



come tribe
— with me —

A FREE GUIDE

Protecting Your Peace

*around difficult family,
without cutting everyone off*

with Dom · Identity & Emotional Healing Coach

For everyone who has been told “but they’re family” one too many times.

BEFORE WE BEGIN

A note from Dom

Hello lovely, I'm so glad this guide found you.

If you're here, I'd guess you love your family and they exhaust you. You've probably spent years bouncing between two options that both feel wrong: keep the peace and lose yourself, or cut everyone off and lose them.

This guide is about the third option almost nobody talks about. Staying connected on your terms. Protecting your peace without a dramatic estrangement, without endless confrontations, and without abandoning yourself at the door of every family gathering.

Nothing in these pages requires anyone else to change, apologise, or even notice. That's the point. This is work that happens in you, which means nobody can take it from you.

*Your hurt is allowed to matter,
even when the person causing it shares your surname.*

Take this slowly. Try one thing before the next family event, not all of it at once. And be gentle with yourself, these patterns took decades to form. They don't undo in a weekend.

With love, Dom

You were only ever shown two doors

Most of us were taught there are two ways to handle difficult family. Door one: put up with it, smile, keep the peace. Door two: walk away completely and carry the guilt forever.

But contact isn't a switch, it's a dial. And you're allowed to turn it.

1

Full contact

Open access to you, your time, your emotions. What most of us run on by default.

2

Boundaried contact

Same relationship, new rules. Certain topics are closed, certain behaviour ends the visit.

3

Low contact

Shorter visits, less frequency, less sharing. Present for what matters, protected the rest of the time.

4

Structured contact

You only meet in ways that work: public places, time limits, with other people around, never alone.

5

No contact

A last resort for your safety and sanity, not a punishment. Some relationships only allow this.

Moving down this dial is not failure. It's information: this is the amount of access this person can be trusted with right now.

THE TECHNIQUE

The Grey Rock method

Difficult and narcissistic family members feed on reaction. Your hurt, your defensiveness, your explaining, it's all fuel. Grey rock means becoming as interesting as a grey rock: polite, brief, and emotionally unavailable. No fuel, no fire.



Keep answers short and boring

"Fine, thanks." "Not much." "Mm, maybe." No details, no stories, no updates they can use later.



Don't feed them emotion

No visible hurt, no defending, no justifying. React like they've commented on the weather.



Stay neutral in face and voice

Flat, pleasant, unbothered. You're not cold, you're just... elsewhere. Think polite stranger at a bus stop.



Have exit lines ready

"I'll leave you to it." "I said I'd help in the kitchen." "We're heading off, early start tomorrow."

Two things to know

Grey rock is protective armour for people who've shown you they'll use what you share. It's not for healthy relationships, and it's not forever. And if someone in your family is genuinely unsafe, your safety comes before any technique. Please reach out to people who can help.

WORD FOR WORD

Scripts for the hard moments

You don't need to explain, defend or win. A boundary said calmly, once, and then held, is worth more than an hour of justifying. Steal these:

WHEN THEY RAISE THE TOPIC YOU'VE CLOSED

"I'm not discussing that today. So, how's the garden coming along?"

WHEN THE GUILT TRIP STARTS

"I know it's not what you wanted to hear. It's still what works for us."

WHEN YOU'RE TOLD "BUT THEY'RE FAMILY"

"That's exactly why it hurts, and exactly why I need these boundaries."

WHEN THEY PUSH YOU TO STAY LONGER

"We're leaving at four, we'd love to make the most of you until then."

WHEN THEY CRITICISE YOUR CHOICES

"I'm not looking for input on this one, but thank you."

WHEN YOU'RE DONE WITH THE CONVERSATION

"Let's leave it there. I'd rather enjoy today than fall out over this."

Say it once. Then change the subject, move seats, or top up the teas. The boundary is in what you do next, not in how well you argued it.

The family gathering plan

Your body starts bracing days before you see them, that's not weakness, it's memory. So we plan for your nervous system the way you'd plan the food.



Before

- Decide your limits in advance: arrival time, leaving time, closed topics
- Tell someone your plan so it's real, or text it to yourself
- Slow exhale breathing in the car before you walk in: in for 4, out for 8, six times
- Remind yourself: "I'm an adult visiting, not a child who lives here"



During

- Take breaks: the bathroom, the kettle, a walk with the kids, checking on the car
- Feel your feet on the floor when it gets tense, cold water on your wrists helps too
- Grey rock the baiting, warmth for everyone else
- Leave when you said you would, even if it's going fine



After

- Discharge the tension: a walk, a shake-out, loud music in the car, a proper cry
- Debrief with one safe person, then close the topic, no all-week replays
- Notice what worked and what you'd change, that's data for next time
- Do one kind thing for yourself the same day, you've done something hard

READ WHEN YOU'RE WOBBLING

Permission slips

Nobody is coming to officially approve your boundaries. So consider this your permission, from someone who gets it:

♡ You're allowed to love someone from a distance.

♡ You're allowed to leave early, arrive late, or say no to the invitation entirely.

♡ You're allowed to protect your children from dynamics you weren't protected from.

♡ You're allowed to stop explaining decisions you've already made.

♡ You're allowed to be the "difficult one" in a family where easy meant silent.

♡ You're allowed to grieve people who are still alive.

♡ You're allowed to have a lovely life they know very little about.

And one more: you're allowed to need more support than a PDF. That's not failure, that's being human.



This is where your healing starts, *not where it ends*

If this guide stirred something in you, that's not a problem to fix, it's a door opening. Here's how I can walk with you through it:



My private community

A safe, women-only space full of like-minded women navigating difficult family, with live calls and real support between them.



The Foundations Course

My C.T.W.M Method, six modules taking you from awareness to a whole new relationship with yourself. Inside the community, for women only.



Work with me 1:1

Open to everyone. Book a free discovery call: no pressure, no script, just a conversation to see if we're the right fit.



Scan to find the community, the course and my calendar,
all at the link in my bio · @cometribewithme