

# Multigenerational and multilingual family

People



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## Multigenerational and Multilingual Family

I am a born Middle Eastern who is really proud of my culture even though it seems like it clashes with the American culture which is more liberal. I have been raised by my grandmother and parents and hence our family is a multigenerational one. My grandmother is multilingual based on her different cultural backgrounds and heritage. She was born in Venezuela which makes her a Venezuelan by birth but was raised in Palestine. This makes us of mixed heritage and hence the reason for simply calling ourselves Middle easterners. My culture is very strict about grandparents raising their grandchildren even though their parents are still alive.

The fact that my family is a multigenerational one is a cause for arguments over modern and traditional ideas. The argument is between the older generation which comprises of my grandmother and my parents and my siblings and I which are the young generation. The older generation's mentality and ideas are tailored towards traditional issues which used to take place long time ago. With the younger generation however, the ideas are much more liberal and geared towards the modernity such as the internet age among others.

Other than the multigenerational era, the other unique thing about my family is the fact that every decision I make affects the rest of the family one way or another. The other reason is that according to the Arab culture, male members of the family despite matter their age are highly regarded and their opinion valued by the whole family. This is very different from the American family where decisions do not necessarily affect the whole family but only a few pertinent members.

My culture is also unique in the fact that sons take after their parents and

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follow directly in their footsteps when it comes to career paths as well as family decisions and choices. This led to a bit of a fall out with my father. He wanted me to follow these cultural rules and join the family business and get to run it entirely on my own someday when he retires. I however wanted to develop my own roots and become my own individual who would not happen with me joining the family business and my father shadowing me. I therefore decided to be my own individual by pursuing a career in medicine which I had to move away from home to America to pursue.

The fact that my culture and particularly my family is very different from what happens in America makes me appreciate them even more than I did before. The one thing however that I have vowed to strictly following the footsteps of my culture is that of grandparents living together with their children and grandchildren. This leads to passing of cultural traits from one generation to the other leaving little room for generational gaps and culture disintegration which is the reality in the US.

Living in America and having to learn and adapt to new cultures as well as all the modernity it offers often creates a clash in my decision making. This is mainly from the fact that I have only grown up to be aware of the Middle Eastern culture. However, I appreciate this diversity and do not regard it as a problem because at the end of it all, I am able to become my own individual and make my own independent decisions as well as choose my own path.