

# Do You Have A Brother Or Sister? Remember National Siblings Day

Dr. Karen Gail Lewis

It's that time of year again. We have gotten through the holidays, the January and February Blues, and St. Paddy's Day. What's next? National Siblings Day. You may be shaking your head complaining, "Not another Hallmark gimmick." Well, this day was not established by Hallmark, yet they may eventually catch on.

Think about this. We have a day for fathers and mothers and grandparents. We have a day to celebrate the birthdays of presidents. But, honestly, ask yourself, who have you spent more hours of your life with: your parents, grandparents, President Washington? You may not have thought of this, but (if you are within four years of age with a sibling), you probably spent more hours with your brother or sister than with either of your parents. Did you share a room, fight over toys, walk to school together, swap clothes? Did you fight with or scheme with or tickle a sibling?

Once you are grown, you tend to forget the enormous amount of time you were involved with your siblings and the enormous amount of influence (positive or negative) they had on you.

You are grown now and you may have a good or horrible (or anywhere in between) relationship with them. Childhood is so far away; those old memories may be lost in your current relationship with them.

Despite the passing of years, here's a surprise: despite how much all of you have grown and changed, through an unconscious process, the feelings you had way back when (positive and negative) are frozen inside you; during some encounters with them today, you still see that young brother or sister being mean to you or adoring you.

I have named that unconscious process "frozen image." And, not only do you still see your siblings through your young-self

eyes, there's a good chance your siblings' influence has affected how you relate to your love partner. And, through the unconscious absorption of those old feelings, you may be packing them up in your lunchbox as you head off to work, finding behaviors (or even facial expressions) of co-workers or bosses that pull you back to those old childhood frozen images.

What does all this have to do with National Sibling Day? As long as they are so influential in your life (consciously or not), it's important to honor them.

Now, on a more concrete basis, you may just like your brother or sister, so this is a special day. Check out their link to see how many states (and presidents) have proclaimed April 10 as National Sibling Day, and to learn how the day was established. Also, see how people with siblings with special needs are celebrating this day.

And for those who have experienced the death of a sibling, National Sibling Day is an opportunity to honor that person – which is what got the originator of National Siblings Day going in the first place – when both of her siblings died.

Don't be left behind, let your siblings know how you feel (or even how you wish you could feel) about them.

Dr. Karen Gail Lewis has been a marriage and family therapist for over 40 years with an expertise in adult siblings. She is author of numerous [books on relationships](#) – for siblings, marriage, singles, and friendships. Since 1996, she has run [Unique Retreats for Women](#) and does weekend retreats for adult siblings. She has offices in Washington, DC area and Cincinnati, Ohio. She is also available for phone and skype consultations.

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