also fostering respect for their grandparents, recognizing that both roles require effort and understanding.

- *Many parents struggle with in-law relationships, which can be a significant source of stress.*
- *When marrying, you also marry into your spouse's family, necessitating efforts to build and manage those relationships.*
- *The goal should be to help your spouse maintain a healthy relationship with their parents while also ensuring your children have a positive connection with their grandparents.*
- *Setting boundaries is crucial if in-laws exhibit harmful behavior towards your children, but it's also important to teach children respect for their elders.*
- *Avoid competition with your in-laws for your spouse's attention; instead, support their relationship with their parents.*
- *Recognize that all relationships have imperfections; focus on the positive aspects of your in-laws while managing any negative behaviors.*
- *Be proactive in creating a safe environment for your children, which may involve limiting interactions based on in-laws' behavior.*
- *Strive for a balanced approach that fosters respect and understanding, while also protecting your children from any harmful dynamics.*

This is from Mama's YouTube channel 6381 and she left it on my video, How to Handle in-laws, and she says, "What do we do when our in-laws really aren't good with our kids and they end up causing stress and drama with the things that they say or do?" Okay, so first of all, I'll just tell you that you are not alone. I know a lot of people whose main challenge in their, you know, in their parenting or in their family life is their relationship with their in-laws.

And that can be incredibly incredibly stressful. And one of the things we have to remember and we have to teach our children is that when you marry someone, you're not just marrying them. You're marrying into their family. And that's a big deal. You want to learn about their family. You want to hopefully be able to get along with their family. And if it's not a great match, that doesn't mean that you don't have to marry that person. You don't have to run away just because of their family. But you do need to know that it's going to be um a project in your life, right? something that you'll need to deal with, something that you'll need to contend with, relationships that you'll need to work on and build and try to manage. Okay?

Because in-laws are a thing. They're your children's grandparents. They're your spouse's parents, and your spouse cares deeply about them and is very maybe defensive of them or triggered by them or emotionally entangled with them in one way or another, often in very unhealthy ways. Most or at least many adults don't healthfully separate from their parents even in adulthood. So they still, you know, kind of um regress back to being eight years old when they're with their parents again, right?

Suddenly they get triggered or they have tantrums or they, you know, get really shy or or lots of different things that might happen suddenly when they are faced again with their parents. Okay? So let's just let's just really outline what your job is, okay? And what you need what what you can do when it comes to your in-laws. First of all, I'll just say that I think our goal as parents should be to help our children have the best possible relationship with their grandparents that they can have. And I think our goal as spouses, and this is a controversial one, okay, so trigger warning. I think our goal as spouses is to help our spouse have the best possible relationship they can have with their parents. It's to help them look good to their parents, make their parents proud, have as easy and pleasant a relationship with them, um, you know, build as much healthy closeness as they as everyone can tolerate and like uh as adults in adulthood. In other words, it's to strengthen the links between those generations rather than pull them apart. Now, many women, many, many, many of my coaching clients get into the terrible mistake, in fact, of being in competition with your mother-in-law.

Okay? Fighting for your husband's attention with your mother-in-law, saying, you know, he's giving her too much attention, or he cuts her too much slack, or she's here too much, or he cares about her more than me, or he's more protective of her feelings than of mine, or he doesn't stand up for me in front of her. Right? These are the types of complaints that I hear often inside my coaching and that we work on. Um, so let's go back to our role as a parent with regards to the indoors. Your role, okay, is first of all, of course, as a parent, we're there to protect our child. Okay?

If anyone is actually hurting our child emotionally or physically, then we are going to set boundaries. So, let's just say that loud and clear, very obvious. if anyone's in any way being um unsafe, uh aggressive, cruel, okay? Any of those things to our kid, in-law or not in-law, doesn't matter who they are, we will stand up and we will um we will protect our child. Okay? Because in that case, our job is to protect our child, not to preserve the adults comfort, right?

