

5 COMMON MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES FOR CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS & WHAT HEALING CAN LOOK LIKE



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'Pursuing healing and prioritising your mental health is not a rejection of your parents, community or culture. Rather, it has positive ripple effects throughout your networks.'

Success was an expectation, not a goal, so you may stop yourself from pursuing something you enjoy because it is seen as "unconventional" and it feels safer to seek "recognisable" achievement instead.

Healing can look like...

- Recognising your desires and putting in the work to live out your own timeline, not one that may be expected of you.
- Trusting yourself to make choices and live a life you're proud of.

You may have experienced praise for being self-sacrificial for your loved ones, and feel like your worthiness in relationships is tied to how you can be of service.

Healing can look like...

- Separating your self-worth from your productivity or usefulness to others, and practicing boundary setting.
- Advocating for your needs in all of your relationships.

You may invalidate your own problems and mental health concerns as they may seem trivial or privileged compared to experiences your parents went through. So you may struggle with going to your parents for advice or seeking professional mental health care – even though you deserve it!

Healing can look like...

- Learning that it's okay to speak up, take space, and self-advocate.
- Practicing honestly communicating what you feel.

You may not have been modelled or taught that walking away or taking a break can be acts of strength, so you may feel like you always need to "power through" even when it's unhealthy or you're unhappy.

Healing can look like...

- Seeking out community with others who share your experiences. And cutting out extremely toxic relationships.
- Recognising what burnout looks like for you, and what you can do for self-care.

You may both appreciate that your parents did the best they can, but also wish they did some things differently. As you grow up, you may grieve what never was and feel burdened to give yourself things you did not necessarily get from them.

Healing can look like...

- Accepting that it is valid to feel angry and hurt, BUT still love those who anger and hurt you.
- Forgiving your parents and understanding they did not have the resources we do.