

Understanding your role as the "black sheep" of the family

The black sheep unconsciously becomes the family's source of blame. They help remove other family members from facing things they want to avoid. The clinical term is the identified patient.

This role is extremely common and prolific in society.

Many people feel intense shame and rejection because they're seen as the "problem" for wanting to be healthier, to have boundaries, or to not going along with dysfunctional dynamics.

If you're the black sheep, this is your encouragement to keep going. To keep healing, and to keep breaking generational cycles.

The healthiest person in a toxic family system causes the most friction.

They become the black sheep.

Why this is a good sign:

In dysfunctional family systems, each member plays a role.

There are peacemakers, enablers, and the person who over-functions.

These roles help keep the family from acknowledging deeper issues or emotions.

When a person awakens in this family system, they seek (and speak) the truth.

They might bring up unresolved issues, want to have uncomfortable conversations, or acknowledge things other family members want to deny.

The black sheep will be labeled as:

- "Angry" or "bitter"
- A grudge holder
- Someone with memory issues ("that never happened", "you're remembering wrong")
- Someone "just looking" for problems

- Dramatic or too sensitive

In an emotionally healthy family, issues are directly dealt with.

There's accountability, repair (apologies), and cooperation.

In dysfunctional family systems, there's limited coping skills and limited communication skills.

The frustration and pain from conflict isn't dealt with, instead it's projected onto a person within the family unit.

This projection allows family members who can't cope with their own conflicted emotions to deflect them, or place them outside of themselves in order to cope and continue with life as they know it.

Being the black sheep is a deeply painful experience. It brings up our primal wounds of being rejected from our "tribe." It can make us feel unloved because instead of being heard or seen, we become the problem.

The black sheep causes issues not because of something they did, but because of something they represent. They represent truth and reality in a family that feels comfortable keeping things in the dark.

They're healing as they grieve the reality that they may not be understood.

But they will break the cycle...

~ Dr. Nicole LePera