

Help! My Ancestors Were Related To Each Other!

Diahan Southard

Your DNA Guide

Author of *Your DNA Guide—the Book*

Creator of Your DNA Guide—the Academy

Multiple Relationships, Pedigree Collapse, and Endogamy

Let's start off by understanding these three terms and how we sometimes use them interchangeably, but we shouldn't.

Multiple Relationships - This is the simplest to understand as it just means that you have more than one relationship to someone else. A good example of this is when brothers marry sisters. Their children are actually related to each other in two ways: they are first cousins through their mothers and first cousins through their fathers.

Pedigree Collapse - This happens when you have the same ancestral couple in more than one place in your family tree. Instead of your tree doubling the number of ancestors at every generation, you have fewer unique ancestors than expected.

Endogamy - The practice of marrying within the same location or culture for many generations. Often people with endogamy have elements of pedigree collapse and multiple relationships within their trees, too.

Dig in a little deeper: [Endogamy v. Pedigree Collapse](#)

The Diagnosis

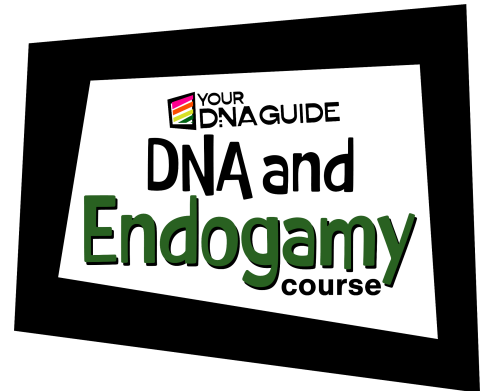
How do you know if you have one or more of these scenarios in your tree? Well, sometimes the DNA can provide clues as to this diagnosis. For example, if you share more DNA than expected with a known cousin, that may be a result of multiple relationships. Or, if you are trying to separate your DNA matches into groups, but there is too much overlap, then you likely have pedigree collapse and/or endogamy.

Using DNA results in these situations

Traditional DNA analysis techniques don't always work when you have one of these situations in your family tree. Without overcomplicating things, you can make significant progress by taking each match one at a time and evaluating if they are a Best Match, and therefore worth your

research time. As I teach in my [DNA and Endogamy Course](#), one of the most telling characteristics of a Best Match is the size of their longest segment. Spending time researching those with the longest segments will help your research to pay off.

Endogamy on your family tree means that working with your DNA matches can be CHALLENGING! That's why we created the Endogamy & DNA Course. Developed and tested by an expert DNA team, this unique Course teaches straightforward strategies for addressing endogamy more productively.



Our next Endogamy & DNA Course session runs April 17 – May 8, 2023. The cost is just \$129 USD. [Learn more and enroll in Endogamy & DNA.](#)

This Course is for anyone who has identified (or strongly suspects) the presence of endogamy on a family tree. For the 3 weeks of interactive instructive, plan to spend about 2 hours per week on the Course. (Some people may work more quickly than others, and some may want to dive deeper. That part is up to you.) You'll experience:

- 3 weeks of self-paced, online instruction and practice using tools at your DNA testing companies, without the need for complicated segment analysis or spreadsheets
- Weekly pre-recorded video tutorials, additional resources, homework, quizzes, polls, and a moderated discussion board
- A final live Q&A session that will be recorded and made available with your Course materials
- Full-length, professionally-designed workbook with classwork, homework, and research log (PDF format)
- Homework that provides hands-on experience with real-life case studies
- Enrollment in a class cohort that allows students to interact with one another at their preferred level

[Learn more and enroll in the Endogamy & DNA Course by Your DNA Guide.](#)