

Lucy decided to take action and approached Tom when they were alone during the next family \_\_\_\_\_. Instead of the usual "Everything is great!", she gently told him, "I can see you're going through a \_\_\_\_\_ time, and it's completely okay not to be okay." For Tom, these words were a massive relief. He broke down in tears and finally shared the pressure he felt from always having to fake a smile.

Knowing they needed to \_\_\_\_\_ the situation carefully, Lucy and Tom decided to talk to the parents during a quiet evening. Without blaming anyone, Lucy explained how the "always be happy" rule was making Tom feel \_\_\_\_\_ whenever he was sad or stressed.

The parents were shocked at first because they only wanted the best for their children. However, seeing Tom's tears made them realize that their "culture of absolute positivity" was actually hurting him. His father hugged him tightly and \_\_\_\_\_ for missing his pain, while his mother admitted that she, too, often hid her own stress behind a forced smile.

Over time, these positive changes transformed the entire extended Smiths family, including the grandparents, stepfamily, and \_\_\_\_\_ :

- **A new family rule:** Instead of saying, "Just be happy!", the family adopted a new motto: "I am here for you, \_\_\_\_\_ what you feel."
- **Evenings of honesty:** During Sunday dinners, the Smiths began sharing not just their wins, but also their failures, fears, and exhausted days.
- **True emotional support:** When a cousin or an uncle felt down, no one forced them to cheer up \_\_\_\_\_ anymore. The family learned to just listen and \_\_\_\_\_ their feelings.

Thanks to Lucy's courage and Tom's honesty, toxic positivity was replaced by true empathy. The Smith family culture shifted, making their connections much deeper and more resilient. They finally became a stronger, more honest family where everyone felt \_\_\_\_\_ for who they truly were.