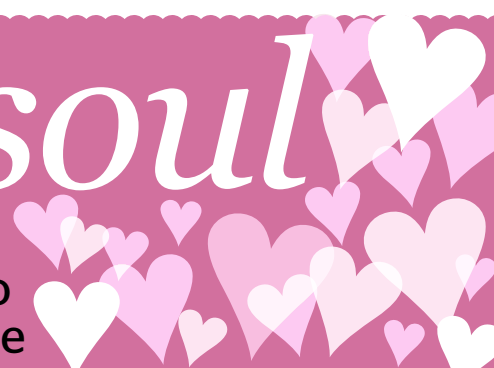




Heart & soul

Cate Mackenzie, our resident love coach, helps readers open their hearts to relationships they never thought possible



Heal family rifts

This month, Cate reveals how we can shift tricky dynamics within our closest relationships

Family and close relationships can be difficult, and this could be down to anything from you feeling your mum babies you to resenting your dad's put-downs. When you engage in a journey of healing family rifts, you have the potential to clear some of these patterns of behaviour and create a new experience. Remember – when we resent someone, the person we harm most is ourselves, as we're the one harbouring toxic negative feelings. As you defuse this energy, you will become calmer, and this could help the relationship in surprising ways. Even if the other person doesn't want to change, they may well meet you in a gentler way, now or in the future.

A friend of mine was often ridiculed in family gatherings and accused of being 'the sensitive one', as though this was a negative trait. As a result, she wanted to avoid her family and often cancelled meeting up with them en masse.

The relationship between her and her family deteriorated to the extent that she decided she was no longer going to be the family scapegoat, and steered clear of all family gatherings. Instead, she prayed for healing in her family, visualised clearing the blocks and decided to meet up with them on a one-to-one basis.

By doing this, she discovered that the other family members were as sensitive as she was and

had their own insecurities, but hadn't felt able to share this within the family group. By asking for one-on-one meetings, each family member felt important and loved, and appreciated in their own right. By creating a new way of interacting with her family, my friend began to feel their

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support and that they were a unit. She no longer felt on the outside any more, and in fact she felt important and loved.

DEFUSE FAMILY FALLOUTS

Trying all or a few of the tips below should have a positive effect on your relationships.

- **Acknowledge the problem**
Think of someone you would like to heal your relationship with, and pay some attention to how you're thinking of the person or reacting to them. Have you got yourself into a rut where you're expecting the worst, or only capable of feeling angry or resentful? Sometimes it is vital to distance ourselves from certain people, but you can still heal the energy between you by reframing how you regard them.
- **Rebalance your energy**
Walk barefoot in nature to ground your energy, and then release any

stress and strains into the earth by imagining yourself surrounded in golden light. Are you worn out? Do you need more fun and relaxation? Make a list of fun things to do and try, and do at least three a week.

- **Step into their shoes**
What specific criticism are you directing at the person you've fallen out with? Could this criticism possibly apply to you, too? You might be thinking that someone else is too impatient and needs to relax, but do you need to do the same? Take a little time to see what you admire and appreciate about this person, and let that image and idea of them grow.

- **Clear the blocks**
Visualise a wall between you and the person you're not getting along with, and see it dissolving before you to allow a beautiful, shining

version of this person to appear. Breathe this image into your heart and notice what you experience as you see them with love. Can you now forgive this person? Create an altar in your home with pieces of rose quartz for unconditional love and a photo of this person. Every day, send them love as you look at their photo. Ask your angels and the other person's angels to communicate with you so they can also lend their healing.

- **Meet one-on-one**
Families often meet in a group, which can make it hard to have meaningful conversations with individual members. Meet relatives on their own and in a neutral space, like a cafe. Really listen to them and their needs, and ask what support they'd like from you. Make sure this feels like you're connecting in a way that feels good for both of you, which means you can ask how they are without feeling you have to save them, or have them save you. ■



WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Cate Mackenzie is a love coach and couples counsellor with more than 20 years' experience. For more information about her work, visit catemackenzie.com