We're not there to be respectful to our in-laws if they're being rude to our child. So, if an in-law grabs a child physically, we're there to grab the child back and to protect them. If an in-law is, you know, talking down or being mean to our children, we're going to step in and say, "Oh, we don't talk to our kids that way. Um, you know, come sweetie, we're going to go. That's not okay for grandma to speak to you that way." Right? if it's something that really needs protection. The problem is that many of us in the modern day world uh are overprotective of children and we don't put any emphasis on the opposite side which is also to teach our children to respect their grandparents. That respecting elders is really important not just as a biblical idea or as a religious idea but as a psychological idea as an idea that strengthens the fabric of society that strengthens our own emotional psyches. We need to be respectful of our elders because all of us need to find our place in the hierarchy in the authority hierarchy. We need to be able to defer to leaders, to authority figures, to elders, right?

That is really really important for kind of that that sanity structure that children need to learn that they aren't in charge. They aren't, you know, wiser, older, more experienced, uh more in charge than their parents or than their grandparents. Okay. So, that's really important. That part at least of our focus needs to shift from protecting our kids from our in-laws to expecting our kids to respect our in-laws, to uh be patient with them, to accept behaviors from them that maybe are a bit different than ours. Maybe they're a bit sharper. Maybe they're a bit moodier. Maybe they're a bit less patient. Maybe they're a bit more direct. Maybe they feed them more candy or show them more TV than you would like. Right? But a huge and important value would be to teach our children that they can handle different relationships. They can handle people who are different than what they're used to and they should and must be respectful to their in-dos. With all of that said, okay, if they aren't good with your kids in your own words, they cause stress and drama with everything they say and do, then you need to parent the room. Okay, if someone becomes disregulated, if they become negative or dramatic, then you can step in immediately. Okay? You can redirect. You can pause. You can remove the child. You can say, "Okay, we're done here." You can decide that we don't come to your house anymore. We only meet at the zoo or at the playground or at our house.

You can decide that we don't meet, you know, around big stressful family holidays anymore, but we re meet just during the year or during the week. You can decide that you will not leave your child alone with the grandparents that you're always going to be there. Uh you can decide really whatever you want. Okay? They can be physically present with your children in accordance to your boundaries, rules, and decisions. I just urge you not to be overzealous, not to be disrespectful, not to make your child a little king and their grandparents, their minions who just have to bow down and jump through hoops to get access to their grandchild. Remember that respecting elders and being in a culture of more deference and more um expectations on children to moderate their behaviors to fit in with adults is not a bad thing, right? We want them to learn those things for their own good.

And so I guess I'm I'm giving you a doublepronged, you know, approach here. On the one hand, build up the relationship with them, respect them, you know, try to really soften yourself to be a good daughter-in-law. You, you know, sometimes I've said to myself like, Avital, you just have to be the best Avital you can be, the best daughter-in-law, the best sister or the best friend. Like be the best that you can be. Do the things that you think are right and leave the rest up to them.

Okay? So you buy the gifts and give the compliments and show up to the things and try to make your husband shine for them and try to make them feel comfortable and be hospitable and be kind and be patient with them. You do your part. But then if they're still toxic and aggressive towards your children, then you step in with boundaries and clarity and you say, "Oh, sorry. We can't do that. We don't use, you know, physical uh parenting around here or, you know, those tasks, those topics are off uh off um off the table.

We're not discussing them, right? That kind of thing. Okay? You can say, "If you undermine my child, if you shame them, if you criticize them, the visit ends." Okay? Simple, neutral, firm. Remember, your leverage here is the children because they come home with you. So, you decide how much access your ch your uh grandparents have. and they only have access in accordance to their behavior. Right? If they behave in, you know, loving,

caring, polite ways, they'll get full access. And if they behave in ways that you deem toxic, then that access will be very much limited.

Um, and with that, I I I I still want to underscore the importance of trying to see the good in them, trying to bring out the good in them, trying to be the the higher, you know, trying to connect to your higher self, right? where you're more patient, more giving, more confident in your relationship with your partner, that you can just let him have his relationship with his parents, that it doesn't um threaten you in any way. You know that you're his chosen woman and that these are his parents and he needs to love them and see them and let them enjoy their grandkids. Um, and and you know, I say all this and it sounds a little bit like I'm I'm speaking out of both sides of my mouth because I don't know these people. I don't know, you know, what kind of things they're doing. Sometimes people say, "Oh, my in-laws are so toxic and abusive." And they mean that they give my kids candy or they let them watch TV or they buy them too much junk from AliExpress or whatever, you know, and sometimes people say that and they mean that they, you know, are grabbing them or forcing them to sit on their laps or telling them off or yelling at them or putting them in the corner or doing all sorts of scary things. So, there's a wide range of behaviors that people perceive as stressful and dramatic with in-laws. And I would just say do your best not to turn the dial up on stress, to deescalate the drama, to not take things personally, to not heighten and elevate and always highlight and push uh push all the BUTTONS OF DRAMA. LIKE, you don't need like red alerts for everything that they do. Maybe it's just their generation.

Maybe it's just their culture, maybe it's just their personality. Maybe you can forgive them some of their history. Maybe they've been through a lot in their life and they're doing their best. Maybe, okay, it's just once a month, it's not a big deal. Oh, okay. So, on Christmas, whatever. Like, what you could let slide, let slide. But things that you can't let slide, set boundaries on. Just do so graciously. Do so gracefully, right? Don't be that difficult daughter-in-law who is kind of drama hungry who's separating the grandparents from the grandkids because of benign things like life is too short for that.

I promise you no one's perfect including you. Okay, remember when you say ours aren't good with our kids. They cause stress and drama. What do what do I do? I just want to remind you like I don't know about you but I'm sometimes not good with my kids. I sometimes cause stress and drama, right? Okay? Because we're we're humans. We're imperfect. I, you know, I cause stress and drama with my kids. I yell at them. I I threaten. I bribe. I I I neglect. I ignore. I do all sorts of things that if my in-laws were doing them, I'd be like I'd be outraged, right? Like, it's terrible. You can't do that. And then I have to just eat a little bit of humble pie and remind myself that I do those things, too. And so, the the relationship is important. And I'll just end there and say we're quick to let go of relationships in the modern day and age. I saw some horrible stat recently.

I actually forget what the stat was, but a huge percentage of Americans have let go of family members over political differences. Okay, I don't know about you, but I come from a country where that's not not acceptable. You don't leave the people you love just because you have political disagreements, for example. And I think that this is becoming more and more common that people are uh judging uh relationships based on rather superficial or minor or benign elements of the relationship. No grandparent or in-law is wow amazing perfect all the time exactly made to measure what you wanted because they're human beings but neither are you neither is your

husband neither will your children be. And I think we all have to learn to live with more imperfections in the people that we love and workarounds and manage them. You know what I mean?

Manage those relationships in a way that they can thrive, not get stuck to our guns and our, you know, our ideology and our belief system. Like I've seen this happen with gentle parenting for example, right? Where people are like saying good boy or good job is terrible. Right now, okay, yeah, there's some research that it's not the best way of encouraging a child, but like your grandparents can say good job. Nothing will happen. They're fine. Like just be grateful that you have grandparents in your children's lives who want to be with them. Not everybody has that, right? And so again, I'm not speaking specifically to you, Mama's YouTube channel 6381, because I don't know who your in-laws are, but I'm answering this question in a more broad term where I think we've got to make a lot more room for imperfection in the people that we love. We've got to make a lot more room for the fact that people have differences of opinion, differences of history, different generations, different upbringing, different cultures. And let's try and pick apart the good rather than the bad, right?

Highlight the good. Oh, but they did want to spend time with them, but he did read them a book. I hate the gift that she got him, but she got him a gift. And that's something to be grateful for. That's something to highlight and be sweet about, right, Don Bim? Hello. I really love your consistent radical middle position. It's refreshing to see someone encouraging humans to be tolerant and accepting of others. Yes. Well, thank you. That is very much uh what I believe and what I will continue to encourage.