



# Relations with Parents Statements

Marc Szydlak

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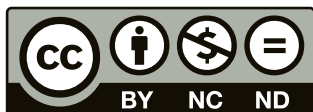
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# Happy families, conflicted generations

## Overview

What do adults say about their parents? What emotions do they have? What stories do they tell? This is the fourth volume of the SwissGen project. The study has investigated the relationships of adult daughters and sons with their mothers and fathers. The book at hand documents the personal statements of these adults. They confirm and illustrate the findings of the previous books.

The first two books are identical. They represent the analysis volumes in English and German (“Generations between Context and Cohesion” / “Generationen zwischen Konflikt und Zusammenhalt”). These volumes describe and analyse the main features of the relationship between adults and their parents. What role do tensions and conflicts play? How strong are cohesion and support? What promotes conflict and cohesion? The study examines current relationships with living parents and past ties to mothers and fathers who have passed away. The first part of the analysis volumes is about ambivalence, stress, quarrel and distance. These include mixed and changing feelings, worries and burdens, tension and conflict, indifference and estrangement. The second part deals with attachment, space, time and money. This comprises emotional closeness and contact, coresidence and proximity, help and care, current transfers and inheritances.

The third book is the data volume (“Relations with Parents: Questions and Results”). It provides basic information on the research project and documents all questions and answers of the survey. This includes the numbers on which the figures in the analysis volumes are based. The data volume represents the quantitative addition to the analysis volumes by providing over 150 summarised tables, which furthermore distinguish between education, finances, age, gender, migration and region. The authors of both the analysis volumes and the data volume are Ronny König, Bettina Isengard, Klaus Haberkern, Christoph Zangger, Tamara Bosshardt and Marc Szydlík.

The book at hand is the qualitative complement to the analysis volumes. The respondents reflect their relationships with their parents in their own words. They were free to answer with a single word or with long elaborations of their whole family history and their subsequent emotions. The study par-



ticipants could talk about their parents in general, about specific situations with their mother and father, or they could just concentrate on one parent. The open-ended question in the four languages of the study was worded as follows:

“Would you like to say anything else about the relationship with your parents?”

„Möchten Sie noch etwas über die Beziehung zu Ihren Eltern sagen?“

« Souhaitez-vous ajouter autre chose sur la relation avec vos parents ? »

“Vorrebbe aggiungere qualcosa sul rapporto con i Suoi genitori?”

*SwissGen* is a representative survey of adults in Switzerland. All in all, a total of 10,623 adults between 18 and 100 years of age participated in the study. The survey was conducted between September 2018 and February 2019. Half of the respondents filled out the paper questionnaires, whereas the other half responded online. The latter were finally asked the open-ended question. Detailed information about the study, including topics, questions, design, respondents, modes, sampling, testing, collecting, responding, correcting, weighting and cases, is provided in the data volume.

Nearly a third of the online respondents gave an answer to this final question. Some of these 1,713 answers consisted of just one word, whereas other daughters and sons gave long, elaborate responses. Some respondents focused on their mother or father, whereas others provided joint information about their parents. However, a few replies did not refer to the question, and some just said “No”, indicating that they had nothing more to say about their parents beyond the many previous quantitative generational questions. These answers are not reported here. This results in 1,644 statements from adults considering the relationship with their parents. To protect the respondents and ensure anonymity, in some cases personal information has been omitted or generalised, such as names, dates, vocations, locations or the exact number of siblings.

One hundred of these statements have already been presented (partly shortened) in the second chapter of the analysis volumes. These statements were ordered according to four generational types: cohesion, distance, conflict and ambivalence (25 quotes for each type, respectively). Cohesion involves close attachment without notable conflict. It is the most frequent generational type, and most of the responses to the open-ended question also fall into this category. Ambivalence is marked by the simultaneous occurrence of conflicts and closeness. This is the rarest of the four types. Conflict is characterised by considerable quarrel between adults and their parents, accompanied by lim-

ited attachment. Conflictual relationships occur more often than ambivalent ones, but less often than those characterized by distance – and in particular cohesion. Distanced relationships are neither close nor conflictual. There is no special attachment, but also no considerable conflict. This is the second largest group.

The volume at hand provides the statements given about parents. The quotes do not offer representative information – this is provided in the previous books. Instead, the statements represent valuable examples of intergenerational relationships. In general, the book has several goals: documentation, illustration, evaluation, complementation, inspiration and reflection.

*Documentation.* The first goal is to document the statements, since otherwise the information provided by those many respondents would have simply been lost. Instead, the assessments and firsthand stories of the adults about themselves, their parents and their joint lives have now been published in this book.

*Illustration.* The qualitative statements amend and illustrate the quantitative findings of the previous books. In doing so, the statements also bring to life the fact that the percentages and coefficients are based on many individuals and their families.

*Evaluation.* The statements may sometimes indicate the limits of quantitative empirical social research. Figures and tables can summarize representative information on entire populations and population groups, to the point, so to speak. However, the underlying stories may partly be lost in the process. For example, it is very helpful to represent the closeness of the relationship in terms of five values, from “very close” to “close”, “medium” and “not very close” to “not close at all”. This provides a general picture of emotional cohesion amongst adult family generations. Yet, this procedure may underestimate the diversity and complexity of intergenerational relationships. Some quantitative results may rather provide a summary of underlying, partly even undetected diversity.

*Complementation.* The statements may serve to amend other empirical results, including the ones provided by the previous books. This is also noted in the following paragraphs. For example, quantitatively we may observe that many intergenerational relationships are very close. However, in some cases the stories and statements may offer a more vivid and clear picture of the current and previous relationship than summarised numbers are able to provide.

*Inspiration.* The quotes may inspire further research. Showing the huge diversity of intergenerational relationships and their manifold histories may

lead to a better understanding of family structures and processes, which may in turn stimulate promising new research agendas.

*Reflection.* The quotes may serve as a means of reflecting on one's own family situation and history. The personal stories provided by the respondents more or less automatically evoke comparisons with one's own story – perhaps even more than the (generalised) quantitative results are able to do.

In the following, the 1,644 statements are presented in an order following four steps: age, gender (daughters, sons), closeness with mother, closeness with father. Additionally, the age groups are differentiated into three sub-groups. For example, the early twenties range from 20 to 23 years of age, the mid-twenties from 24 to 26, and the late twenties from 27 to 29.

The next two paragraphs address the diversity of intergenerational relationships by looking at happy families and conflicted generations. The following paragraph reflects, in accordance with the analysis volumes, relevant patterns of relations with parents.

## Happy families

The statements document many impressive, personal thoughts and stories on intergenerational relationships. This includes a huge diversity of family situations and histories. The statements illustrate, support and complement the analysis volumes. In fact, close relationships are not only the majority in representative terms but are also reflected in a majority of the personal statements. We find many declarations of harmony, love and cohesion. However, we also read of horrible dramas behind closed doors of private family life.

When it comes to happy families, the headwords are *love, importance, happiness, role models, value, respect, support, gratitude, sacrifices* and *missing*.

First of all, a large number of statements reflect close emotional connections between the generations, including *love*. For example, young adults report:

“I love my parents” (3). “I love them very much. I would be at a complete loss without them” (13). “I love my parents dearly” (45). “I love them more than anything” (62). “I love them both very much :)” (74).

“I love them. I miss them” (89). “I love my parents” (128).

Older respondents point out:

“Love, love, love ...” (1145). “I loved and appreciated them more than anything else” (1146). “I had wonderful parents who taught me so much and gave me so much LOVE” (1157). “I loved and appreciated my two parents, mother and father, very much. And I think they loved me too” (1172). “I loved my parents, and they loved me too” (1253). “I loved my parents” (1631, 1636).

In fact, ‘love’ is explicitly mentioned many times throughout the statements of this book and thus over the whole life course. Furthermore, the respondents emphasise the special *importance* of their parents in their lives:

“They are very important to me :)” (76). “They are the most important thing in my life!” (78). “To me, my parents are the most important thing that there is” (90). “My parents are very important to me!” (107). “My parents are incredibly important to me” (143). “I had a wonderful youth and parents who raised me very well and loved me a lot. This basis helps throughout life. To me, my parents were the BEST” (1110). “I had a wonderful relationship with my parents. It has been a strong foundation for my life” (1124). “Unforgettable! They will always continue to be present in my life” (1186). “They were the most important people in my life” (1190). “To me, they were a great example and made an imprint on my life” (1199). “My parents, my father in particular, were my most significant others” (1281). “A wonderful relationship that shaped my life” (1340). “Even today, they are still omnipresent to me” (1429).

In this context, it is also often mentioned how *happy* the adult children are with the relationship with their parents:

“I am extremely glad and happy that I have such a great relationship with my parents!” (70). “[T]hey have helped me to become the happy, fulfilled 24-year-old woman I am today” (116). “My relationship with my parents is fantastic – I’m extremely happy to have them” (173). “I am happy to have them and I love them” (489). “I am happy and grateful that I am still able to have them with me” (528). “We always had a good and happy relationship” (1566).

One adult son answered by providing only one single word, namely, “Happy” (867). Adult children in particular explicitly mention a happy childhood owing to their parents:

“I experienced a carefree happy childhood with my parents” (707). “I had a happy childhood; my parents looked after me and my sister and taught us to love and be curious about the world” (969).

For many, their parents serve as great *role models*:

“For me, they are role models, and I give their advice great significance” (130). “My father was the most loving father in the world and my role model” (993). “To me, my parents were always the greatest role model in my life. Even beyond their death” (1021). “They were a role model to me in many ways” (1256). “In this sense, we are very grateful for the example of our parents” (1388). “They were a model for me in every respect” (1529). “To me, my parents were exemplary parents in every respect” (1583).

The term “role model” is in fact used in a number of further statements: 130, 156, 400, 656, 717, 931, 1232, 1252, 1554, 1558, 1560, 1615.

In addition, many respondents state how much they *value* their parents. Some quotes are:

“I wish everyone had such wonderful parents” (116). “My mother is the best in the world” (144). “Wonderful people” (744). “Wonderful parents” (1103). “To me, my parents were the BEST” (1110). “Fantastic parents” (1022). “To me, my father was my all” (1143). “A mother is the greatest thing there is” (1443).

Some say that they now hand down the positive values they received from their parents to their children:

“As for the rest, my parents gave me some basic values that I have passed on to my children” (819). “I am glad that I have been able to pass this sense of family on to my own children” (1023; see also 407, 499, 534, 754, 888, 946, 1103, 1157, 1159).

Another word which is used time and again is ‘*respect*’:

“Our relationship is based on love, mutual trust and respect” (322). “We nevertheless all love and respect each other” (485). “We deal with each other in a very respectful and loving manner” (552). “I respect my parents” (577). “A relationship of respect, closeness and love” (678). “We respect each other” (726). “For about 20 years now, the relationship of parents-child has become one of friendship and respect” (756). “A normal and happy relationship, based on mutual respect” (799). “I respect my mother a lot” (973). “The relationship was always respectful and warm” (1014). “I have great respect for them still today” (1476). “We mutually respected each other at all times!” (1486). “We led a simple life, but a life full of love and mutual respect” (1628).

*Support*, help and care are also frequently mentioned, and this goes in both directions. Many adults report receiving support from their parents, for example:

“I can always rely on my parents, and they support me” (9). “They support me in whatever it is that I do and want to do” (32). “My parents always supported me wherever they could” (47). “I can approach them any time for help or advice” (160). “They always made sure I had everything I needed and were always there to listen when I needed them. I love them deeply” (317).

Older respondents also do not forget the help they received in their younger years:

“Both parents supported me a lot with childcare and created a paradise for my daughters” (1599). “Although they were very different, my parents were role models, who provided guidance and support to my sister and me” (1615). “My brother and I had loving parents who supported us” (1632).

Mutual support is also mentioned time and again, for instance,

“we can absolutely rely on each other and count on our mutual support” (948). “We help and support each other whenever there is a need for it” (1174). “We always supported and helped one another wherever possible” (1420).

Furthermore, several older respondents note support they provide(d) for their elderly parents, for example:

“I also took care of my father before he died” (1105). “When my father died, I was with him and was helping him during his last days” (1342).

“I increasingly support and accompany her in addition to the homecare and other care providers” (1262). “In old age, my parents received the necessary attention and help from me and my brothers” (1382).

Some emphasise that they would support their parents if needed:

“I would obviously also give the shirt off my back for them so that they are well” (466; see also 312, 518).

Others regret that they did not care more:

“In retrospect, I would have liked to have more time for them during their last years of life, but that was not possible for job-related reasons” (838). “As for my father, I was working abroad in the twelve months before he died, and I regret not having been able to help him more” (1071).

Support received often comes with *gratitude*:

“I am infinitely grateful to them” (47). “I’ll always be grateful to them” (193). “I am very grateful that I was able to grow up in such a sheltered way!” (236). “I am very grateful to them for all that they have done for me” (240). “I am incredibly grateful for all the things that they did

and still do for me – can't imagine a life without them" (277). "I will forever be grateful for it" (319). "Thank you to my parents for all that!" (325). "I'm grateful and glad to have a very good relationship with my parents" (441). "I am grateful to them for all that they did so that their children would be better off" (471). "Thanks that you are there and have always been there for me!" (506). "I owe both great respect and gratitude!" (1092). "For that I am grateful" (1136, 1502). "I am very grateful to my parents" (481, 905, 1553; see also 494, 992, 1067, 1095, 1312, 1405, 1406, 1452, 1463).

Some adult children mention the *sacrifices* of their parents:

"Only once you have matured a bit do you understand how much they did and sacrificed for you" (143). "My parents have always provided support and made sacrifices themselves" (297). "They sacrificed everything so that their children could have an easier and better life than they did" (438). "I realised how much good she did for me (and for my siblings) and which sacrifices she also made" (1195). "For this, they made great sacrifices" (1405). "They had a difficult life but made many sacrifices in order to give their children a better life" (1577).

In the case of deceased or absent parents, it is often noted that they are *missed* greatly:

"With my mother passing, I realise how much I miss her" (439). "Regret it very much that they are no longer alive" (548). "I miss my mother a lot" (690). "I loved my parents a lot and still miss them today" (777). "I adored my father and miss him every day" (877). "I miss them" (883). "I had wonderful parents and miss them a lot" (1159). "Even though my parents have been gone for almost 20 years now, I still miss them every day" (1281; see also 89, 368, 408, 413, 439, 481, 563, 657, 1000, 1019, 1162, 1283, 1504, 1517, 1550).

## Conflicted generations

The previous statements describe happy family lives. They show strong cohesion between family generations. The following quotes, however, tell different stories. In stark contrast to happy family lives are reports of difficult, often even horrible situations. The headwords are *conflicts*, *beatings*, *abuse*, *tyranny*, *alcohol*, *unwantedness*, *death* and *alienation*.

*Conflicts* are characteristic of many intergenerational relations. Some examples are:

“It is a difficult relationship because they believe to know what is best for my life” (114). “The tension between me and my mother primarily originates in her always expecting a lot of me and putting me under a lot of pressure (school grades, extracurricular activities) well into adolescence, and then she very often shows her disappointment with me, especially with how I live my life – that is to say, her expectations in terms of my partner, marriage, children, career and so on” (175). “The relationship with my mother was emotionally very tense, particularly during my puberty, and there were frequent conflicts” (230). “Over the years, I have learned that I needed a certain distance from my father to avoid constant conflict” (511). “My father left raising us kids largely up to my mother. So we had our conflicts with her” (611). “It’s always been a conflictual relationship” (773). “It was incessantly complex, difficult, sad, tearful and speechless for me as a child” (925). “I had strong conflicts with my father when I was young. Also because of the rows between my parents, I left home at the age of 21” (1322).

Quite a few adult children report *beatings* by their parents:

“Was beaten as a child. Grew up in modest circumstances. Was on my own early on” (210). “Father was never there. Left us and got in touch minimally. I saved my mother’s life several times. She never touched me, but she beat my sister black and blue daily” (444). “I nevertheless appreciate my parents very much. Also despite slaps in the face or spanking of the bare bottom (by hand or the carpet beater)” (622). “As a child, I suffered very much from my mother’s choleric temper; she also often beat me” (645). “I remember getting beaten up frequently” (910). “Moreover, my father only wanted to have daughters and treated me accordingly (beatings and other punishment)” (963). “I experienced a large number of traumatising situations as a child, daily emotional or physical violence within our family” (1068). “For example, I was hit with a carpet beater or a belt, had to strip down naked in the bathroom beforehand and wait until I received the beating, mostly from my mother. Very humiliating” (1114). “My parents were never in a position to care for their many children. We were beaten, my father was an alcoholic, my mother was afraid of him” (1293).

Several respondents explicitly report *abuse* within their families:

“Both of my parents are perverted narcissistic manipulators. They have abused me and my siblings physically and mentally, and regularly so,



during our whole life” (123). “I was abused as a child, and in all facets, whether violence, sexually or mentally. That I NOW have post-traumatic stress disorder / have to have psychotherapy” (268). “However, given the physical and psychological violence around which I grew up, the fact that I was finally able to recognise the abuse in which I lived for many years freed me. These days, I no longer maintain a relationship between my children and my parents unless my children want me to” (557). “I was mentally abused as a consequence of the difficult traumas of my parents during their childhood (war and their parental home)” (789). “During my childhood until their separation, a lot of quarrelling, including violence, between my parents. Then, until I moved out, mental and, up until teenage years, physical abuse through my mother” (911). “My father often beat my mother, abused her and had alcohol problems until he died. Because of that, as an adult with a household of my own, I no longer had any contact with him” (963). “Difficult because of an extremely dysfunctional family / massive mental, emotional and sexual abuse that was never brought out in the open. As an adult at a distance, much better” (1036). “In my early childhood, my father abused me for the first time! This happened on an irregular basis until late childhood” (1222).

Many adult children give account of *tyrannical fathers* – and corresponding burdens for the whole family:

“[M]y mother was strongly oppressed in their marriage, which also affected the relationship with us children” (347). “My parents have been separated by court order. However, my father still rules over my mother” (860). “He was strict, and patriarchy reigned” (944). “Before he retired, my father was quite a tyrant. ‘As long as you live under my roof ...’” (945). “My father was an alcoholic, a tyrant and a thug. It was fortunate for us that he died that early” (1001). “I was only able to live a life of my own by escaping the influence of the family tyrant (father) and his second (mother, who probably did not adopt this role voluntarily) and therefore cut off ties of any kind” (1055). “My father was an ‘old school’ patriarch. Women didn’t have much of a say. My mother suffered from this a lot” (1070). “I was raised very strictly by a dominant father; my mother had no say” (1077). “My father was very self-opinionated and my mother had to go along” (1119). “My father was a patriarch” (1222). “Patriarchal relationship between my parents” (1289). “He was a real patriarch” (1409). “My father was old school in the sense of a family dictator. My mother suffered from his strict regi-

men” (1469). “My relationship with my father was really bad. He was authoritarian and brutal also toward his wife, my mother, who fell ill with MS. There was never a normal life. That burdens me still today” (1477). “I could not bear my father’s wielding of power toward my mother. For this reason, I sought no contact. After my father died of an accident, I was in touch with my mother again” (1484).

A great number of adult children reports *alcohol* problems and addictions of their parents. These are some examples:

“[M]y relationship with my father up until adulthood was very contradictory. Since he often drank a lot and hardly supported the family financially, it was very difficult to live with him” (175). “Mother: chronic alcoholism, complicated relationship because of this condition” (283). “I always had a strong relationship with my mother but not with my father! My father has been an alcoholic since he was a teenager ...” (327). “I had a very close relationship with my mum, but I had no relationship with my dad, who was an alcoholic” (661). “And as for my dad, without going into too much detail, my dad drank a lot and never knew how to show his feelings” (718). “My relationship with my father was lovely when I was a young child and was very difficult later because he was an alcoholic” (859). “Over time, I found out that she drinks secretly and that she is a heavy alcoholic with depression. She denies all this. (...) However, she claims that I am mad at her and that this is the reason why we are no longer in touch ...” (863). “My father became an alcoholic after my teenage years, I suppose. Nowadays, he drinks in a controlled manner. We have few conflicts, but when we do, it is mostly related to that” (878). “My mother was an alcoholic and drank excessively off and on until age 60. For that reason, my childhood and teenage years were very conflictual” (1031). “I felt close to my parents but suffered from my mother’s alcohol addiction and my father’s frequent absence and his hot temper” (1457). “My parents’ marriage was strained during my lifetime. Father’s alcoholism” (1465).

Several respondents write that they were *unwanted*:

“I was an ‘accident’. Apart from my mother, no one knows who my father is” (461). “My biological parents had a love affair at the time, and I was the unintentional product. (...) I don’t know my biological father. He never got in touch with me, and I also never got in touch with him” (538). “I was not wanted and often suffered from it” (1072). “Difficult relationship with my parents since I was an unwanted child” (1152). “The relationship with my parents was very difficult, because

of my mother, who did not want me” (1198). “My mother was overwhelmed by four children and an alcoholic. Especially being the only daughter, who was born unwanted, I did not have a nice childhood” (1234). “We had to obey, full stop. We knew that in those days children were always accidents, unwanted children ... (The poor parents!)” (1318). “We were never interested in one another. My parents separated when I was still a little child. For this reason, I couldn’t care less about my biological father. My mother bore me when she was 17; I was not a planned child. That also shaped my relationship with my mother. But I never suffered from the situation. We just both went our own way” (1370).

Another difficult situation is early *death* of parents, which goes along with the absence of corresponding intergenerational relations between adult children and their parents:

“My father passed away before my tenth birthday” (463). “I was a little child when my mother passed away, and my father raised five children on his own. I and my siblings grew up without a mother, and I only have very few memories of my mother” (827). “My father passed away when I was a little child. For this reason, I have no memory of him and there was no relationship with him” (918). “Unfortunately, I can’t say anything about the relationship with my father since he passed away when I was not even in kindergarten yet” (939). “I didn’t really know my biological mother since she died in a car accident when I was just two years old. My biological father died when I was just age 30” (1187). “My father passed away after my first birthday. For that reason, I have no memory of him” (1196). “Father passed away when I was still little” (1219). “Unfortunately, my father passed away at a very early age” (1430). “My father passed away at a fairly early age. It was very difficult for my mother and us children” (1442). “My father passed away when I was four years old. For that reason, my mother’s financial situation was not very good” (1514). “My mother passed away during my childhood. I had a poor relationship with my stepmother” (1592). “Being a young widow and single parent, my mother was under considerable social pressure, which was a burden on her children as well” (1580). “My biological father passed away soon after I was born” (1613). “My mum died a few months after my birth. After my father remarried, I was put in a boarding school. And then from the age of 15 or 16, I had to look after myself” (1640).

Last but not least, respondents give account of *alienation* from one or both parents. Oftentimes, the adult children mention in this context the point in time at which intergenerational contact stopped:

“I have had no contact with my mother for ten years!!!” (237). “I’ve had no contact with my father since 1996” (306). “I have had no contact with my biological father for more than 20 years” (329). “I have had no contact with my mother for about ten years (332). “No contact with my father since I was 21 years old” (349). “No contact with father since my late 20s. I have no detailed information regarding his current life” (418). “I haven’t been in touch with my father for about 15 years” (536). “No contact with my father for ten years” (612). “No contact with my father for almost 40 years” (964). “There was actually no relationship with my parents from age 16 on once I left the parental home” (1018). “I haven’t been in touch with my parents for 30 years now” (1336).

When it comes to an assessment of the situation, all possible alternatives can be found. In most cases the adult child does not want contact, in other cases this applies to the parents, and in still other cases both parties agree to live their own lives without any intergenerational connection:

“My father no longer exists, as far as I’m concerned” (145). “For years, there has been almost no contact with my father. This is presumably how both sides want it” (267). “Using the word ‘relationship’ would be exaggerated. Related is more accurate. They regularly forget that I exist” (462). “To me, they are no longer more than acquaintances!” (556). “I now feel justified in no longer maintaining a relationship with them. Not anger, but the distance I needed for my well-being” (557). “As far as I’m concerned, I don’t need any contact with the two. Both were not really enthusiastic about becoming parents. We all live our life and are satisfied with that” (595). “Unfortunately, a cold loveless relationship” (793). “I’m glad and happy to have no contact” (865). “I would have liked to have a much closer relationship with my parents. It has been difficult to accept that they never had this desire” (1008). “Not very affectionate, not much warmth; it was all rather functional” (1154). “I grew up in a foster family and had it good. I have always been in touch with my biological mother. I know who my father is but have no contact with him. My biological parents were a couple only for a short time” (1235). “My father and mother were divorced, and I had no contact with my father” (1274).

## Patterns

The analysis volumes identified four groups of factors that are important for intergenerational relationships: opportunities, needs, family and contexts. Opportunities include factors such as *education*, *finances* and *distance*, which may promote or prevent interaction between people. Needs can be assessed by considering *age*, *employment* and *health*. Family structures comprise *gender* and *partnership of parents* as well as their children's *childhood*, *partner*, *children* and *siblings*. Societal contexts can, for example, be identified via *migration*. The following sections assess the relevance of opportunities, needs, family and contexts on the basis of corresponding statements.

## Education

Several adult children emphasise their appreciation of their parents' efforts to provide a good education. Examples are:

"The relationship with my parents and the education they gave me enabled me to fulfil my potential as a woman and to assert myself, to make choices and to have confidence in myself and in my future career and studies" (29). "The relationship with my father is special. It's not very emotional, but I know that he is always there for me when I need him, and he has been supporting me financially during my studies without any discussion" (38). "They were able to give us a good, well-structured education" (156). "My parents made it possible for me to study, even though they did not earn much and worked hard for it. I'm very grateful for that and support them for that reason in every respect" (201). "My parents have always provided support and made sacrifices themselves (including financial sacrifices) in order to educate me and help me progress in life. I feel grateful for what they have done" (297). "I lived in a normal working-class family in the countryside with my siblings. My parents worked hard to pay for our studies and diplomas" (617). "Vacation trips were very rare for a lack of money. And yet they still enabled me to study at a university of applied sciences and supported me monthly" (622). "They gave all that they could and supported me in my personal decision-making: choice of occupation, further education" (692).

Older respondents write the following about their parents:

“They made sure that we were all able to study at a university and have a good job and/or future” (905). “They were the most important people in my life, and they did everything for my education and well-being” (1190). “My parents supported me in every respect. They enabled me to study abroad” (1238). “I had very generous, liberal parents, who gave us two daughters a good education. I am grateful to them for a loving childhood with good guiding principles” (1339). “I am grateful to my parents that they raised us to become independent people early on and valued a good education. For this, they made great sacrifices” (1405). “Seen from today, my parents were very strict. But they supported their children and made sure that they were able to get a good education. At the time, this was not yet a matter of course for girls. In this respect, they were progressive” (1408). “I’m grateful to my parents for always supporting me in my choice of studies” (1452). “Even though they were not always in agreement with my goals in life, they never put obstacles in my way and did support me, both morally and financially (university studies, self-employment)” (1501). “To my father, my education was very important and therefore also my marks. Looking back, I am very grateful to my parents” (1553).

However, there are also examples of problems and difficult situations in regard to children’s education:

“Particularly when it came to upper-secondary education and searching for an apprenticeship, I would have needed support but never got any” (857). “The goal was always for us children to receive a vocational education, for us to have it better. A lot of pressure, a lot of obligations” (1105). “Father pressured me into an apprenticeship as a craftsman. I actually wanted to attend a conservatory. To him that was nonsense. A pity” (1426). “A looser relationship with my caring mother, from whose modest education I distanced myself as an arrogant grammar school student” (1599).

## Finances

A great number of adults emphasises their good childhood despite their parents’ limited financial resources:

“I had a very beautiful childhood (although money was always scarce)” (917). “Although we were a rather large family with low income, I felt comfortable during my childhood. Even though we had little, we nevertheless had everything we needed in life” (937). “Even though

we could not afford a lot, I was able to enjoy a beautiful childhood” (1002). “I can consider myself fortunate to have such parents. We never had much money, but we were happy, and they gave me the gift of a protected childhood” (1015). “We didn’t have much, but they were always there for me/us (five children and foster children)” (1057). “My parents lived in simple conditions. But they gave us a home in which we felt comfortable and could experience a carefree childhood” (1265). “I had a very happy childhood, although the financial situation was not the best” (1303). “We had very little, mostly below the existential minimum, but were always content” (1338). “Although my parents were poor, I never lacked anything” (1346). “[T]heir financial means were rather limited. Yet they nevertheless gifted us with a wonderful childhood” (1386). “I had a very close relationship with both parents. We grew up in modest circumstances without substantial financial means but never went hungry and had a happy youth in the countryside” (1482). “Financially we didn’t have much, but I felt protected and loved” (1523). “My now-deceased siblings and I grew up in poor financial conditions. We nevertheless had a good childhood and teenage years since mother and father gave us everything they could under the given circumstances. Security and love were our wealth” (1528; see also 1050, 1307, 1445).

However, other respondents point to financial issues and their negative consequences:

“I have the feeling that my parents and I don’t have the same ideas, values, norms. I attach greater importance to personal relationships with people; for them it’s more about money, wealth” (86). “Previously, I had been distancing myself from both of them because they were repeatedly in front of the judge over money (divorce)” (163). “Difficult because of constant quarrels between my parents over money (unemployed father) during my teenage years” (250). “Unfortunately sad, brought about by divorce, lies and money issues” (284). “Right now the situation is very difficult because my mummy is terminally ill, and their financial means are very poor” (432). “My father refused to pay child support, which is why I had to sue him in court. We haven’t been in touch ever since” (434). “I am happy with the relationship I have with my parents and my brother. I am sorry that I only get to see them twice a year because they live far away. It is too expensive for them to come and see me more frequently; they can’t afford it” (597). “Once they are no longer self-sufficient, this will pose a serious financial problem if we

have to rely on a nursing home” (706). “My father was more self-effacing, but I still had conflicts with him (particularly over pocket money; everything was too expensive and that made me stingy for several years afterwards)” (893). “After my father’s death, my mother had less financial means (underage children) and no vocational education (which meant cleaning)” (1034). “My parents sold my brother the parental home without part of our sisters knowing about it. This has changed my relationship completely” (1074). “Since my father couldn’t handle money, this resulted in continuous tension in the family” (1278). “Since we were a large family and not financially well off, there was frequent tension, especially originating from my mother” (1367). “My parents were very concerned about us children. But money was always also an issue and also the cause of conflict” (1502). “Since we were a large family and not financially well off, there was frequent tension, especially originating from my mother” (1367).

Conversely, several adult children mention a good financial background and receiving money from their parents:

“[H]e is always there for me when I need him, and he has been supporting me financially during my studies without any discussion” (38). “The business did very well; we never had financial problems” (153). “But she was also always there for me and supported me, particularly financially” (175). “They supported me during my training and also otherwise as much as they could (financially and in other ways as well)” (203). “When I turned 30, I received a generous gift (money) from my biological mother” (538). “He helped all of his children if necessary (financially or organisationally, with repairs etc.)” (945). “My parents supported me in every respect. They enabled me to study abroad. They also supported me financially during my first year of marriage” (1238). “I’m very grateful for everything they both gave me (education, inner balance, good relationships with my brothers, good financial situation)” (1309; see also 1452, 1501).

## Distance

Many adults report a weakened relationship with their parents as a consequence of greater spatial distance (see also below for further statements under the heading ‘Migration’):

“I have started my university studies, so I basically don’t live under the same roof anymore. As a result, the relationship is different compared



to what it was like during my adolescence. Definitely a lot less conflicted, but also a bit more detached” (34). “I’m very close to both my parents, but the distance (we don’t live in the same country) means we don’t have as much of a relationship as we would if we lived in the same country” (75). “Distance doesn’t help maintain relationships” (225). “The bonds have weakened because we live far apart. But as soon as we are together for a little while, the strong family relationship returns” (264). “We have grown apart. Large spatial distance. Difficult to maintain a relationship” (443). “Because of the large spatial distance and partly health impairments, it is difficult to regularly visit my parents or for them to visit us (592). “Since they both live in Germany and we live in Switzerland, the relationship is not quite as close. That’s OK with us, but they would probably be happy if we would see each other more” (624). “Because of the distance between where we live and our individual activities and commitments, we see each other fairly rarely (about every two months)” (726). “The relationship with my parents has become looser as a result of their moving to Southern Europe. This is for geographical reasons. Prior to that, I had a good relationship with my parents with the usual, normal tensions” (837). “The relationship was not durable because of the large geographical distance” (1042). “I am one of six siblings, the other five all live near our parents. I live far away and always have. They are well taken care of, and I am the prodigal son :)” (1047). “Sometimes we just lived too far apart from each other to look after one another more!” (1454). “The relationship was good, but because of the distance (about 600 km) our contact was not too close” (1524). “Because of the distance, we mostly saw each other only on vacations” (1548).

Quite a few adult children who live far away from their parents regret this situation:

“I love my parents very much. It is such a shame that we live so far apart (over 1,000 km)” (189). “All in all, we have a good relationship, although the distance makes it difficult. I would like to spend more time with them, and sometimes I feel guilty for not being close to them” (414). “I find it too bad that they live so far away from me” (526). “I miss being closer to my parents because they live in Brazil. I am very worried about my parents’ financial situation, as they are already elderly and there is a major economic, social and security crisis in Brazil” (563). “I am sorry that I only get to see them twice a year because they live far away. It is too expensive for them to come and see

me more frequently; they can't afford it" (597). "It's a shame that we don't live closer to each other" (618). "The large distance of 800 km has unfortunately impaired the relationship" (677). "The distance that separates us has deprived me of their presence, their spontaneity, their joy of living, their help and their involvement with our children. Parents are at the heart of the family" (719). "It's very difficult when we're 2,400 km apart. When they fell ill, I went to see them several times a year. And I was with my dad when he left; that wasn't the case for my mum and it broke my heart" (928). "As for my father, I was working abroad in the twelve months before he died, and I regret not having been able to help him more" (1071). "I have a very close and loving relationship with my parents. Unfortunately, I live too far away, and it hurts me every time I have to end my visit with them (every one or two months at the most, for a few days) and return to Switzerland. I would love to be able to support them both more with my presence" (1099). "What makes support more demanding is that we live 100 km apart" (1127). "I loved my parents very much and always felt supported and loved by them. I could not help them so much during old age as they lived in the UK and I lived in Switzerland with my family. I was widowed young and had my children to support here too. We visited as often as we could" (1282).

Nevertheless, some report good relationships with their parents *although* they live far away:

"Despite the distance, I have a very good relationship with my parents thanks to communicating via the Internet (Skype, WhatsApp, FaceTime etc.). Our relationship is deeper, more peaceful and intense since I've been living abroad" (299). "Even though my parents live in the Middle East, I know that they will always be there for me if I need them. Recently I had major surgery, and my parents were at my side the entire time. That is family, selfless and always being there for one another. I can consider myself fortunate to have such parents (not all of us have this good fortune)" (409). "Despite the (relatively) large distance between my parents and me, we have a respectful and, above all, loving relationship. We are there for each other in all essentials of life and help each other wherever we can. Contact with my parents, my siblings, and other relatives is very important to me" (448). "I think the relationship was normal. As there is spatial distance, we don't see each other so often, but via new technologies, we are in touch regularly, almost daily (WhatsApp Chat)" (484). "The relationship with my

father was very good despite the distance to Southern Europe” (490). “My parents let me live my own life. I let them live their own lives. We are reasonably close emotionally, and have a strong sense of kinship, despite the distance. Our filial love binds us together without suffocating us” (567). “My relationship with my parents has always been excellent. Lots of love and respect. Even though I’ve been living abroad for a long time, we communicate very often. I go to South America regularly” (913).

Another group appreciates the greater distance. These respondents perceive having better intergenerational relationships *because* they no longer live close by one another:

“The relationship with my parents has always been good. Since I moved out, it’s been even better” (98). “We always lived very different lives, but since I moved out my relationship to my parents feels more natural and, interestingly, also closer” (122). “Since I moved out, I have had a much better relationship with my mother” (154). “Currently, we have a good relationship because we do not live together” (175). “I (...) visit/see my parents only on weekends. Ever since, our relationship has become better. The distance was therefore necessary” (224). “Strangely enough, we’ve become a lot closer now that I live over 100 km away” (337). “As I moved more than 500 km away from my parents about 20 years ago, my relationship to my parents has improved. I always look forward to visiting my parents for a few days and when they come to see me. But I’m also glad when they leave again” (376). “My relationship with my parents has greatly improved since I left home and even more so on the day I found my partner” (478). “The great distance facilitates tolerating each other’s peculiarities. Some differences would presumably not be as easy to bridge were we to have to deal with them constantly” (817). “However, the relationship was always very pleasant, also due to the distance that separated us” (1212). “I myself emigrated to Papua New Guinea to gain distance. That was the positive ‘turn-around’ in my life” (1387).

Conversely, a shorter distance may come with a greater burden:

“A lot of pressure, a lot of obligations. My siblings and I were glad to leave; I went particularly far away. I needed more space to blossom” (1105). “In advanced age, my mother’s and father’s health was severely impaired. For this reason, I specifically, who lived nearest by, was heavily burdened during their last years, which every now and then led to

tension and differences of opinion (support, admission to a nursing home)" (1267).

## Age

The statements are ordered by age. The smaller numbers refer to younger people, the higher numbers to older ones. The younger and middle-age respondents report on their relationship with their living parents. The statements are mostly about their current relationship and the time spent together with their parents, and sometimes also about the time that lies ahead of them. Older adults rather look back on the earlier time with their parents who have since passed away. Sometimes they look back on their childhood, sometimes on the last years of life together with their parents, not least with regard to illness, care and death. Diversity is also evident here: great and terrible childhoods, good and bad times, close bonds and no contact at all.

Some notice a change in the generations involved and their relationship as they get older. For example:

"Age is also an important factor; as I get older, some of their character traits become more apparent, which has an influence on how I view my current relationship with them" (534). "The burden of ageing parents is often a constraint that adds to our busy lives" (807). "People and also relationships change considerably with age and illness. My relationship with my parents is much different now than in my young years" (821).

An example of role reversal during the life course is:

"I had a beautiful youth with my parents, followed by an independent unproblematic life as an adult. In old age, my parents received the necessary attention and help from me and my brothers" (1382).

Several respondents report an improved relationship with their parents as they get older:

"Especially as a teenager, the relationship with my parents was very difficult. In the meantime, it has become increasingly warmer" (308).

"Not frequently, but whenever necessary, we have selectively ventured to have an honest talk. This communication process has continued with my mother, and even more so as we grow older" (689). "Parents: In old age, the relationship became closer again. When I was young and my parents were still working, we had a bit less contact" (743). "When I was a child, my father was very strict, which sometimes burdened me a bit. Over the years, our relationship increasingly improved, and he became more and more affectionate toward me and my family" (784).

“My father had a bad temper, which wasn’t always easy for us children and our mother. But there was no physical violence. We were afraid of his temper tantrums. For those experiencing them, this was always also very sad. His bad temper settled down with increasing age” (851). “My father has changed for the better with age” (881). “Yes, in the terminal phase of his life, my relationship with my father changed entirely. I saw and experienced a completely different person. It was positive. It was a formative, curative experience” (896). “The relationship with my parents has become closer with increasing age (...). You might say that, after my apprenticeship, the relationship declined, which then became stronger again after 20 years and is very good today, with frequent contact” (902). “Since they are old and fragile, ill, have dementia, I have forgiven them of all that I once blamed them for. Relationship with my father closer for about two years. Never got close to my mother. As mentioned, have forgiven them, though” (1280).

Age may also go hand in hand with different experiences of birth cohorts. Some older respondents compare their upbringing with the current relationships of younger family generations:

“It was a generation where children had to behave. My wishes and needs remained wishes, but I hardly expressed them. I knew that I had to behave” (1029). “I was raised very strictly (which was normal at the time). Only once I was 18 was I allowed to be out on Saturday until 10 o’clock! (1030). “In my view, a completely normal relationship – it was just a bit more authoritarian at the time than it is today ...” (1385). “In ‘my day’, manifestations of affections were virtually absent, but my parents were present and loved us in ‘their own way’” (1395). “I’m from the generation where parents didn’t talk to their children very much. I’m happy to say that things have changed a lot, which is good for family balance!” (1537). “We were a normal family with clear rules. The relationship with my parents was, in line with the times, more distanced than today. After the war, our parents also had more worries ....” (1586). “The times were different then. Children were not at the centre of attention as they are now. It was about ensuring family survival and not the pursuit of egoistic interests” (1614).

## Employment

The various phases of the work-related life course play a huge role in inter-generational relations. This already applies to the stage of life when one is

preparing for work. Many adult children explicitly appreciate their parent's support in matters of education (see above). With respect to working life, we see instances of adult children looking back on their parents' employment. In several cases, respondents talk about weakened family cohesion owing to their parents working (too) much:

"I suffered enough that my dad was always at work" (337). "Father was overstressed by too much work because he always feared that he had to provide for the entire family and he saved for hard times" (415). "My mother was often alone with us because of my father's job" (584). "They took too little time for us children, worked too much, punished us too often, failed to show enough love" (594). "My father died when I was seven, I don't remember everything, plus he worked a lot, so I didn't really see him in the years before he died" (750). "My parents both worked a lot, which is why no close relationship evolved" (805). "My father worked hard but was rarely present. But he always worked to support us" (853). "Since my father died early and always worked away from home, I didn't have such a close bond to him as to my mother" (872). "The relationship with my father was not as strong because my father always worked night shifts during all of his active working life. For this reason, we also didn't see each other much" (1205). "Until the age of 12, I saw very little of my father, who worked away from home to make a living. There was no real relationship; I only saw him on the weekend every other week" (1296).

When it comes to family businesses and self-employment, we find both positive and negative assessments:

"Very good relationship. I work daily with my parents in the family business" (142). "We work together in the family business. Business and private life often mix. The only tensions really emerge over business issues. Privately we get along almost 100% like best friends" (227). "We live in the same place and work in our own firm (family business) and therefore see each other daily. Generally, I can't imagine life without them" (241). "My parents have been self-employed since I was born, and, despite their goodwill, they weren't around much for my brother and me during our childhood. Materially speaking, we lacked nothing, but family relations were complicated by a lack of family time and the daily stress that weighed on the shoulders of every member of the family" (328). "During my childhood, he almost never had time for us children. He had his own business, and therefore my parents

worked seven days a week" (1377). "Our mother ran the farm and didn't have a lot of time for us" (1641).

On the other hand, adult children also reflect on how the time constraints resulting from their own employment affect the relationship with their parents:

"We have four children, and my wife and I work full-time so it's very difficult for us to find the time for our parents unfortunately ..." (623).

"We must consider how little free time we have (after work) to visit or look after our parents" (727). "In retrospect, I would have liked to have more time for them during their last years of life, but that was not possible for job-related reasons" (838). "I have reduced my workload to have time to support my parents with daily tasks" (852).

## Health

It often has stark consequences when parents become ill and frail. A large number of adult children reports physical problems of their parents, for example:

"It's very complicated because my mother had brain haemorrhage and a stroke ..." (51). "On account of my mother's illness, there is certainly potential for conflict" (181). "Unfortunately, my father died much too early and unexpectedly from cancer. For me and my family, it was a difficult time" (292). "As my mother was seriously ill (in a wheelchair, suffering from multiple sclerosis), our relationship with both my mother and my father changed a great deal. Negatively" (310). "My father suffers from Asperger's syndrome, which of course affects the relationship with him" (644). "I clearly have a closer relationship with my mother. Yet since she is suffering from slight dementia on account of a stroke, my father has acquired a different role, which has forced all of us to reconsider how the roles are distributed and to engage differently with one another" (747).

These are more examples:

"Unfortunately, my mother has had multiple sclerosis since the age of 30. This made the relationship with my parents a bit unique as my father cared for her 100% until her death" (840). "It was very difficult for me to lose my mother to cancer" (944). "My father passed away before my 30th birthday on account of cancer. After the death of my father, my mother was deeply affected mentally. She spent the last years of her life in a nursing home; her mental illness made our relationship difficult" (1005). "After several strokes, my mother was highly

dependent on care so that it was not possible to care for her at home. We tried for a year. Three years after my mother died, my father voluntarily wanted to move to a nursing home” (1062). “Ten years before his death, my father had a major stroke. He was paralysed, couldn’t speak anymore and his mind was confused. My mother cared for him at home during those ten years” (1390). “My mother’s early death of cancer shocked me deeply. After my mother’s death, I felt a closer connection with my father” (1405). “My mother ended up living with me and our two children. She stopped talking. Had a stroke” (1581).

Many adults also report mental health problems of their parents (see also 194, 551, 1073):

“For a long time, my parents’ mental illnesses (depression, anxiety) made our living together difficult, but they both gave their all to ensure that we children had a good life” (84). “My mother is manic-depressive. My father suffers from schizophrenia and dementia and is in a nursing home” (353). “My father is currently suffering from a deep depression” (384). “The relationship was strained because my father was manic-depressive during my childhood” (456). “For 20 years, my mother has been suffering from schizophrenia, lives in her own world. She is strongly sedated by medication. Both live in the same care centre” (546). “My father suffered from depression when I was still at school. My mother didn’t really understand what was going on – I felt very alone. I was very disappointed with the relationship with medical services. That period of my life was extremely difficult, but now that they’ve passed away, I feel at peace” (819).

More examples are:

“The relationship with my mother is often difficult because she is borderline and time and again has periods of excessive drinking” (824). “My parents’ home is an outright psycho-geriatric institution. Narcissists, egoists, and thanks to medication, it’s more or less tolerable. Still my parents” (875). “Unfortunately, my mother came down with a severe depression from which she has not recovered until today. Moving to a nursing home while my father was still alive became inevitable, which my father never got over” (974). “My mother had a borderline personality disorder, which placed a heavy burden on the relationship among the family members! (I had the role of the scapegoat and was frequently wrongfully blamed!)” (1369). “A difficult life with one parent being manic depressive and the other becoming an alcoholic. Boarding school difficult but more stable than living at home. In spite



of all this, they loved us dearly and were brought down by their respective problems” (1448).

Additionally, respondents mention parental addictions. This applies especially to alcohol (see above), and in one case to heroin:

“Was all very, very difficult!! Both parents were addicted to heroin ... My mother got away from it; my father is still completely at it ... I haven't had contact with my father for years” (486).

Some also report the suicide of a parent:

“My father couldn't cope with the accidental death of my mother and committed suicide a few years later” (605). “My mother was seriously mentally ill. She took her life through suicide” (779). “Ten years ago, she killed herself” (898). “I barely knew my biological mother, or more precisely, I can barely remember her. She suffered from severe depression and ultimately shot herself” (1184).

It is not surprising that respondents report poor parental health as weakening the intergenerational relationship:

“I have always had a close relationship with both my parents. My father, who is nearly 90 years of age, suffers from dementia and is in a care home, so I have little contact with him aside from when we return home for the holidays. We stay in my mother's house when we return (approx. three times a year), and I normally speak to her several times per week on the phone” (425). “I used to have a wonderful relationship with my mum, but unfortunately she had a stroke that changed her completely” (718).

However, some adults state that poor parental health has even strengthened the connection to their parents:

“My father supported the family and was always there, never interfered with my life. When he came down with Parkinson's, this strengthened my relationship with him a lot and increased the desire to spend the remaining time with him” (637). “My father was ill for the last three years of his life, which had a major impact on our relationship. Before that, we sometimes fought. Paradoxically, his illness brought us closer together. When he left this world, we parted serenely on a relational level” (653). “The last two years of my father's life were marked by severe dementia. The beautiful part within that severity was, however, that he could (finally) live out his very emotional side – there were the first moments that we could hug and ‘cuddle’ each other and he could say straightforwardly that now ‘the one is coming whom I love the most’. Only then could he express at the emotional level much of that

which could always be sensed” (968). “Relationships changed at the end of my father’s life because of his illness. They improved. It made for some wonderful moments of intimacy” (1139).

Further statements underline the significant impact of parental health on their adult children:

“During the last year of my father’s life, I was very busy due to his numerous hospitalisations, as well as working 80% and bringing up my two youngest children on my own, who were in their early teens. Four months after my father’s death, I was burnt out and spent nine months on sick leave” (879). “With increasing age and the physical problems and mental deterioration that it entails, I feel growing pressure, which is to say, I ought to be able to make more time for my mother” (973). “Both my parents were in very poor health. (...) I have very bad memories of their last years of life (...). They suffered greatly, as did we – my brother and sister – who surrounded them as best we could. And it went so far that I’m going to make arrangements for my own end of life ... I don’t want to end up like this and I wouldn’t wish it on anyone ...” (1121).

A large number of especially poignant statements refer to older parents having dementia. Some of them are (or were) living at home, some in nursing homes, and some are (or were) being cared for both by family members and professionals:

“My father has Alzheimer’s, in the highest class of care, and no longer speaks. He lives in a nursing home, and we bring him home for a day on weekends” (455). “My mother lives in a nursing home and suffers from Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s. She is only minimally aware of other people” (725). “My mother suffers from dementia, is confined to a wheelchair and lives in a nursing home in the place where I live” (886). “My father has dementia and is cared for by my mother and supported by us children” (891). “My mother lives in a nursing home at a very advanced age. She has dementia, and I try to enable her to live the autumn of her life with dignity” (1291).

The older the respondents, the more they report about deceased parents:

“During his last years of life, my father suffered from dementia. For this reason, our relationship was one-sided (from child to father). It was nevertheless close and affectionate” (882). “During the last three months before her death, my mother suffered from dementia. In her last twelve months, it was impossible to have a conversation with her” (895). “Together with my mother and with the support of my brothers,

my family and the palliative care provider for people with dementia, I cared for my father at home until his death” (912). “In old age, my mother fell ill with Alzheimer’s dementia and was cared for and looked after at home until a year before her death. During her last year, she lived in a nursing home, with us children and some of her grandchildren visiting her a lot, but she no longer recognised us” (920). “As my father came down with dementia and lived at home until shortly before his death, the father-daughter relationship became increasingly difficult because of his illness since he was cognitively strongly impaired” (1004). “My mother died of Alzheimer’s disease after 15 years of illness” (1059). “In the last three years before her death, she developed dementia and became dependent on care. Since she had already been placed in assisted living, care could be quickly organised” (1073).

These are more examples:

“Prior to her death, my mother developed dementia to the point that she couldn’t remember anyone” (1098). “During her last year of life, my mother was in a nursing home and increasingly suffered from dementia” (1113). “My father, with whom I had a very good relationship, suffered from Alzheimer’s disease for two to three years (I supported my mother more since she looked after him a lot)” (1123). “During her last year of life, my mother was barely responsive anymore (dementia)” (1130). “My mother’s dementia made the situation difficult in the last two years” (1225). “My mother had dementia for about ten years” (1255). “My mother died in a nursing home. She lived there her last ten years and suffered from severe dementia” (1292). “My mother had Alzheimer’s disease and was living in an old people’s home near my home. This meant I didn’t have to care for her, and our emotional exchanges were limited and altered by the illness” (1294). “My mother came down with dementia and, for this reason, could no longer communicate with me during her last two years. She spent the last five years in a nursing home” (1352). “During the last year of her life, my mother was seriously ill with Alzheimer’s disease. Unfortunately, she did not recognise me anymore, and although I went to see her every day, our relationship was very superficial and sometimes difficult” (1629).

Several respondents give account of decreasing health of both parents:

“My parents lived in a nursing home for several years. Toward the end, they were strongly dependent on care and my mother also suffered from dementia so that I had to say goodbye ‘step by step’ because the relationship was no longer really possible” (986). “The last twelve

months before her death, my mother was in a nursing home, with senile dementia. My father suffered from Alzheimer's" (1182). "My mother didn't recognise me for the last twelve years of her life (Alzheimer's), so I couldn't do anything for her except visit the nursing home (250 km from home, accompanied by my young children). Otherwise, I would have supported her as much as possible. I was able to look after my father until he died of a heart attack" (1379). "In his last years of life, my father suffered massively from Alzheimer's. My mother (97 years old) has mild dementia, is in a wheelchair and, for this reason, dependent on care" (1481).

## Gender

A great number of respondents made specific comments about their mother and father. Most statements support and explicate the quantitative results of the analysis volumes. Nevertheless, there are also assessments which reflect a minority situation.

Many adult children especially appreciate their mothers' commitment and the corresponding closer intergenerational connections with her. The following are some examples of this:

"My mother is better able to deal with other opinions than my father" (79). "The relationship with my mother is very close. We can talk about anything. The relationship with my father is more difficult. I worry a lot and ask myself whether he is happy. It is difficult for me to talk about it with him. He is very important to me, but it is hard for me to have a longer or serious conversation with him" (103). "I would characterize the relationship with my parents, especially with my mother, as closer than average" (118). "The relationship with my mother is very close. I have a more distanced relationship with my father, but that's ok for both of us" (119). "Relationship with my mother: very good. Relationship with my father: normal (burdened by the past)" (126). "My mother is the tough one but also the one that provides the most help and care. My father stays in the background; he's the fun one, very little conflict with him. But he does not provide emotional support like my mother does" (148). "The relationship with my mother is close and intimate, whereas the relationship to my father is more distanced" (158). "I came to Switzerland with my mother, and she always looked after me very well and made sure that I was brought up right. My father was never interested in any of his many children (me included).

Accordingly, I don't have any emotional attachment to my biological father" (184). "My mother has always been there for me despite a great deal of tension in our family. In contrast, my father had children but never looked after them" (205).

These previous statements are confirmed by older adults:

"I have a close bond with my mother, but a relatively non-existent emotional bond with my father. I do see him often, though, since I often visit my parents because of my close relationship with my mother (they do still live together)" (505). "Unfortunately, my relationship with my parents is special ... very good with my mother ... difficult with my father" (619). "My emotional bond with my mother was very strong, with my father, by contrast, conflicting and difficult" (944). "My mother was the best mother and friend that one could ask for. My father was an embittered and jealous person who forced me to make a choice: him or my family!!!!" (1189). "Love for my mother / hatred for my father" (1221). "Yes, I loved my mother. I would have loved and supported her in spite of everything. As far as my father is concerned, I would simply have preferred not to be his daughter. It has been very good for me to live far away from him" (1223). "To summarise, I felt less of an affinity with my father than with my mother, but I'm very grateful for everything they both gave me" (1309). "I had a good relationship with my mother. I loved her" (1447).

On the other hand, several adult children report a closer relationship with their father:

"For a while now, I have had a closer relationship with my father" (163). "Distant relationship with both; however, my father was always there when I needed him throughout my childhood and teenage years, while my mother never really cared about anyone other than herself ... (311). "I'll never have any contact with my mother again, because she made me suffer too much. And I'll be closer to my dad" (463). "The situation with my mother was more confrontational than with my father" (480). "Hostile attitude toward my mother, rediscovery of the relationship with my father" (629). "The relationship with my mother is really bad because she accepts neither me nor my wife. (...) The relationship with my father and his second wife is perfect" (654). "I felt more drawn to my father, and we often had a lot of fun together. My mother was a rather emotionally cold person" (857). "When we were children, it was my mother who was 'in charge' dealing with most of our upbringing, housekeeping, organisational worries etc. (today we'd say 'the mental

load'). So I think it's normal that I clashed more with her" (893). "Very good, relaxed relationship with my father in particular" (904). "Difficult with my mother. Very understanding with my father" (1013). "I always had a closer relationship with my father than with my mother. He respected me, accepted me the way I am – we were very similar! My mother was always very critical of what I was doing – still today, she does not accept me, who I am – in conflicts at school, work or in life, she always came to the defence of the others and sought fault with me ..." (1064).

The following statements also express interviewees' very positive thoughts about their father:

"My father means a lot to me; he raised me and my brother alone. (...) My father still makes me feel good and stands by me" (164). "He loved us children above all else, and he showed it and said so on every occasion" (549). "The relationship is like in a storybook! Live and let live and being there for each other. His daughter clearly means the world to her father, and her father the world for his daughter! Cast in the same mould" (778). "I always was what was called 'father's daughter' (...). Although I get along with my mother well, I never had a very close relationship as she is more of a reserved person. She frequently just had demands but never provided support. My father always supported but never pressured me" (786). "I was Dad's child. Mum and I were probably too similar. Nowadays, I feel that I was too strict in judging my mother" (1380).

However, some responses point to a rather neutral and distanced relationship with one's father:

"I haven't been in touch with my father for about five years" (146). "Even now, I can't rely on my father. But I see him from time to time and we have a superficial relationship" (195). "I haven't had any contact with him since I was four" (196). "The relationship with my father was not as strong because my father always worked night shifts during all of his active working life. For this reason, we also didn't see each other much" (1205). "I would generally call my father an 'absent father'" (1277). "The relationship with my father was not very close and not very warm, perhaps like with an uncle" (1409). "My father was just there. He brought the money home. Other than that, I had no particular relationship with my father" (1447).

A few statements about fathers seem to show ambivalence:

“He sometimes shows me that he loves me with little gestures. And he doesn’t realise that he can be hurtful with the words he uses or when he just doesn’t listen when you talk to him” (83). “My father was very dominant and often ignored my mother. Although he appreciated her a lot, he always stood in the foreground. That bothered me, which is why my relationship with him was ambivalent” (1348). “Father extremely dominant and full of expectations but willing to help if necessary. Dialogue was never possible since another opinion was never accepted. I lived completely withdrawn to avoid conflicts” (1387).

Several adults state that their father is or was not able to show enough emotion:

“The relationship with my father is rather ‘dispassionate’. I do think that he loves me, but he can’t show his emotions much” (247). “They are good and caring; I know I can rely on them anytime. But they didn’t verbalise their affection and feelings much, even when needed, especially my father” (346). “I and my sister have never really felt loved by our father. He has problems showing feelings and is very dominant. Our parents separated twice. So far, none of us has had the courage to stand up to him. He supported us a lot materially during childhood but never much came across emotionally” (449). “My family rarely speaks about emotions. My father never spoke about feelings. And deep emotions are not shown among adults to the extent possible” (668). “[M]y dad drank a lot and never knew how to show his feelings” (718). “My father is a good person. Unfortunately, he is emotionally faintly present and way too preoccupied with himself. I miss that even today ...” (822). “He would have done everything for his family, only he couldn’t show his feelings. I am nevertheless very grateful to him” (960). “My father was emotionally crippled and unable to show feelings. Our relationship was tense – but OK” (979).

Furthermore, there are clear negative statements about fathers. This applies to the many abovementioned quotes about tyrannical fathers. Additional statements are the following:

“My father shows many patterns of emotional blackmail and frequently takes on the victim role. He punishes by means of subtle reproaches and a guilty conscience and completely dodges direct conflict” (248). “My father expects infinite gratitude from me, which I cannot give him, however. He would never get in touch with us voluntarily. (...) Moreover, our discussions are mostly superficial. (...) That’s why I live our life with my wife, and my father lives his life” (769). “My father

is stubborn and peculiar” (848). “My father was the worst person I know” (856). “My mother was a doormat, and my father was a tyrant. They both had unrealistic expectations of me and my siblings. They did not agree with the wife I chose but compromised and took an interest in their grandchildren. I respected my mother but came to hate my father” (1547).

### Partnership parents

The parents’ partnership plays a crucial role in the relationships with their children. It is quite rare that respondents emphasise a positive situation after parental separation:

“Despite their divorce during my early childhood, I always felt secure and had a fulfilling family life” (168). “I’m grateful to have/have had the best parents. In other families, there is a lot of quarrelling or even hatred, especially after a divorce. My parents were superb in dealing with the situation after they separated. I’m infinitely grateful to them for that” (371). “Although I was over 30 when my father married again, I have a great relationship with his wife and their adult children. We all give each other a sense of security” (598). “The relationship with my father and his second wife is perfect. His second wife is also ‘GRANDMA’ for my children” (654). “My parents were always there for me and my sister, despite their divorce. I had a carefree childhood and am grateful to my parents for that. I can enjoy my father, still in good health; I visit him every Sunday” (992). “My parents had the intelligence to divorce without getting angry, protecting my peace of mind and respecting each other. They have both always been there for me. They respected one another, even after their divorce. I greatly admire their attitude. Their respective spouses (after their divorce) have always been kind to me, so thank you to them too” (1108). “My parents raised me well, stayed together because of their children, until I was 18 years old. Afterward, they divorced peacefully. Each parent remarried another person. My mother lived abroad for a long time, returned to Switzerland again as a widow. The relationships to all family members have always been very open and affectionate” (1260). “I had a good relationship with my parents despite them separating when divorce was unusual. I’m very grateful to them. I have very fond memories of them both” (1286).



Instead, in most cases by far, parental separation led to a deteriorated relationship with their children:

“Hardly any close contact with my father because of his new partner. Many conflicts with my mother. Relationship between my parents has remained difficult since their divorce” (140). “The relationship with my parents is rather complex. Since the two separated emotionally (but still live in the same household), the process of me detaching has definitely happened” (279). “Unfortunately sad, brought about by divorce, lies and money issues” (284). “I was still a child when my parents divorced. This left its mark on me (mental strain – in school and private life)” (318). “Difficult, as the separation of my parents stole a lot of time and therefore my childhood and youth. The divorce dragged on for almost 15 years” (404). “It’s a pity that my relationship with my parents developed that way because of their divorce” (774). “After their divorce, he remarried and unfortunately his new wife took him away from us and slandered us, so I hardly saw him for about two years and he hardly knew his grandchildren (my children, that is). It was very painful” (893). “Because of the family circumstances (divorce, remarriage), they were busy with their own problems, so I mostly had to find my own way” (1536).

It is above all the child-father relationship that suffers:

“Since my parents separated and divorced, my contact with my father has diminished considerably. In recent years, we haven’t had any contact at all” (131). “I wish my relationship with my father was a closer one; I feel we’ve definitely grown apart over the years. The divorce of my parents may have contributed to the distance in the relationship I have with him” (450). “To me, my parents raised me in an exemplary manner. There was a break in the relationship with my father when my parents separated (at advanced age)” (716). “My father and mother were divorced, and I had no contact with my father” (1274). “Good relationship. After their divorce, a longer pause in the relationship with my father” (1297).

Ultimately, the father’s behaviour is primarily blamed for this:

“The relationship with my parents has changed considerably since I discovered a year ago that my father had cheated on my mother. And in the last three months in particular, the relationship with my father has become really bad because I will never forgive him for what he did” (43). “My father was an alcoholic, cheated on my mother; they separated; he never got in touch until he had a new wife. It depresses

my mother still today. Because of this, I mostly grew up with a nanny. My father plays happy family with his new wife, with a house and a yard (without children)" (85). "My parents are divorced; the relationship to my father is problematic because I can't accept what he did to my mother financially. (...) I still can't get over the fact that a man can financially ruin a woman – whom he once loved, had children with and a home, friends and a fulfilled life – to a degree that, after so many years of marriage, she has to start all over again. (...) This makes my relationship with my mother even closer" (153). "My father cheated on my mother with another woman and humiliated her in the worst possible way. I tried to mediate, organised couple therapy. But his behaviour tore open so many old wounds on my part, which he is not able to address together with me, that I have arrived at the point where I will completely cut ties with him" (553). "Parents were separated ever since we were kids. Father didn't have any visitation rights since he wasn't paying child support" (841). "After severe experiences with my father during childhood and after a dispute over inheritance, I completely broke off contact with him and my siblings. It was much too stressful for me" (855). "Until my parents separated, I had a good relationship with both of them, but after that, my relationship with my father became difficult since he left my mother when she started receiving disability allowance. This situation hurt me. That's why I stayed with her, and her health deteriorated little by little" (997).

At times, the father's new partner has played an important role in reducing or even ending the relationship with his child:

"Hardly any close contact with my father because of his new partner" (140). "Since my father moved in with his partner, our relationship lost some of its quality. Because of his guilty conscience owing to the divorce, I can't take his praise and advice seriously anymore. He is eager to please me ... I find that a shame" (229). "Terrible. None of my parents ever supported me the way you would want them to. My father a little (you have to give him that). But he has a new family with a woman who is 20 years younger (any questions?)" (614). "My mother is much more present in my life. My father is very involved in his wife's new family" (636). "My relationship with both parents was strained considerably, especially also because of their new partners" (966). "After my parents divorced, the contact with my father was cut off by his second wife" (1129).

In some cases, the mother and father never or rarely lived together:

“My parents separated during pregnancy. I know who my father is but do not have detailed information about him. Never had any contact with him” (139). “Our father left us early on and was never there for us. Instead, my mother was there for us twice as much and still is today. Thanks, Mum” (161). “My father left my mother before I was born. He relinquished his parental rights. Therefore, I don’t really know him. I only know who he is. An emotional relationship or relationship of any kind with him, however, is missing. There was never any father-daughter contact” (162). “I still saw my father as a young child, but I don’t remember those times. I think the last time I saw him was about 15 years ago. I got back in touch with him recently. I need to know who gave me half my genes” (265). “My father left my mother when she was pregnant with me” (343). “My biological parents had a love affair at the time, and I was the unintentional product. At that point, my biological mother was single and my father was not, but rather married and with children. (...) I don’t know my biological father. He never got in touch with me, and I also never got in touch with him. I don’t dare to” (538). “My father died before I was born, and I grew up with my biological mother and stepfather. Our family life was very patriarchal, and my mother was never strong enough to support me against my stepfather” (631). “My father left my mother when I was a little child; afterwards I was occasionally with him for a day, never longer” (639).

## Childhood

Many of the above statements refer to the partnership of parents during the respondents’ childhood. In fact, early experiences cast long shadows. Childhood can have an effect over several generations. Some respondents even consider the childhood of their parents and its consequences:

“While I don’t hold a grudge against my parents (their past is their burden to bear and their behaviour is intimately linked to their painful childhood), and while I know that they did what they could, I now feel justified in no longer maintaining a relationship with them. Not anger, but the distance I needed for my well-being” (557). “When I consider what a rather difficult childhood they had, they did a very good job. However, they are not my closest confidants. Those are more my friends” (591). “Both my parents grew up with missing parents (divorced or deceased). They themselves never experienced a ‘nest’ as a child. They had to experience emotional pressure. I did have a ‘nest’

but with few emotional bonds. Each one just somehow lived their life. Alongside one another” (698). “My parents always supported me within their possibilities. I am very grateful to them for all that they have done for me! It was only later that I realised what it must have meant to grow up as a *Verdingkind* [child in care used for labour] and what kind of deprivation this must have involved ...! You also often noticed this in their behaviour ... Of course, you figure this out only later ... that is, too late!” (834). “My father had a very tough childhood. His mother died when he was still a child. He grew up in poor circumstances, was always required to work and also punished severely. Until the end, he sought to show everyone how strong he was. He would have done everything for his family, only he couldn’t show his feelings. I am nevertheless very grateful to him” (960).

When it comes to the respondents’ childhood, the analysis volumes identified childhood effects in regard to parental conflicts, intergenerational conflict as well as parental affection for their children. As for parental conflicts, quite a few adults remember their father beating their mother (see above). Further examples of conflicts between parents during the respondents’ childhood are:

“Difficult, as the separation of my parents stole a lot of time and therefore my childhood and youth. The divorce dragged on for almost 15 years” (404). “My childhood was marked by my parents’ contested divorce” (493). “No contact with my father. My parents’ marriage was not based on love and respect but on power and oppression” (537). “The relationship with my parents has not always been easy because they frequently had rows. To a certain degree, this has affected the relationship between my mother and me and between my father and me” (708). “The biggest relationship issues that I had with my parents can be traced back to the conflictual relationship between my mother and father. During my entire childhood, they would ‘bark’ at each other every day (...), without the situation leading to a divorce, however. This created a very stressful atmosphere at home, with a lot of yelling, and this grim atmosphere led me to move out as soon as possible (just before I turned 18)” (758).

More examples are:

“My parents quarrelled a lot. For this reason, the relationship with my father was difficult” (881). “During my childhood until their separation, a lot of quarrelling, including violence, between my parents” (911). “When I was a little child, my father rejected my mother and didn’t speak a single word with her – I never experienced my parents

talking with one another, let alone treating each other lovingly. He locked her up in their bedroom when he went out in the evenings (...). The mood was infinitely bad, scary, inhuman, psychogenic. I frequently nearly wet my pants for fear that they would kill each other, thought it was MY fault" (925). "During my parents' phase of separation and divorce, I suffered considerably from the tension. I was often drawn into their quarrels and so on. My teenage years were anything but pleasant since I had to deal with the problems of adults much too frequently. Yet I loved them both even though I had to see and experience many painful things" (1188). "My parents didn't have a good relationship; they expected me early on to choose sides or act as a referee. In the process, they lost sight of me as a person" (1503).

The above section about 'conflicted generations' has included a number of statements that testify to parental abuse and beatings of their children. Additionally, some examples of early tension and conflict with parents are:

"The tension is still there, and a lot is hushed up. You would think that, because you grow older, stuff from the past is over with, but that's not true. It would be good to come to terms with it together before their death" (823). "My mother forced me to eat meat every day through my entire childhood (until 16), even if I had to throw up. I was not allowed to go to school before my plate was empty" (1191). "I had a very strict upbringing. I had the feeling that I was a 'prestige child' for my parents. Only the best clothes and shoes, always forced to go the barber – and this in the heyday of long hair (Beatles, Stones etc.). There was indeed often quarrelling over such petty matters" (1279).

The analysis volumes also pointed out that parents who show their affection towards their children during childhood have a lifelong closer bond with these children. Some of the corresponding quotes have already been presented in the previous section about happy families. Further examples are:

"All in all, I had a very good childhood and upbringing and am glad to have my parents!" (186). "Had a very beautiful and super childhood and still have a close relationship with my parents" (257). "I had a dream childhood and our relationship today is excellent!" (326). "I have been extremely lucky to grow up with people like my parents. They let me and my siblings live, exercised restraint in imposing as few expectations as possible on us and were very tolerant. The perfect breeding ground for trust and firm roots" (344). "A very friendly honest relationship. My parents have given me a lot, and I try to give back. My brother and I grew up in a wonderful family and had a great child-

hood" (730). "The relationship with my parents was always very good – especially with Mum. Dad never concerned himself much with us but was always there when we needed him. My youth was very lovely" (1285).

It fits the picture that less affection for young children is often connected with weaker bonds in adulthood:

"My father was rather strict, and affection and praise were granted only when we, for example, performed well in school. I have actually never had a close bond with him" (590). "My relationship with my parents was loveless even when I was a child. This has continued to the present" (701). "My parents did not protect me when I was a child. All that I am and have achieved to the present, I accomplished on my own. Nowadays, my parents occasionally need help. But I can't give them any because I didn't receive any as a child either. It's just not possible (794)".

## Partner

The following statements refer to the respondents' partners, children and siblings. Several adult children write about partner effects on their relationship with their parents. Some describe positive family situations:

"There is a great relationship between me, my husband, my children and my parents" (376). "My relationship with my parents has greatly improved since I left home and even more so on the day I found my partner" (478). "Without my parents, I couldn't pursue my occupation. I can rely on them, and we have organised ourselves very well. I and my husband are infinitely grateful for that" (584). "My mum has been living with my partner and me for almost five years. It's been very rewarding for me" (1019). "The relationship was always good, and my wife has contributed a lot to our good relationship and regular contact" (1181).

More respondents, however, report difficulties with their parents because of their partnership:

"The relationship with my mother was very tense for a few years (because of my partner at the time). Since then, it has relaxed and we have a good relationship" (247). "During recent years, the relationship with my partner and my brother as well has increasingly been affecting the relationship with my mother (systemic conflicts)" (428). "Since my husband and I are separating/divorcing, there has automatically

been more contact with my parents again (since they didn't like him much). Before we were hardly in touch and there was a lot of potential for conflict since they tried to interfere in our life a lot. Sometimes we didn't hear from and see each other for months. Now that I am alone with my child, things have changed. They respect my lifestyle and often simply come over without notice and are suddenly interested in our life. Strange somehow, but that's how it is ..." (457). "My parents (...) couldn't stand the fact that I split up a few years ago. They turned their backs on me, they were not supportive – on the contrary. My mother was very angry with me. (...) My father was ashamed of me (I've become an embarrassment to the family)" (557). "The relationship with my mother is really bad because she accepts neither me nor my wife. (...) To save my marriage, I cut ties with her a few years ago after the last attempt at peaceful co-existence. My marriage is perfect, and I can live without my mother" (654). "The relationship between my wife and my mother is strained" (772). "Unfortunately, my parents could not accept my choice of partner. They even broke off contact with their grandchildren!" (897). "Since I married my wife, the relationship unfortunately has been very tense. My parents don't accept her, which has led to us not being in touch with them at all for some years. We eventually got that sorted out to some degree until things blew up again. Since then, I have had only occasional contact with my parents" (987). "I married, and the break with my parents was absolute. My parents never bothered with my children and have never seen them!" (1592).

## Children

Relationships with parents may change – for the better or the worse – with the arrival of children of one's own, that is, grandchildren from the perspective of the respondents' parents. Several examples point to the existence of grandchildren improving the relationship of adults with their parents:

"The relationship has changed since I bore my first child. Since the birth of the child/grandchild, the frequency of contact has increased" (222). "Today, a much more relaxed, beautiful relationship than during my teenage years. The grandchildren have let my parents 'blossom' even more and work on their relationship/old role patterns" (415). "Now that I am a mother, they are very present in my son's life as his grandparents, and this is very precious to me. I am happy about the

opportunities we have to spend time together, but I also know that I can manage on my own" (420). "I am lucky to have two wonderful parents. Since I have been a mother myself, I have appreciated them more and more, and I would like to spend more time with them" (499). "Since I have a family of my own, it has become better" (642). "I see many things through different eyes since I have children of my own. I appreciate them for what they were able to do" (694). "Only once there were grandchildren did our contact become steadier and I was able to get to know my father over the past 20 years, which was very important to me" (751).

More examples are:

"Our relationship has improved over the years. When I had children of my own, I understood and appreciated my mother more. She was also gentler with my children than with us, and I was able to discover a new side to her" (893). "Very harmonious relationship up until very old age: both parents are over 90 and still out and about independently. They keep in close touch with us and their grandchildren. I'm very grateful for that" (932). "It went from being very hostile to calmer, particularly once I had children of my own (...). They have been loving and attentive grandparents to my children, and that has meant a lot to me and my children" (950). "To me, the relationship with my parents was very beautiful and valuable; they passed on a lot for my pathway through life. My mother was able to see her grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow up and it made her very happy to experience this. She was an excellent storyteller" (1404). "It was very close and very good! Especially also their connection with their grandchildren, our children" (1518).

On the other hand, having children of one's own may reduce the time and attention available for parents. Interference of grandparents in child raising may impair the relationship to parents as well. Also, some respondents feel the need to protect their children from their grandparents. Some quotes are:

"The relationship has changed since I have children of my own. I expected more sympathy/interest. Similar to my relationship with them when I was a child. But because we rarely see each other anyway, it isn't a constant concern of mine" (402). "We have grown apart. Large spatial distance. Difficult to maintain a relationship. Grandfather not much interested in his grandchildren" (443). "These days, I no longer maintain a relationship between my children and my parents unless my children want me to (my parents have retained their manipulative –



even violent – pattern, even with their grandchildren, and as a mother, I have a duty to protect my children. So I warned my parents that if there was the slightest sign of abuse or hurtful words, they would no longer see their grandchildren until they were adults and old enough to defend themselves)” (557). “On top of that was my mother’s interfering when our children were still little, which was often annoying” (902). “Since I was a single mother with several children and worked, I often didn’t have the time to share it with my father” (1258). “For my father, I was never good enough, and my mother gave me too much advice on how to raise my children, which burdened our relationship” (1438).

## Siblings

Siblings can influence intergenerational relationships. Many respondents state that their parents took care of them and their siblings and that they are very grateful for that. However, some adult children regret that their parents prefer(ed) their siblings, which led to a feeling of injustice:

“During my teenage years a strenuous relationship, always too many expectations and too strict (compared with my sister), quite meritocratic” (218). “I feel unfairly treated by my parents compared to my brothers (e.g., they funded their university studies but not mine). Great emotional distance between me and my parents (especially with my mother), which both sides are good at glossing over toward outsiders” (286). “I never had a good relationship with them because they wanted a son and I was nothing like they expected. In fact, during their lifetime, they gave their property to my younger sister, with whom I’ve had no contact for over 20 years” (828). “There are many things with my mother that are also difficult and have been left unspoken. I feel that she treated me unfairly. She always favoured my brother and still supports him even today. He doesn’t have to work, travels all over the world and I get nothing!” (859). “My parents sold my brother the parental home without part of our sisters knowing about it. This has changed my relationship completely. I am of divided opinion on whether such an act can all of a sudden really ruin the family life of several siblings or whether I can be above it. We try to maintain contact again, particularly since each of us gets by very well. The wound is a much greater problem than the financial issue” (1074). “My parents never supported me, never motivated me to learn a vocation. My father

always favoured my siblings. I more or less never mattered to him” (1155). “My mother only saw my brother and favoured him; that was very painful. She never showed me her love much; I was unimportant to her” (1193).

Other adults declare that their siblings were treated worse:

“I saved my mother’s life several times. She never touched me, but she beat my sister black and blue daily” (444). “The situation with my mother was more confrontational than with my father, and I had a strong feeling that she was treating my sister unfairly” (480). “My relationship with my parents is also influenced by the relationship they have with my sister, with whom I am very close and to whom they show little recognition, which often disappoints me” (534). “But since I was the latecomer in the family and my siblings were all older, I was presumably also a bit more spoiled” (574).

For some, the sheer number of siblings affected the relationship with their parents:

“We were so many children that it was normal that our demands on our parents were extremely limited and that we automatically tried to support our parents as much as possible. The example of our parents was the basis for our good upbringing” (1359). “Since I was the eighth of nine children, I didn’t receive much affection from my parents. My oldest sister compensated for this, however. I understand my parents’ situation. We had good parents” (1479).

Also, siblings may be the cause of problems:

“I generally got along well with my parents. The only point of conflict, where I felt completely left alone, was that they never protected me from my brother, who mentally abused me” (221). “Generally speaking, I have an excellent relationship with my mother, with no arguments, but we’ve recently been experiencing some tension over a complicated and stressful situation with my brother” (244).

In many more cases, siblings are very supportive – to one another and to their parents:

“After their divorce, we had to get through a few very hard years. I was a pillar for my younger siblings; you could almost say a substitute father, especially for the chores at home that the man is responsible for” (153). “My relationship with my parents remained fairly short because the decision was made within the family that my sister would care for our parents once they needed support as they increasingly grow older. My sister did an excellent job of implementing the agreement” (710).

“My brother and I, together with my father’s wife, accompanied my father during the last days leading up to his death” (751). “My father lives in Eastern Europe. I live in Switzerland. But I love my father. I have sisters in Eastern Europe. I know and am sure that all of my sisters there are caring for my father” (776). “My father spent his last years in assisted living. He was able to live there until he died because my sister and I supported him on a daily basis. Our parents were always there for us kids, and when they needed it, we were always there for them as well!” (880). “Together with my mother and with the support of my brothers, my family and the palliative care provider for people with dementia, I cared for my father at home until his death” (912). “Then, after I moved away once I had married, I soon cared for my mother (taking turns with my sister) in my own household for a few years” (1219). “In old age, my parents received the necessary attention and help from me and my brothers” (1382). “I supported [my father] for a few years in looking after my youngest siblings (every weekend with household chores, during my siblings’ holidays, their education and training)” (1405). “I accompanied my mother closely in old age, to the extent that the geographical situation allowed. My sister, who lived in the same neighbourhood as our mother, took over the task of looking after her on a daily basis. The last ten years, my mother lived in a nursing home” (1543). “My father was under guardianship for over a year before he died, living with one of my sisters, with whom I no longer had any relationship” (1551). “I (...) was not able to care for my mother before her death. My brother, who lived there, took care of her. I sent money instead” (1595). “I lived abroad. My sister looked after our parents” (1603).

## Migration

Migration has many faces. It ranges from moving temporarily to a neighbouring country with no major cultural and language differences up to a lifelong, irrevocable relocation from a geographically and culturally distant continent. The consequences affect whole families, including parents and children.

Several respondents report challenges and problems arising from differences between themselves and their parents due to migration:

“Because of the cultural difference, my father and I frequently have different opinions. My father is very old-fashioned since he grew up in Kosovo, and that’s not me; that bothers him. This conflict will proba-

bly result in me no longer wanting to have much to do with my father in the long run if he doesn't accept who I am and what I want" (97). "Because of language difficulties (both parents never learned proper German), it is not possible for me to communicate with them in Swiss German or only to a limited extent" (496). "Since my parents didn't speak German well, I had to take care of lot of things for them, and this from an early age on. Nevertheless, I loved both of my parents very, very much" (508). "[T]here were nevertheless misunderstandings and also mistaken expectations between us children and our parents (...), for we children have been shaped by a different society, have been socialised by a different education in school and have been formed by yet very different paths and experiences in life, so that we are all the more aware of the uprootedness of our parents and feel all the more obliged" (633). "A partnership with children is already a huge challenge as it is. An intercultural relationship like that of my parents – of Indian and Swiss origin – is an incomparably greater challenge" (1268).

Sometimes, migration effects are different for daughters and sons:

"Rather difficult. My mother and father are both from abroad and have always been very traditional. For instance, no relationship before marriage, get married and have a family. But that applied only to me as a daughter and not to my brothers" (785).

In another case, different relationships to mother and father evolved in the migration process:

"Moving away from our country of origin caused a lot of distance with my mother, but not with my father. Dad chose to leave Northern Europe for professional reasons (major promotion), while Mum was uprooted in a way. My mother was bitter throughout my childhood and that weighed heavily on me" (1166).

Other adult children (also) emphasise positive consequences of migration:

"I am very grateful to them for the life that I have. Because they took us with them to Switzerland, we have had many opportunities. As a result, my sister and I gained access to different ways of thinking, to other values and traditions, which has greatly enriched our lives. As a woman, it has enabled my independence and given me a mind of my own" (351). "I grew up in a mixed cultural family as one of my grandparents came from East Asia. As a child, I always tried to understand both ways of thinking, acting and speaking. This made me into a really flexibly minded person and one to seek a solution when I have a little problem. They were very strict, but this also made me have a lot of

patience in difficult situations” (602). “My relationship with my parents has always been excellent. Lots of love and respect. Even though I’ve been living abroad for a long time, we communicate very often. I go to South America regularly. I’m in a better financial situation so I help out a lot financially, but also emotionally. Since my father died, I’ve been especially attentive towards my mother” (913). “Thank you to life for bringing me into this home and into this country. I’m grateful to my parents who gave me material well-being, but above all emotional well-being. It’s a great privilege” (1406).

In some cases, it is not the parents who migrated but the offspring:

“I went abroad when I was 16/17 (South America) and have never really lived at home since then. As a result, I emotionally detached from my parents rather early. They only really fell out with each other when I was already 30. That did indeed trouble me much more than I previously thought it would” (416). “They always supported me with my ideas, also to leave the country to go to Central America to live there, even though the guerillas were active at the time. Unfortunately, they never tried to get me to attend baccalaureate school, although I had excellent grades. They accepted and never criticised how we raised our children and our ideas in this respect” (809). “Father extremely dominant and full of expectations but willing to help if necessary. Dialogue was never possible since another opinion was never accepted. I lived completely withdrawn to avoid conflicts. Mother fought the divorce for many years (presumably because of finances). As a school-child, I was constantly caught in the middle, which stressed me a lot. I myself emigrated to Papua New Guinea to gain distance. That was the positive ‘turnaround’ in my life” (1387). “I had a very good and close relationship with my parents. We always supported and helped one another wherever possible. I worked in various countries (and on various continents) and visited my parents in Switzerland as much as possible or invited them to spend vacations with us as long as their health allowed” (1420).

Several respondents point out the long distance between them and their parents (see also above more statements under the heading ‘Distance’):

“They live in Central America, so the relationship is a long distance one with constant communication, and when we can visit them with my kids (more or less every two or three years), we enjoy the visit and stay with them” (608). “My parents separated many years ago; they divorced later. My father has lived in Central America ever since. My

sister and I aren't in touch with him at all. For this reason, we also don't know anything about his personal financial situation and his health" (721). "In the last few months of their lives, I was not as close to them as I would have wanted to be considering their poor health. But we were living 1,200 km apart from each other, in different countries, and I had a family with young children and a demanding job. Whenever I could, I was there for them, however. For their daily support I relied on my brother and his family, who lived in the same town as them" (813). "Since my parents emigrated abroad 30 years ago, some questions were more difficult to answer than if they had stayed in Switzerland. To me, providing care and help, if desired, would, however, be a matter of course if my mother lived in Switzerland" (858). "My parents are the average Kurdish family parents. (...) Unfortunately, I have been separated from my parents for more than 20 years now for political reasons. Since I cannot go to my home country, I also can't meet up with my parents. I have been able to see my parents only once since. They were my guests about a month ago. For the first time, they were able to see my children, their grandchildren, and my children their grandparents" (905).

A few family generations are now separated by country borders because of their parents going back to their country of origin:

"Unfortunately, my parents returned to their home country in Southern Europe once they retired. I was therefore in the situation that I wanted to help but couldn't because I live here in Switzerland. Especially since my mother had a heart attack, her situation has become precarious and I have been emotionally torn" (1192). "My parents returned to Italy, and so we met three or four times a year for short periods of time, during the summer breaks, for bank holidays or for short visits. However, the relationship was always very pleasant, also due to the distance that separated us" (1212).

Older respondents give somewhat mixed assessments of their parents' migration:

"My parents and I fled with two suitcases from the Russians in 1945 shortly before the end of the war. I had a poor childhood without love. Unfortunately ... I am glad to be able to be here in Switzerland" (1541). "My parents were Swiss but originally from Italy. My grandfather had emigrated to Switzerland. They had a difficult life but made many sacrifices in order to give their children a better life. I am the youngest of

three children, and unlike the others I managed to have a good career. As a result, I tried to help my parents out when they were old” (1577).

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# Statements

## Under 20

- 1 "I have a very, very close relationship with my parents. I'm infinitely glad that I have them." (Woman, age 18)
- 2 "The best parents ever." (Woman, age 18)
- 3 "I love my parents. Of course, it is not always easy, but I appreciate what I have in them, and I am grateful for all that they have done for me." (Woman, age 18)
- 4 "I'm very lucky compared to some people." (Woman, age 18)
- 5 "It is good and works even if we don't have much time for one another. I appreciate them very much. You can rely on them when you need them." (Woman, age 18)
- 6 "To me, my family (parents and siblings) is the most important thing in the world. I would go through fire and water to help one of them out in an emergency. After the death of my brother, the bond to my family has become increasingly tighter." (Woman, age 18)
- 7 "Unfortunately, I'm at odds with my father over maintenance payments and I've gone to see my uncle, that is, his brother, because he's just moved. Otherwise, it hasn't been easy with my parents' divorce, and my brother and I were always caught in the middle, being pushed around by one or the other of our parents; they still hate each other just as much, and I'm the one who cops it all." (Woman, age 18)
- 8 "Even though I sometimes have disagreements with my parents, I still love them and always support them." (Man, age 18)
- 9 "To me, family is the most important thing and comes first. I can always rely on my parents, and they support me. We help each other, and I appreciate that a lot. I thank them for all that they have done for me." (Woman, age 19)
- 10 "Very glad to have such open-minded and understanding parents." (Woman, age 19)
- 11 "I love them." (Woman, age 19)
- 12 "I was in touch with my biological father only in the early years of my life. He showed no more interest in me afterwards." (Woman, age 19)



- 13 “I love them very much. I would be at a complete loss without them.”  
(Woman, age 19)
- 14 “Despite their divorce, my parents still have a very, very good relationship with one another. I find that terrific and admirable!” (Woman, age 19)
- 15 “I think my relationship with my parents is normal. I see my mother every day, actually, except sometimes on weekends. My father works very much and tends to have more stress, which is why I hardly see him during the week and if I do only in the evenings. Right now, I am living with my boyfriend, but I try to make sure that we can have brunch or dinner with our respective families.” (Woman, age 19)
- 16 “It was difficult to fill in the questions about my biological father because I don’t know him well.” (Woman, age 19)
- 17 “On the whole, my relationship with my father was chaotic until I was 16, then it improved; my relationship with my mother has always been excellent. It’s just that these days, faced with a lot of changes, we’ve had a spat once or twice when dealing with stress and all that.” (Woman, age 19)
- 18 “Sometimes we can no longer rely on one of our parents. But that doesn’t make life any less good. Some people – like my father – don’t deserve me in their lives. Relationships between parents may not be perfect, but that’s not the key to happiness and well-being.” (Woman, age 19)
- 19 “I haven’t seen my father since I was 14.” (Woman, age 19)
- 20 “A difficult situation at the moment. There is no longer a sense of family.” (Woman, age 19)
- 21 “My parents, my mother in particular, put a lot of pressure on me when it came to school. That took an emotional toll on me. My father is more reserved and distanced, sometimes also towards me.” (Woman, age 19)
- 22 “Since my parents separated, the relationship with my mother is much closer than with my father. My father has become increasingly ‘foreign’ to me; to me he is a person who is close but not a father. In the meantime, the relationship with my mother is no longer the best, either.” (Woman, age 19)
- 23 “My father disappeared when I was seven years old, and we had him legally pronounced dead and received an inheritance.” (Woman, age 19)
- 24 “My parents are the best!” (Man, age 19)

- 25 “I have a generally good relationship with my parents. Since I no longer live with them, we have been growing in slightly different directions. We are less frequently of the same opinion.” (Man, age 19)
- 26 “I have a very good and very close relationship with my parents.” (Man, age 19)
- 27 “It is very good.” (Man, age 19)

## Twenties

### Early twenties

- 28 “It is my personal opinion that the Swiss Confederation could have better managed and protected my mother’s inheritance and how it was followed up. When my mother died, Switzerland saw fit to appoint my grandfather as my guardian to manage my mother’s estate. She owned a flat that she had bought to move to Switzerland with my father, which was therefore rightfully mine. My father – a Swiss resident and an honest man whom I can say I know better than anyone else – was top of the list of people likely able to manage the inheritance on my behalf, since I was a little child at the time. However, he was dismissed from his duties because my grandfather had managed to convince my mother that he would certainly squander the entire ‘jackpot’. Switzerland therefore appointed my grandfather as my guardian. For many years, my grandfather had full access to my (my mother’s) accounts and my property. My father and I were different. We adored each other, but God knows we’ve had our conflicts. The day I turned 18 was the day I decided to move away from him and closer to the school he had sent me to.” (Woman, age 20)
- 29 “The relationship with my parents and the education they gave me enabled me to fulfil my potential as a woman and to assert myself, to make choices and to have confidence in myself and in my future career and studies.” (Woman, age 20)
- 30 “The best in the world!” (Woman, age 20)
- 31 “They are the best parents ;-).” (Woman, age 20)
- 32 “My parents and I have a terrific and good relationship. They support me in whatever it is that I do and want to do. They back me and are also very proud of me. Conflicts and disputes are part of it.” (Woman, age 20)

- 33 “My relationship with my parents has always been very good. My relationship with my parents is very good. My relationship with my parents will always be very good.” (Woman, age 20)
- 34 “I have started my university studies, so I basically don’t live under the same roof anymore. As a result, the relationship is different compared to what it was like during my adolescence. Definitely a lot less conflicted, but also a bit more detached.” (Woman, age 20)
- 35 “I grew up having a good relationship with my parents. It has had a major influence on me in terms of my own relationships with other people. Even today, at 20 years old I can still benefit and learn from them and always rely on them, even though I am now ‘grown up’.” (Woman, age 20)
- 36 “The relationship has suffered from ups and downs due to my two parents separating. It is now beginning to stabilize.” (Woman, age 20)
- 37 “It is very good. They never put pressure on me or hit me. I could almost always behave the way I wanted.” (Woman, age 20)
- 38 “My mother died when I was still a child. She was ill for several years, during which her condition varied. I therefore hardly remember this time with her since my grandparents and the rest of my family took good care of me. The relationship with my father is special. It’s not very emotional, but I know that he is always there for me when I need him, and he has been supporting me financially during my studies without any discussion.” (Woman, age 20)
- 39 “In principle, my parents are the only people whom I can completely rely on. They are the only two people whom I have known from the beginning of my life, who have accompanied my development and have always been there for me. Even though there has frequently been tension or conflict between us, I think that this is the case in every family and is also part of it. I am also of the opinion that one usually has a better understanding with one parent. In my case, that is my mother. Every time I do something for her or support her, I think of all the things that she has done for me and feel the desire to take even more work off her hands and to help her. What’s more, I can’t bear it when she cries or is sad because it affects me. I am firmly convinced that I need my parents in my life to withstand problems or emotional difficulties in life. For this reason, I cannot imagine that they will no longer be there one day.” (Woman, age 20)
- 40 “I sometimes feel too trapped in my family. I have a strong desire for freedom.” (Woman, age 20)

- 41 “I have a very good relationship with my parents. It is a bit closer with my mother, but I get along very well with both.” (Woman, age 20)
- 42 “My depression during adolescence intensified our relationship.” (Woman, age 20)
- 43 “The relationship with my parents has changed considerably since I discovered a year ago that my father had cheated on my mother. And in the last three months in particular, the relationship with my father has become really bad because I will never forgive him for what he did.” (Woman, age 20)
- 44 “Very good.” (Woman, age 20)
- 45 “I love my parents dearly, but in terms of character I am very different from them, which is why there is often conflict and hurt feelings. Unfortunately ...” (Woman, age 20)
- 46 “As a mountain family, our isolation fosters a spirit of mutual respect and support. Family will always be there.” (Man, age 20)
- 47 “I couldn’t be more satisfied. My parents get along perfectly, and we are all happy together, even if we no longer live under one roof. My parents always supported me wherever they could, and I am infinitely grateful to them for that.” (Man, age 20)
- 48 “During my youth, we had the most conflicts since I was a bit rebellious. However, the relationship is generally very good. We also often went on vacation with the whole family, which one can consider to be a great gift. The relationship with other relatives is also very good.” (Man, age 20)
- 49 “They divorced and married again.” (Man, age 20)
- 50 “After I moved out, a lot better.” (Man, age 20)
- 51 “It’s very complicated because my mother had brain haemorrhage and a stroke ...” (Man, age 20)
- 52 “It is difficult at times.” (Man, age 20)
- 53 “My dad is a sickly miser and depressive, and my mum is in a psychiatric hospital because of her mental state, and she wants to ruin my life because I’m happier than her ... so I know I’m a good subject for these statistics.” (Man, age 20)
- 54 “Sometimes when I see them, they seem foreign to me.” (Man, age 20)
- 55 “My mother died when I was very young.” (Man, age 20)
- 56 “I would like to take example from my parents. They have always been close to me and they’ve always helped me; they would give their lives for us (daughters).” (Woman, age 21)
- 57 “My parents have been separated for many years now, and they both get on very well (we celebrate my birthday and my sisters’ birthdays

- with my parents and their respective spouses). I get on very well with them and even more so now that I'm independent from them, because we see each other less often." (Woman, age 21)
- 58 "I could hardly imagine having better parents." (Woman, age 21)
- 59 "They used to be strict when they raised me, and today I am very glad that they were." (Woman, age 21)
- 60 "We have a very good relationship." (Woman, age 21)
- 61 "I have a very good relationship with my parents." (Woman, age 21)
- 62 "I love them more than anything." (Woman, age 21)
- 63 "Our conflicts generally started after my high school years, when I was just starting university. I now notice that tensions and conflicts were, to say the least, non-existent before I was 18. Perhaps it was because I behaved in such a way as to avoid them, especially my father since I was afraid that he would be violent, both in his words (slurs, insults) and deeds. Thanks to these questions, I have also noticed an imbalance between my parents' input and support, and my own." (Woman, age 21)
- 64 "I have a perfect relationship with my parents, just as my brother does." (Woman, age 21)
- 65 "I have a good relationship with my parents, even if we occasionally disagree." (Woman, age 21)
- 66 "We always got along well. I always received support with all my decisions." (Woman, age 21)
- 67 "Messed up. Thanks for reminding me ..." (Woman, age 21)
- 68 "Complicated." (Woman, age 21)
- 69 "The relationship is super!" (Man, age 21)
- 70 "I am extremely glad and happy that I have such a great relationship with my parents!" (Man, age 21)
- 71 "I love my parents." (Man, age 21)
- 72 "We don't have much (if any) time to share moments of joy together because my parents – particularly my father – are very busy with work unfortunately." (Man, age 21)
- 73 "Because my father was from Kosovo, he had very different ideas about life than my mother, who is Croatian. He often sent money to his family in Kosovo, which led him to become heavily indebted." (Man, age 21)
- 74 "I love them both very much :). They always welcome me and my brother with open arms." (Man, age 21)
- 75 "I'm very close to both my parents, but the distance (we don't live in the same country) means we don't have as much of a relationship as we would if we lived in the same country." (Woman, age 22)

- 76 “They are very important to me :)” (Woman, age 22)
- 77 “Very harmonious. I can easily talk about everything with them.” (Woman, age 22)
- 78 “The relationship with my parents improved a lot after puberty (after the age of 17). We are very close. They are the most important thing in my life!” (Woman, age 22)
- 79 “Disagreements with my father frequently led to quarrelling or tension. However, he was always there when I needed him. My mother is better able to deal with other opinions than my father.” (Woman, age 22)
- 80 “Perfect, I wish it for everyone!” (Woman, age 22)
- 81 “Because of my cultural background, family is very important to me, even though I was born and raised in Switzerland.” (Woman, age 22)
- 82 “The relationship with both parents is good. With my father a lot better though. We get along very well, although I was very focussed on my mother as a child. Caring for my parents is not an option for me. I work in care and know how mentally and physically exhausting this task is.” (Woman, age 22)
- 83 “He sometimes shows me that he loves me with little gestures. And he doesn’t realise that he can be hurtful with the words he uses or when he just doesn’t listen when you talk to him.” (Woman, age 22)
- 84 “I love and appreciate my parents very much. For a long time, my parents’ mental illnesses (depression, anxiety) made our living together difficult, but they both gave their all to ensure that we children had a good life. I would care for my parents again in exactly the same way that I did during their years of illness. Today, I am freer and glad for that, but they still have the same significance for me that they did at the time!” (Woman, age 22)
- 85 “My father was an alcoholic, cheated on my mother; they separated; he never got in touch until he had a new wife. It depresses my mother still today. Because of this, I mostly grew up with a nanny. My father plays happy family with his new wife, with a house and a yard (without children).” (Woman, age 22)
- 86 “I have the feeling that my parents and I don’t have the same ideas, values, norms. I attach greater importance to personal relationships with people; for them it’s more about money, wealth.” (Woman, age 22)
- 87 “I have no relationship with my mother. I haven’t seen her for five years.” (Woman, age 22)
- 88 “I haven’t been in touch with my mother since the year 2000, which is when she left the family.” (Woman, age 22)

- 89 "I love them. I miss them." (Man, age 22)
- 90 "To me, my parents are the most important thing that there is." (Man, age 22)
- 91 "Perfect." (Man, age 22)
- 92 "Very happy family; I couldn't imagine better parents." (Man, age 22)
- 93 "My father runs a farm together with my older brother, and a lack of communication/concessions on both sides frequently results in arguments that affect the whole household. From my personal point of view, I simply don't see a solution to improve the situation and distance myself from my father and brother. I nevertheless try to maintain the relationships with my mother and my sisters." (Man, age 22)
- 94 "Harmonious, peaceful and familial." (Man, age 22)
- 95 "I maintain a good relationship with my parents. I am satisfied with exactly the way it is." (Man, age 22)
- 96 "I am satisfied with the relationship with my parents overall." (Man, age 22)
- 97 "Because of the cultural difference, my father and I frequently have different opinions. My father is very old-fashioned since he grew up in Kosovo, and that's not me; that bothers him. This conflict will probably result in me no longer wanting to have much to do with my father in the long run if he doesn't accept who I am and what I want." (Man, age 22)
- 98 "The relationship with my parents has always been good. Since I moved out, it's been even better." (Woman, age 23)
- 99 "The relationship with my parents is very open; we can really talk about anything. Tension is rare, and the tension is never substantial." (Woman, age 23)
- 100 "They are understanding and very kind; unfortunately, they allow themselves to be influenced by the judgement of other people." (Woman, age 23)
- 101 "I am more than satisfied with my parents, know that I can always count on them, that they love me no matter what happens, and I'm happy with that." (Woman, age 23)
- 102 "I have fantastic parents!" (Woman, age 23)
- 103 "The relationship with my mother is very close. We can talk about anything. The relationship with my father is more difficult. I worry a lot and ask myself whether he is happy. It is difficult for me to talk about it with him. He is very important to me, but it is hard for me to have a longer or serious conversation with him." (Woman, age 23)

- 104 “I would do everything for my mother. But this does not mean that I love my father less. She is just different.” (Woman, age 23)
- 105 “It is a respectful and honest relationship, for which I am very grateful. Even if it is sometimes challenging, I know it is in the good interest.” (Woman, age 23)
- 106 “I got to know my biological father only when I was a teenager. A few years before, my mother had a nervous breakdown, which was then diagnosed as a borderline personality disorder. In the following years, I was a foster child living with my stepfather, whom my mother had previously divorced. Later I moved in with my mother again. Now I am pursuing an apprenticeship with the larger goal in the not-so-distant future of running far away from them, as far away as possible. Not forever, at least not from my mother, but long enough to have a seriously guilty conscience.” (Woman, age 23)
- 107 “My parents are very important to me!” (Man, age 23)
- 108 “We always had a wonderful time. For this reason, it was hard for me to move out of my parental home.” (Man, age 23)
- 109 “They have always supported me and are open-minded.” (Man, age 23)
- 110 “Each of my parents has a different life story, with their own weaknesses and strengths. However, it’s partly their strict upbringing that makes me a respected person today, loving and deeply respectful of my parents.” (Man, age 23)
- 111 “I have great parents and am often glad that I had some freedoms, but they also showed me clear boundaries. I am likewise glad that I can do what I enjoy doing and have never had to do anything that they wanted me to do with regard to my occupation/training.” (Man, age 23)
- 112 “My siblings and I were fortunate to grow up on a small farm in the countryside. Because of this, we learned early on to do our bit and be content with less. On top of that, we were also taught to deal with money economically, as a small farm does not have a large income. Even if we never took a longer vacation with the whole family, we could enjoy our shared time at home. With regard to generations and generational conflict, I can say that my siblings and I benefit perhaps more from the older generation than others of our age because we also grew up a bit more isolated and there was more exchange within the family than with other youths.” (Man, age 23)
- 113 “I would call it a perfectly normal relationship. In rare instances, there are conflicts, but they can be sorted out by talking.” (Man, age 23)



- 114 “It is a difficult relationship because they believe to know what is best for my life.” (Man, age 23)

### Mid-twenties

- 115 “I am very satisfied with my parents, and I know that I can count on them.” (Woman, age 24)
- 116 “I’m lucky to have such exceptional parents. We’re a close-knit, harmonious family, and we share many precious moments together. I love them more than anything else in the world and will always be there for them. They give me so much love and support on a daily basis and have always done so, that they have helped me to become the happy, fulfilled 24-year-old woman I am today. I wish everyone had such wonderful parents.” (Woman, age 24)
- 117 “I have a very good and close relationship with my family (mother, father and sister).” (Woman, age 24)
- 118 “I would characterize the relationship with my parents, especially with my mother, as closer than average.” (Woman, age 24)
- 119 “The relationship with my mother is very close. I have a more distanced relationship with my father, but that’s ok for both of us.” (Woman, age 24)
- 120 “The relationship with my father is rather difficult. When I was a teenager, he had to work a lot. After the divorce, we saw each other often. Then once again he had to work a lot and married again. Since then, I have only seen him rarely.” (Woman, age 24)
- 121 “My parents have been separated for almost 20 years but have a good relationship.” (Woman, age 24)
- 122 “Although our family was highly intact by comparison, my relationship with my parents is rather distanced. We always lived very different lives, but since I moved out my relationship to my parents feels more natural and, interestingly, also closer.” (Woman, age 24)
- 123 “Both of my parents are perverted narcissistic manipulators. They have abused me and my siblings physically and mentally, and regularly so, during our whole life. They are very focused on their own problems and don’t really care about their children’s lives. It requires a great deal of emotional support even though none is provided at all. They are very attached to their image and their person. I have attempted to detach myself from them because contact with them makes me feel miserable. Their divorce was a real relief, and I think my life would have been more

- cherished if they'd been treated medically or through psychotherapy. These blood ties are part of my burden to bear ...” (Woman, age 24)
- 124 “I have a very good relationship with both my biological parents, with whom I still live.” (Man, age 24)
- 125 “They are very kind.” (Man, age 24)
- 126 “Relationship with my mother: very good. Relationship with my father: normal (burdened by the past).” (Man, age 24)
- 127 “Stable relationship based on trust.” (Man, age 24)
- 128 “I love my parents.” (Woman, age 25)
- 129 “I have a very good and close relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 25)
- 130 “My parents always supported me and are very important to me. I think that I have a much closer relationship with my parents than most of my friends with their parents. For me, they are role models, and I give their advice great significance.” (Woman, age 25)
- 131 “Since my parents separated and divorced, my contact with my father has diminished considerably. In recent years, we haven't had any contact at all.” (Woman, age 25)
- 132 “I know my biological father but have not had contact with him for more than ten years.” (Woman, age 25)
- 133 “It has improved over the years since I have grown up and become independent.” (Woman, age 25)
- 134 “Extremely close with my father, who raised me on his own. Have a close relationship with my mother now; however, for several years, we lived on opposite sides of the world.” (Woman, age 25)
- 135 “The relationship with my parents is more multifaceted and cannot be categorized or measured.” (Woman, age 25)
- 136 “This is an explanation of how my mother supports me financially: My mother supported us with equity capital so that my sister and I could rebuild my father's parental home. She gave us an interest-free loan. It is still unclear whether we have to pay it back or whether it is a gift in anticipation of inheritance.” (Woman, age 25)
- 137 “Relationships with parents are never easy. Especially if they are strict with their children, just like mine were. But today I am 25 years old, and I am grateful to them because they have made me a responsible person, who is polite and respectful with other people.” (Woman, age 25)
- 138 “I left home quite early and quite abruptly. I've just got married and it's only now that we're trying to relay new foundations.” (Woman, age 25)

- 139 “My parents separated during pregnancy. I know who my father is but do not have detailed information about him. Never had any contact with him.” (Woman, age 25)
- 140 “Hardly any close contact with my father because of his new partner. Many conflicts with my mother. Relationship between my parents has remained difficult since their divorce.” (Woman, age 25)
- 141 “I love my parents.” (Man, age 25)
- 142 “Very good relationship. I work daily with my parents in the family business.” (Man, age 25)
- 143 “My parents are incredibly important to me. Only once you have matured a bit do you understand how much they did and sacrificed for you. I would try to do everything to also improve their lives if I can.” (Man, age 25)
- 144 “My mother is the best in the world.” (Man, age 25)
- 145 “My father no longer exists, as far as I’m concerned.” (Man, age 25)
- 146 “I haven’t been in touch with my father for five years.” (Man, age 25)
- 147 “It’s probably fairly average. After the death of my father, my mother remarried. The relationship with her current husband is friendly and not ‘fatherly’. But very good!” (Man, age 25)
- 148 “My mother is the tough one but also the one that provides the most help and care. My father stays in the background; he’s the fun one, very little conflict with him. But he does not provide emotional support like my mother does.” (Man, age 25)
- 149 “The older I got, the more I understood what it meant for my parents to raise children. Yet it is not just age but also severe events within the family that strengthens the relationship and opens up understanding/trust for each other.” (Man, age 25)
- 150 “Very good relationship with both parents.” (Man, age 25)
- 151 “We work together daily on our farm.” (Man, age 25)
- 152 “I haven’t had contact with my mother since I was 17.” (Man, age 25)
- 153 “My parents are divorced; the relationship to my father is problematic because I can’t accept what he did to my mother financially. He was self-employed. The business did very well; we never had financial problems. After their divorce, we had to get through a few very hard years. I was a pillar for my younger siblings; you could almost say a substitute father, especially for the chores at home that the man is responsible for. Always supported my mother but was also always supported by her and given freedoms – always. I still can’t get over the fact that a man can financially ruin a woman – whom he once loved, had children

- with and a home, friends and a fulfilled life – to a degree that, after so many years of marriage, she has to start all over again. No pension, no savings account, no job and several children with minimum child support from a man who has more than enough. This didn't lead to maintaining much of a relationship with my father. We nevertheless have contact since deep in my heart I can't bear to not respect him to some degree. This makes my relationship with my mother even closer." (Man, age 25)
- 154 "My mother was the stricter one of the two, and she expected very much of me. My father was more the quieter one, but they pulled together. They complement each other excellently still today. Since I moved out, I have had a much better relationship with my mother. Family is the most important thing for me, and I appreciate the time that we spend together." (Woman, age 26)
- 155 "I feel loved and appreciated very much by my parents! I cherish that very much." (Woman, age 26)
- 156 "We're very close and they are my role models, seeing them together still nowadays. They were able to give us a good, well-structured education, fostering respect for others without being restrictive or punitive. We trust one another completely, and that remains one of the strongest pillars of our family." (Woman, age 26)
- 157 "I appreciate it very much that they have always remained in their parental role. They never tried to become my friends and also never needed my emotional or financial support so that it would have burdened my childhood and youth. That is to say that, although they quarrelled in front of us and made up again, I never had to see that their relationship was actually threatened or that they had major worries of any kind that I would have had to help them shoulder somehow. The parent-child relationship clearly exists to date, even though we have naturally become closer personally over the years and this relationship has become somewhat more equalised." (Woman, age 26)
- 158 "The relationship with my mother is close and intimate, whereas the relationship to my father is more distanced." (Woman, age 26)
- 159 "For us, it used to not be so great when our parents were strict with us and didn't allow us to do all the things that other kids were allowed to do. Today, I'm glad that it was like that." (Woman, age 26)
- 160 "During adolescence, it wasn't always easy. But for a long time now, we have been getting along very well. I can approach them any time for help or advice." (Woman, age 26)

- 161 “Our father left us early on and was never there for us. Instead, my mother was there for us twice as much and still is today. Thanks, Mum.” (Woman, age 26)
- 162 “My father left my mother before I was born. He relinquished his parental rights. Therefore, I don’t really know him. I only know who he is. An emotional relationship or relationship of any kind with him, however, is missing. There was never any father-daughter contact.” (Woman, age 26)
- 163 “I love them, they help me often, and I can also ask them any time. I was often very cold toward my mother (I myself don’t even exactly know why), but it is becoming better (but not because of the money), which is why I have a bit of a guilty conscience. She tries very much to be close to me. For a while now, I have had a closer relationship with my father. Previously, I had been distancing myself from both of them because they were repeatedly in front of the judge over money (divorce).” (Woman, age 26)
- 164 “My father means a lot to me; he raised me and my brother alone. During that time and even up to today, he has worked full-time. Other (single) parents wouldn’t have done that. I’m very glad that I didn’t have to go to a children’s home. It was a difficult time. I and my brother were brought up very strictly. But ultimately, I can nevertheless look back on a good past (according to the circumstances). My father still makes me feel good and stands by me.” (Man, age 26)
- 165 “I love them very much. They are awesome and have been very supportive throughout my entire life.” (Man, age 26)
- 166 “I love my parents as they are, and I wouldn’t wish for anything different if I had to do it all over again.” (Man, age 26)
- 167 “Agricultural family.” (Man, age 26)
- 168 “Despite their divorce during my early childhood, I always felt secure and had a fulfilling family life.” (Man, age 26)
- 169 “In the meantime, I have a good relationship with both parents.” (Man, age 26)

### Late twenties

- 170 “I couldn’t have wished for better parents. Much of my happiness in my life I owe to them and their magnificent parenting.” (Woman, age 27)
- 171 “They mean everything to me! We stick together. In the past, they looked after us. Today and in the future, that is the task of their chil-

- dren! By doing so, we can show how grateful we are and that we cherish them. Even though they had little money and many children, they tried to make everything possible for us.” (Woman, age 27)
- 172 “A very healthy, respectful relationship that’s very important to me.” (Woman, age 27)
- 173 “My relationship with my parents is fantastic – I’m extremely happy to have them.” (Woman, age 27)
- 174 “I’m very satisfied with the relationship with my parents and wouldn’t want to do without them.” (Woman, age 27)
- 175 “My parents are fantastic, but it took a long time until I understood that. The tension between me and my mother primarily originates in her always expecting a lot of me and putting me under a lot of pressure (school grades, extracurricular activities) well into adolescence, and then she very often shows her disappointment with me, especially with how I live my life – that is to say, her expectations in terms of my partner, marriage, children, career and so on. But she was also always there for me and supported me, particularly financially. Lately, we have been leaving each other more space and privacy, and the relationship between us has become more harmonious. By contrast, my relationship with my father up until adulthood was very contradictory. Since he often drank a lot and hardly supported the family financially, it was very difficult to live with him. Currently, we have a good relationship because we do not live together. We attempt to support each other emotionally and financially.” (Woman, age 27)
- 176 “My mother’s state of health is difficult, owing to mental problems and the physical problems that these entail. Some of my statements have therefore turned out more ‘negative’ than those about my father.” (Woman, age 27)
- 177 “My parents are the best, and I love them more than anything else. I hope that I will be as happy with my partner in 30 years as the two of them still are every day in their marriage.” (Woman, age 27)
- 178 “A very close and harmonious relationship.” (Woman, age 27)
- 179 “My father is an alcoholic. My mother enjoys her life.” (Woman, age 27)
- 180 “I have no contact with my father.” (Woman, age 27)
- 181 “On account of my mother’s illness, there is certainly potential for conflict. Other than that, I consider my relationship with them to be a very beautiful one.” (Woman, age 27)
- 182 “They could have been more engaged parents at the time. Now it’s a bit late ...” (Woman, age 27)

- 183 “Love my mother and grandparents.” (Man, age 27)
- 184 “I came to Switzerland with my mother, and she always looked after me very well and made sure that I was brought up right. My father was never interested in any of his many children (me included). Accordingly, I don’t have any emotional attachment to my biological father. My stepfather was excellent in assuming the role of father, however. And I have the attachment to him that is common between fathers and sons.” (Man, age 27)
- 185 “Separation at birth.” (Man, age 27)
- 186 “All in all, I had a very good childhood and upbringing and am glad to have my parents!” (Man, age 27)
- 187 “They are only human, too. They love their children but have their own problems that can be a burden.” (Man, age 27)
- 188 “All was and is well. Normal family ‘problems’. I feel honoured that I could grow up and was brought up this way.” (Woman, age 28)
- 189 “I love my parents very much. It is such a shame that we live so far apart (over 1,000 km).” (Woman, age 28)
- 190 “My relationship with my parents is very good. Money plays no role in our family – it’s enough to live on and it’s perfect the way it is.” (Woman, age 28)
- 191 “Super.” (Woman, age 28)
- 192 “I have a very good relationship with my parents. I cherish them and would not want to be without them. They always supported my brother and I, and they taught us to appreciate the simple things in life.” (Woman, age 28)
- 193 “The love and values they passed on to us are the greatest legacy I’ve received, and I’ll always be grateful to them for that.” (Woman, age 28)
- 194 “My father suffers from a psychiatric illness. It took a long time to get a specific diagnosis. I had a happy childhood, but violent arguments and property damage were a source of stress for me. According to some studies, my hormonal imbalance (which magically resolved itself around the age of 12 and returned to normal) may have been caused by this atmosphere of constant tension. We reached the peak when my mother and father split up and he left home. It was very hard for him and he tried to commit suicide. Bad times. I also had to do a lot of work on myself to learn to forgive and be resilient in the face of behaviour that was partly due to illness. He’s now much better at managing himself and knows how to seek help when he feels things are

- getting out of hand. We're a close-knit family, and we see each other regularly. Isn't life wonderful?" (Woman, age 28)
- 195 "I discovered what a father should be when I met my partner's father. I said to myself as I watched them: 'Oh! Is that really what a dad is?' Even now, I can't rely on my father. But I see him from time to time and we have a superficial relationship." (Woman, age 28)
- 196 "I didn't answer certain questions about my father because I haven't had any contact with him since I was four." (Woman, age 28)
- 197 "Although they have their faults, like all of us, they are the best parents in the world." (Woman, age 28)
- 198 "I love them dearly, and I feel so lucky to be their daughter." (Woman, age 28)
- 199 "That I am very glad and can consider myself very fortunate that I was able to grow up with such parents. That they are still there for me when I need them. I know that I have been very lucky, and I do appreciate that very much." (Woman, age 28)
- 200 "My parents are affiliated with two different religions. That was the main reason for tensions." (Woman, age 28)
- 201 "My parents made it possible for me to study, even though they did not earn much and worked hard for it. I'm very grateful for that and support them for that reason in every respect." (Woman, age 28)
- 202 "I have a very good relationship with my parents." (Woman, age 28)
- 203 "I just recently moved out. They supported me during my training and also otherwise as much as they could (financially and in other ways as well)." (Woman, age 28)
- 204 "We are not in touch regularly, sometimes for longer periods of time, then again more frequently. I still love them very much, even if I don't see or visit them regularly." (Woman, age 28)
- 205 "My mother has always been there for me despite a great deal of tension in our family. In contrast, my father had children but never looked after them." (Woman, age 28)
- 206 "I love them." (Man, age 28)
- 207 "I'm very glad that I have them." (Man, age 28)
- 208 "I'm infinitely grateful that I can be part of a healthy, loving and supportive family. A true privilege." (Man, age 28)
- 209 "He lived separately, and the divorce was pending in court prior to his death. My father didn't tell us about his (multiple) illnesses!" (Man, age 28)



- 210 “Was beaten as a child. Grew up in modest circumstances. Was on my own early on.” (Man, age 28)
- 211 “We have a very beautiful relationship among each other, and my family means a lot to me! :)” (Woman, age 29)
- 212 “My parents always gave us (my brothers and me) to understand that they are always there for us no matter what we do.” (Woman, age 29)
- 213 “My parents have a farm, which is why I support them in running it.” (Woman, age 29)
- 214 “I love them very much, and I am happy to have such great parents.” (Woman, age 29)
- 215 “I couldn’t imagine having better parents – and grandparents for our children!” (Woman, age 29)
- 216 “Change nothing.” (Woman, age 29)
- 217 “It’s not always easy with parents, but it’s the same with us children. In recent years, I’ve learned to no longer reproach my parents for what happened/didn’t happen in the past. I believe that everything that they did or didn’t do happened based on the best of their knowledge and belief. There are always conflicts in a family. I would still not want to trade my parents.” (Woman, age 29)
- 218 “During my teenage years a strenuous relationship, always too many expectations and too strict (compared with my sister), quite meritocratic. During my studies too little or no financial and, above all, even less emotional support.” (Woman, age 29)
- 219 “My mother died before I was 16, at a time when I was financially and administratively dependent on my parents.” (Woman, age 29)
- 220 “Mother is a relationship person and wants to work on the relationship; father doesn’t.” (Woman, age 29)
- 221 “I generally got along well with my parents. The only point of conflict, where I felt completely left alone, was that they never protected me from my brother, who mentally abused me.” (Woman, age 29)
- 222 “The relationship has changed since I bore my first child. Since the birth of the child/grandchild, the frequency of contact has increased.” (Woman, age 29)
- 223 “Haven’t heard from my father since the divorce ...” (Woman, age 29)
- 224 “I would like to mention that I have an additional residence because of my studies and that I therefore am a weekly commuter and thus visit/see my parents only on weekends. Ever since, our relationship has become better. The distance was therefore necessary.” (Woman, age 29)
- 225 “Distance doesn’t help maintain relationships.” (Woman, age 29)

- 226 “I love my parents. Both of them.” (Man, age 29)
- 227 “We work together in the family business. Business and private life often mix. The only tensions really emerge over business issues. Privately we get along almost 100% like best friends.” (Man, age 29)
- 228 “That my parents met each other was fate and that was a mistake. It could have all been better for my mother.” (Man, age 29)
- 229 “My parents are very important to me; I owe my character to them. Since my father moved in with his partner, our relationship lost some of its quality. Because of his guilty conscience owing to the divorce, I can’t take his praise and advice seriously anymore. He is eager to please me ... I find that a shame.” (Man, age 29)
- 230 “The relationship with my mother was emotionally very tense, particularly during my puberty, and there were frequent conflicts. My father mostly understood my concerns, but my mother didn’t. This resulted in conflicts between me and my mother, which then weakened my relationship with my father because he naturally backed my mother. Years later, she was diagnosed with some mental health problems, some signs of which we had probably already noticed at the time. My father and I recently reflected on my childhood/my teenage years. Many of my mother’s behavioural patterns during my childhood were early signs or symptoms of the now diagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder from her own childhood.” (Man, age 29)
- 231 “I believe a person could misinterpret the relationship with my parents. I am self-employed and independent and currently successful in life without their help. Also in terms of, for example, being proud or supportive, I never need them to clearly tell/show me. That’s just the way we are; we all know how we tick. What might also need to be mentioned is that my mother openly shares our relationship (‘brags’), whereas my father takes it quietly and relishes it. In terms of calmness and thoughtfulness, I am more akin to my father, but in terms of ambition and focus more to my mother.” (Man, age 29)
- 232 “Mummy and Daddy are the best.” (Man, age 29)
- 233 “Regarding the answers concerning my father, it should be considered that he has been suffering from multiple sclerosis for 30 years now.” (Man, age 29)
- 234 “In the last ten years, I have run into my father only twice by coincidence and talked with him only briefly. Physically, my mother is not very well and can hardly walk properly anymore. She still has to go to work every day. I feel sorry for her.” (Man, age 29)

- 235 “Today, I have a very good relationship with my parents. Before I turned 16, there was a lot of quarrelling and the like.” (Man, age 29)
- 236 “I am very grateful that I was able to grow up in such a sheltered way!” (Man, age 29)
- 237 “I have had no contact with my mother for ten years!!! For several years, I have been building a relationship with my father.” (Man, age 29)
- 238 “Completely broke off contact a few years ago.” (Man, age 29)

## Thirties

### Early thirties

- 239 “I am very glad to be able to call them my parents. I think they are the best parents in the world, and I love them more than anything!” (Woman, age 30)
- 240 “The relationship with my parents is and will always be very intense. We are a family, and I am very grateful to them for all that they have done for me.” (Woman, age 30)
- 241 “My parents are very important to me. We live in the same place and work in our own firm (family business) and therefore see each other daily. Generally, I can’t imagine life without them. They made me into the person who I am, and I’m very proud to have such parents. I sincerely hope that I and my husband will be such good parents for our children should I eventually have any.” (Woman, age 30)
- 242 “You grow into a relationship.” (Woman, age 30)
- 243 “I’m glad to have such great parents.” (Woman, age 30)
- 244 “As my situation is a bit unusual (my father died when I was 17 and I received an inheritance), it’s difficult to answer all the questions. Generally speaking, I have an excellent relationship with my mother, with no arguments, but we’ve recently been experiencing some tension over a complicated and stressful situation with my brother.” (Woman, age 30)
- 245 “The belief in Jesus Christ rebuilt the relationship with my mother once I was 18!” (Woman, age 30)
- 246 “I know that my parents love me and vice versa. The strict upbringing that they experienced during their childhood and their life course, however, has led to a lack of openness and communication in my family. The thought of taking care of their personal hygiene makes me feel

- uncomfortable. Perhaps because I have difficulty accepting that they are getting older and our roles are reversing.” (Woman, age 30)
- 247 “The relationship with my father is rather ‘dispassionate’. I do think that he loves me, but he can’t show his emotions much. The relationship with my mother was very tense for a few years (because of my partner at the time). Since then, it has relaxed and we have a good relationship.” (Woman, age 30)
- 248 “My father shows many patterns of emotional blackmail and frequently takes on the victim role. He punishes by means of subtle reproaches and a guilty conscience and completely dodges direct conflict.” (Woman, age 30)
- 249 “I think they did a good job in bringing me up.” (Woman, age 30)
- 250 “Difficult because of constant quarrels between my parents over money (unemployed father) during my teenage years. On top of that, very religious parents, who ‘relied on God’ instead of taking care of everything themselves.” (Woman, age 30)
- 251 “Unfortunately, I can’t answer some of the details about my parents since I haven’t been in touch for almost 20 years (on my part).” (Woman, age 30)
- 252 “My parents are very important to me; they have always done everything for me, and I will always do everything for them.” (Man, age 30)
- 253 “I think I received a very good education, strict but fair. When I had done something wrong, they let me know and equally they let me know when I had done something well. It would be too easy to just criticise them!” (Man, age 30)
- 254 “I love them both ...! :)” (Man, age 30)
- 255 “Whatever happens, I’ll always love them.” (Man, age 30)
- 256 “The relationship with my parents is very important in my life.” (Man, age 30)
- 257 “Typical Swiss. Had a very beautiful and super childhood and still have a close relationship with my parents. Was brought up well, but not too strict. Due to my own good upbringing, I am often annoyed today by people’s bad upbringing/manners (children as well as adults).” (Man, age 30)
- 258 “Have contact with my biological father. Mother separated from my biological father when I was still little. I was then raised by my stepfather – he also lives nearby.” (Man, age 30)
- 259 “If I had the chance, I would pay for them to study, to allow them to see the world as I do! Now maybe I can at least pay for some holidays

- for them to enable them to enjoy life while they are still alive.” (Man, age 30)
- 260 “I hope that I treat my children the same way as my parents treated me.” (Man, age 30)
- 261 “Happily satisfied.” (Man, age 30)
- 262 “I have good and caring parents and can consider myself fortunate.” (Man, age 30)
- 263 “My relationship with my parents has improved significantly after I turned 25. At that age, I started to get closer to them again.” (Man, age 30)
- 264 “The bonds have weakened because we live far apart. But as soon as we are together for a little while, the strong family relationship returns.” (Man, age 30)
- 265 “Unfortunately, I can’t answer any questions about my father as I’ve had very little contact with him. I still saw my father as a young child, but I don’t remember those times. I think the last time I saw him was about 15 years ago. I got back in touch with him recently. I need to know who gave me half my genes. I can’t objectively answer such specific questions about my father.” (Man, age 30)
- 266 “Whether you receive an inheritance or not is a tactless question since a relationship should never be influenced by financial issues.” (Man, age 30)
- 267 “For years, there has been almost no contact with my father. This is presumably how both sides want it.” (Man, age 30)
- 268 “I was abused as a child, and in all facets, whether violence, sexually or mentally. That I NOW have post-traumatic stress disorder / have to have psychotherapy. Thanks that you system controllers and my begetters have completely DESTROYED my life.” (Man, age 30)
- 269 “No relationship with my biological parents. Shortly after birth, I travelled to Switzerland and experienced only a Swiss life.” (Man, age 30)
- 270 “I couldn’t wish for better parents. I love them very much and am infinitely grateful that they always supported me no matter in which phase of my life.” (Woman, age 31)
- 271 “In my view, my parents and I have a super great relationship. They are and have always been there for me when I need/have needed them. They always supported and challenged me to the right extent, and I’m incredibly grateful to them for doing so. I want to raise my son the way that they raised me.” (Woman, age 31)
- 272 “They are more my friends. Always there by my side.” (Woman, age 31)
- 273 “My parents are fantastic, and I have an excellent relationship with them, as does my brother. On the other hand, my little sister was in a

- relationship with an asylum seeker who gave her AIDS and with whom she had (healthy) children. He beat her and kept her under his yoke. She was finally able to escape and now lives alone with her children. Since her separation, she has been corresponding with another future asylum seeker, whom she supports financially despite the fact that she is on welfare. As a result, when it comes to the link between generations, it is a disaster and my parents have to support her and take responsibility for everything: finances, health, etc.” (Woman, age 31)
- 274 “I am very happy to have such great parents and that I was able to grow up in this family.” (Woman, age 31)
- 275 “My parents were quite strict when I was growing up, which led to some tension, but I now have a very pleasant relationship with both my parents. For around four years now, my dad has been teaching me bee-keeping, which he has been doing in his spare time for over 30 years. This passion has enabled me to spend more time with my dad. I also have a lot of contact with my maternal grandparents, who are both still alive and whom I visit about once a week. My paternal grandparents have passed away, but I have very fond memories of them. I should point out that I was lucky enough to know four great-grandparents, including my maternal grandmother’s mother, of whom I have especially fond memories.” (Woman, age 31)
- 276 “I find that I have a very good relationship with my parents and that I owe them a lot, especially when it comes to my current attitudes and behaviour. I am very grateful to them for that.” (Woman, age 31)
- 277 “I love my parents a lot and would not be the person who I am today without them. I am incredibly grateful for all the things that they did and still do for me – can’t imagine a life without them.” (Woman, age 31)
- 278 “It’s super the way it is. Wouldn’t change a thing.” (Woman, age 31)
- 279 “The relationship with my parents is rather complex. Since the two separated emotionally (but still live in the same household), the process of me detaching has definitely happened.” (Woman, age 31)
- 280 “The best parents. Sometimes we have differences of opinion, but I find that completely normal.” (Woman, age 31)
- 281 “As adults, the relationship has developed a different (more positive) dynamic. Inheritances will be divided equally between the siblings.” (Woman, age 31)
- 282 “Solid middle-class family; grew up well protected. I lacked nothing.” (Woman, age 31)

- 283 “Mother: chronic alcoholism, complicated relationship because of this condition. Father: new partner not readily accepted by his children, complicated relationship as a result.” (Woman, age 31)
- 284 “Unfortunately sad, brought about by divorce, lies and money issues.” (Woman, age 31)
- 285 “It’s okay the way it is. Having so little contact doesn’t bother me, and they are alright with that too. I have enough family connection with my husband’s family.” (Woman, age 31)
- 286 “I feel unfairly treated by my parents compared to my brothers (e.g., they funded their university studies but not mine). Great emotional distance between me and my parents (especially with my mother), which both sides are good at glossing over toward outsiders.” (Woman, age 31)
- 287 “I can’t complain; I have a great relationship with my parents.” (Man, age 31)
- 288 “The relationship is absolutely super.” (Man, age 31)
- 289 “I love my parents and could not imagine better parents than mine.” (Man, age 31)
- 290 “We have a very good relationship. When I lived abroad, we engaged in regular exchange.” (Man, age 31)
- 291 “My mother is the totally dominant person in the family.” (Man, age 31)
- 292 “Unfortunately, my father died much too early and unexpectedly from cancer. For me and my family, it was a difficult time, from which I emerged best. My brother had and still has quite a bit of trouble with it. I find that my mother still suffers from it. They were a typical Swiss couple in that the marriage would have lasted until death. This weighs on me, now indirectly, regarding my mother.” (Man, age 31)
- 293 “Good relationship, familial, important.” (Man, age 31)
- 294 “I love my parents, and I feel much closer to my mother than to my father.” (Man, age 31)
- 295 “I’m sad that my father died when I was 13; I never knew him.” (Man, age 31)
- 296 “I love them both very much.” (Man, age 31)
- 297 “My parents have always provided support and made sacrifices themselves (including financial sacrifices) in order to educate me and help me progress in life. I feel grateful for what they have done, and I am happy to see them together after so many years.” (Woman, age 32)
- 298 “Very good!” (Woman, age 32)

- 299 “Despite the distance, I have a very good relationship with my parents thanks to communicating via the Internet (Skype, WhatsApp, FaceTime etc.). Our relationship is deeper, more peaceful and intense since I’ve been living abroad.” (Woman, age 32)
- 300 “Healthy, supportive and with a lot of love.” (Woman, age 32)
- 301 “I am very lucky!” (Woman, age 32)
- 302 “I have a very good relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 32)
- 303 “I have great parents and very good relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 32)
- 304 “I wish it could have gone differently! Even though it’s better that they divorced, I’m quite sad they didn’t manage to rebuild a relationship. It’s always a burden for me.” (Woman, age 32)
- 305 “My mother died when I was four years old.” (Woman, age 32)
- 306 “I’ve had no contact with my father since 1996.” (Woman, age 32)
- 307 “I have a very good relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 32)
- 308 “Especially as a teenager, the relationship with my parents was very difficult. In the meantime, it has become increasingly warmer.” (Woman, age 32)
- 309 “I maintain a sympathetic and honest relationship with my parents. I can always rely on them and would also do everything for them. At the moment, I cannot imagine life without them and hope that it will remain this way for a long time to come.” (Woman, age 32)
- 310 “As my mother was seriously ill (in a wheelchair, suffering from multiple sclerosis), our relationship with both my mother and my father changed a great deal. Negatively. My mother is less inclined to call or ask for services because she thinks she’s a burden. My father, suffering from the burden of the illness and being a carer, isolates himself and gets depressed. All of this means that a serious illness can alter the human relationships we originally had.” (Woman, age 32)
- 311 “Distant relationship with both; however, my father was always there when I needed him throughout my childhood and teenage years, while my mother never really cared about anyone other than herself ... She would buy me stuff to compensate for not being there emotionally during my childhood and teens. I don’t have a lot of contact with them but do visit once or twice a year.” (Woman, age 32)
- 312 “Family is very important to me. My wife and I are planning to buy a house, which we will convert to a multi-generational house once my parents need help.” (Man, age 32)
- 313 “I think a very good one.” (Man, age 32)



- 314 “My parents couldn’t have been any better.” (Man, age 32)
- 315 “The best parents one could ask for!” (Man, age 32)
- 316 “Despite their marital crisis, I, as son, was able to keep the family together when I was about 16 years old ...” (Man, age 32)
- 317 “They always made sure I had everything I needed and were always there to listen when I needed them. I love them deeply.” (Man, age 32)
- 318 “Both parents worked when I was a child. My grandparents often looked after us. But that also allowed us to grow up in a beautiful single-family home and we were often able to go on vacation. I was still a child when my parents divorced. This left its mark on me (mental strain – in school and private life).” (Man, age 32)
- 319 “They both have made me who I am today, each in their own way. I will forever be grateful for it.” (Man, age 32)
- 320 “I and my father work in the same company.” (Man, age 32)
- 321 “The best parents one could ask for!” (Woman, age 33)
- 322 “Our relationship is based on love, mutual trust and respect.” (Woman, age 33)
- 323 “In our family, our relationship with one another is very important. We are in touch very regularly.” (Woman, age 33)
- 324 “A beautiful relationship is a gift.” (Woman, age 33)
- 325 “If families could experience the same harmony of life that I was given, people would have a lot more love to give ... We’re a close-knit, wealthy family who respect and love each other; it’s a real gift ... Thank you to my parents for all that!” (Woman, age 33)
- 326 “I had a dream childhood and our relationship today is excellent!” (Woman, age 33)
- 327 “I always had a strong relationship with my mother but not with my father! My father has been an alcoholic since he was a teenager ...” (Woman, age 33)
- 328 “My parents have been self-employed since I was born, and, despite their goodwill, they weren’t around much for my brother and me during our childhood. Materially speaking, we lacked nothing, but family relations were complicated by a lack of family time and the daily stress that weighed on the shoulders of every member of the family.” (Woman, age 33)
- 329 “I have had no contact with my biological father for more than 20 years.” (Woman, age 33)
- 330 “My pregnancy and the birth of my daughter as well as the deteriorating health (cancer) of my mother resulted in the contact between me

- and my mother becoming increasingly stronger in the twelve months before her death.” (Woman, age 33)
- 331 “We are not very close, but it’s alright for all involved the way it is.” (Woman, age 33)
- 332 “I have had no contact with my mother for about ten years. After she broke it off several times previously and I had sought it time and again, I couldn’t do it anymore.” (Woman, age 33)
- 333 “I’m satisfied with the relationship with my parents, yet there is always room for improvement. But that is unfortunately the way of the world; you are who you are.” (Man, age 33)
- 334 “They are the best ;-).” (Man, age 33)
- 335 “Satisfied.” (Man, age 33)
- 336 “We have a very good relationship with one another. I’m very grateful for that!” (Man, age 33)
- 337 “My relationship with my dad was too distant for my liking (we didn’t share many leisure activities) until I left the family home. I think I have a ‘normal’ relationship with my mum. We hardly ever went on holiday, and I suffered enough that my dad was always at work. In addition to his work, he was also a volunteer fireman (with a great deal of commitment, as this was his passion). However, my parents have always been there for me, always supported me, and I think it’s only natural that I should return the favour if I need to. Strangely enough, we’ve become a lot closer now that I live over 100 km away. This is rather difficult for me because my dad has cancer and I can see him weakening little by little ... Thanks to their upbringing, family is very important to me and I’d do anything for them. I’d like to be more present with my children, when I have them ...” (Man, age 33)
- 338 “My relationship with my parents has remained a parent-child relationship even though I’m now an adult.” (Man, age 33)

### Mid-thirties

- 339 “We have a very good, close and friendly relationship with one another. My parents get along very well, and we frequently do things together.” (Woman, age 34)
- 340 “My parents have always shown me a lot of love. We had a big family life with some pretty strict rules, but we were always able to have a laugh and have fun.” (Woman, age 34)

- 341 “My relationship with my parents is amazing. I admire them. What I am today is all because of them.” (Woman, age 34)
- 342 “The relationship with both parents is very close, trusting, respectful, loving, honest and straightforward. We support each other and can count on each other any time. Owing to my father’s self-employment and my mother’s role as housewife and mother, my relationship with my mother was and is nevertheless closer/deeper.” (Woman, age 34)
- 343 “My father left my mother when she was pregnant with me.” (Woman, age 34)
- 344 “I have been extremely lucky to grow up with people like my parents. They let me and my siblings live, exercised restraint in imposing as few expectations as possible on us and were very tolerant. The perfect breeding ground for trust and firm roots.” (Woman, age 34)
- 345 “My parents had a very respectful relationship on equal footing with each other and with their children. Despite (or precisely because of) their many children, my mother contributed to our family income again very early on. The relationship among all siblings as well as with my parents continues to be close – very close, even if none of us lives in the parental household anymore.” (Woman, age 34)
- 346 “They are good and caring; I know I can rely on them anytime. But they didn’t verbalise their affection and feelings much, even when needed, especially my father.” (Woman, age 34)
- 347 “My father was under a lot of mental stress prior to his death; my mother was strongly oppressed in their marriage, which also affected the relationship with us children.” (Woman, age 34)
- 348 “I hardly knew my biological father. I was a little child when he passed away.” (Woman, age 34)
- 349 “No contact with my father since I was 21 years old. He never cared and hardly showed any interest in the lives of his children. The relationship with my mother has improved tremendously since the birth of my daughter and her retirement. Now, the relationship is harmonious and very good.” (Woman, age 34)
- 350 “It is the most beautiful thing to have parents who believe in you during your childhood, who support you, but also set clear rules, always with the positive intent for the good of the child. Receiving love, trust and values during one’s entire childhood strengthens a person for life and, in my view, represents the most important basis for self-confidence and satisfaction later in life. If I were to succeed (should I have children one day) in being there for my children in the same way that

- my parents were there for me, then I could be proud of myself :-).”  
(Woman, age 34)
- 351 “They made a lot possible for me; my father, too, isn’t the typical immigrant. I just recently married and without pressure. My sister and I had to earn a lot and didn’t get it handed to us. I am very grateful to them for the life that I have. Because they took us with them to Switzerland, we have had many opportunities. As a result, my sister and I gained access to different ways of thinking, to other values and traditions, which has greatly enriched our lives. As a woman, it has enabled my independence and given me a mind of my own.” (Woman, age 34)
- 352 “I firmly believe that you choose your parents. Even if it doesn’t seem to look that way according to my responses, I am thankful and glad that they have accompanied me on my path through life.” (Woman, age 34)
- 353 “My mother is manic-depressive. My father suffers from schizophrenia and dementia and is in a nursing home.” (Woman, age 34)
- 354 “I was raised by my grandmother. Therefore, I believe a lot of the parental relationship is being left out when answering questions only about my biological parents. The most important person in my life is my grandmother. She plays both the mum and dad roles in my life. As I grew up in a different household from that of both my parents, it’s natural that we are not very close. In addition, as I live in Switzerland and all my relatives live in South America, some of my answers might ‘taint’ your data, e.g., to the question about helping with the household, shopping and so on.” (Woman, age 34)
- 355 “My dad was abandoned as a baby. We learned a few years ago that he has four siblings. I don’t know if his parents (my biological grandparents) are still alive. I’d love to learn more about his story, but he doesn’t want to talk about his painful past (foster care, orphanage, violence). I’d love to hear his story one day.” (Woman, age 34)
- 356 “I was adopted as a little child.” (Woman, age 34)
- 357 “My adoptive parents have never made and do not make any difference between me (adopted child) and their three other children.” (Woman, age 34)
- 358 “A long-standing relationship of conflict between them, which we have endured.” (Man, age 34)
- 359 “As a child, my upbringing was strict but fair. Abiding by rules and agreements had top priority, just like honesty. My parents helped me in every imaginable situation. Supporting each other and sticking together were always of the utmost importance. No matter how dark or late it

- was or inconvenient the time for help was, I received it. I would not be where I am today without my parents and my family.” (Man, age 34)
- 360 “To me, my parents are the best.” (Man, age 34)
- 361 “I love them!” (Man, age 34)
- 362 “Two very kind and inspiring people, even though they are also completely different.” (Man, age 34)
- 363 “Some people can’t properly express love, or perhaps are ashamed to do so.” (Man, age 34)
- 364 “Love them both the way they are, and the relationship suits me well.” (Man, age 34)
- 365 “I was raised mainly by my grandparents because my brother had asthma and could hardly breathe when we played together. And I think my grandparents raised and educated me much better than my parents could have because they already had experience and were wise. Anyway, my relationships with both grandparents and parents were/are good. Actually, the closeness of our relationships seems to stand in an inverse relation to technological development. Technology provides the ability to communicate with relatives when it is necessary (rarely), but most of one’s leisure time is spent to either improve the technology or relax instead of devoting time to family relationships and friends.” (Man, age 34)
- 366 “I don’t know my father.” (Man, age 34)
- 367 “My father died when I was still little.” (Woman, age 35)
- 368 “Is a very close relationship. Miss my father a lot.” (Woman, age 35)
- 369 “I have a very good relationship with my parents. Although there were conflicts in the past, we always tried to resolve them and to accept misunderstandings and differences in views. This has certainly led us to having the good relationship we have today. I think that mutual respect and the ability to talk and to confront each other have been the foundation of that.” (Woman, age 35)
- 370 “We have always felt very close, even within the extended family; we love each other.” (Woman, age 35)
- 371 “I’m grateful to have/have had the best parents. In other families, there is a lot of quarrelling or even hatred, especially after a divorce. My parents were superb in dealing with the situation after they separated. I’m infinitely grateful to them for that.” (Woman, age 35)
- 372 “They are simply great.” (Woman, age 35)
- 373 “I love my parents the way they are and am very grateful to them that they give me so much.” (Woman, age 35)

- 374 “I have great parents, who are actually mostly supportive.” (Woman, age 35)
- 375 “Best parents in the world!” (Woman, age 35)
- 376 “As I moved more than 500 km away from my parents about 20 years ago, my relationship to my parents has improved. I always look forward to visiting my parents for a few days and when they come to see me. But I’m also glad when they leave again. There is a great relationship between me, my husband, my children and my parents.” (Woman, age 35)
- 377 “My parents are momentarily in a somewhat exceptional situation.” (Woman, age 35)
- 378 “My parents separated when I was still little. Since then, I’ve only had contact with my father three times.” (Woman, age 35)
- 379 “1. I don’t know my real father and he doesn’t want to know me. 2. I only lived with my biological mother for the first seven years, and since then she has not been present in my life.” (Woman, age 35)
- 380 “It’s hard to handle if your parents have never been interested in your life. As a child, I was a burden to them; today, they simply don’t care ...” (Woman, age 35)
- 381 “The endowment was returned (property returned).” (Woman, age 35)
- 382 “We have a very good relationship, which we also cultivate.” (Man, age 35)
- 383 “My relationship with my parents is good and stable.” (Man, age 35)
- 384 “My father is currently suffering from a deep depression.” (Man, age 35)
- 385 “Mother super, father so-so.” (Man, age 35)
- 386 “I haven’t seen my parents in ten years; would like to see them again and help financially.” (Man, age 35)
- 387 “Family and maintaining good relationships among it was always a top priority for my parents. Despite turbulent moments in life, my parents have always made choices that had the best interest of the family at heart. The close ties in my family were inherited from our grandparents. Our family was always part of a larger unit with older generations at its centre (grandparents).” (Man, age 35)
- 388 “I love my parents even if it is not always easy with them.” (Man, age 35)
- 389 “Regular contact with my mother; I see my father about three to four times a year. Since he also has other children, his focus is currently on them and on his intensive work. I would like to be in touch with him more.” (Man, age 35)

- 390 “I have very good parents when I compare them with those of my friends.” (Man, age 35)
- 391 “When it comes to relationships, I have become very critical on account of my parents, as this couple has actually never had a healthy relationship. To me, it is extremely important to have a healthy relationship because I know how I never want to end up. For that reason, I live in a rather distanced relationship to my parents.” (Man, age 35)
- 392 “Today, I understand that they were caught up in the dispositions and patterns of society and decided on this basis what in their eyes was right and wrong! My mother’s conservative disposition was not very favourable for our relationship. I was a pronounced freethinker, even as a child, who did her own thing, even in opposition to all the others. Today I understand her actions and opinions and can relate to them. My mother doesn’t always understand me still today, but she can accept that I just am who I am.” (Woman, age 36)
- 393 “Could not imagine a better relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 36)
- 394 “It is very straightforward, open, communicative, familial, involves a willingness to help, loving.” (Woman, age 36)
- 395 “My parents are the best! :-)” (Woman, age 36)
- 396 “I love my parents and my sister more than anything else!” (Woman, age 36)
- 397 “Super parents :-).” (Woman, age 36)
- 398 “I love my parents.” (Woman, age 36)
- 399 “My husband and I were travelling. Thereafter, we were allowed to live with my parents until we found work and a flat of our own. Now we are living by ourselves again.” (Woman, age 36)
- 400 “Great, hardworking role models.” (Woman, age 36)
- 401 “I am satisfied with the relationship with my parents. If we have little contact, it’s my fault and not because they wouldn’t want to. Often I simply don’t have the time and energy to call or visit them after work.” (Woman, age 36)
- 402 “The relationship has changed since I have children of my own. I expected more sympathy/interest. Similar to my relationship with them when I was a child. But because we rarely see each other anyway, it isn’t a constant concern of mine.” (Woman, age 36)
- 403 “He has played a decisive role in a negative sense for my professional training and for the sentimental situation in my life.” (Woman, age 36)

- 404 “Difficult, as the separation of my parents stole a lot of time and therefore my childhood and youth. The divorce dragged on for almost 15 years.” (Woman, age 36)
- 405 “They are an important part of my life and I love them.” (Man, age 36)
- 406 “I love my parents.” (Man, age 36)
- 407 “Thank you for this questionnaire. I can see that I have wonderful parents.” (Man, age 36)
- 408 “Best parents forever! I miss them.” (Man, age 36)
- 409 “Even though my parents live in the Middle East, I know that they will always be there for me if I need them. Recently I had major surgery, and my parents were at my side the entire time. That is family, selfless and always being there for one another. I can consider myself fortunate to have such parents (not all of us have this good fortune).” (Man, age 36)
- 410 “I had a good upbringing.” (Man, age 36)
- 411 “After my son and my wife, they are the most important people in my life.” (Man, age 36)
- 412 “Fortunately, I have them.” (Man, age 36)
- 413 “I love my parents. I often miss them, and I plan to reunite with them soon.” (Man, age 36)
- 414 “All in all, we have a good relationship, although the distance makes it difficult. I would like to spend more time with them, and sometimes I feel guilty for not being close to them.” (Man, age 36)
- 415 “Used to be the classical division of roles between my parents at home. