

21 simple ways ... To Be a Great Family



What does it take to be a great family, where members love and support each other? Each family has their own unique struggles, but what makes them stronger are the ways in which they overcome burdens and celebrate the joys -- together. Use these 21 tips to bring every member of your family closer.

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- 1 Honor your elders.** Our elders have collected a lifetime of experiences, both good and bad. Learn from their mistakes and cherish their wisdom. Show them your gratitude and you will reap the rewards.
- 2. Engage in constant dialog.** Communication is key when it comes to family. Converse often to avoid any mix-ups or family feuds. Talk about topics both big and small. And remember, you don't always have to agree.
- 3. Teach young kids early.** Establish family dynamics and ground rules while children are young.
- 4. Have respect for grandparents.** Ask them to share their stories and tell your family history to give children a better understanding.
- 5. Give gifts – both physical and emotional.** Surprise a family member with a small gift that makes you think of them, or give the gift of patience or humor.
- 6. Be honest.** When a confrontation is needed, be sure to do it in a respectful, level-headed way.
- 7. Address bumps in the road.** If your family is experiencing tough times, hold a family meeting to clear the air and talk about it.
- 8. Children have a voice, too.** It's important to remember that grown children are adults with a unique voice, opinion and perspective.
- 9. Talk about life changes.** Big changes ahead? Ask your family for support and the insights they can offer from their own experiences.
- 10. Eat together.** Break bread together regularly to foster togetherness and let you catch up on one another's lives.
- 11. Appreciate parents.** Remember that parents have one of the most difficult jobs out there.

- 12. Accepting different perspectives.** You may never see eye to eye with a member of your family. Accept this and embrace their feedback.
- 13. Ask one another tough questions.** Family members need to rely on one another to probe the hard questions and get down to the important issues in life.
- 14. Plan activities.** Try to schedule events – like family 5K runs, or a coffee shop outing – to ensure that you stay connected.
- 15. Create something together.** Bond by creating something beautiful for your home or yourselves. Try gardening or decorating for a party.
- 16. Offer supportive words.** Even if you don't agree with a family member, make sure your words are supportive and constructive, never hurtful.
- 17. Take time for yourself.** In order to be a positive, loving member of every family, it's important that we all take some "me" time.
- 18. Act as a caregiver.** If a parent, child or sibling is in need, offer to care for them.
- 19. Help out with daily tasks.** Even the smallest things, like putting away dishes, show that you are committed to your family's well-being.
- 20. Cherish memories.** Be sure to keep old photos and home movies on hand so that you can take a walk down memory lane every once in a while.

21 Be a shoulder to lean on. The best thing about families is that they can be a phenomenal support system. Be sure to support, console and encourage family members in good times and bad.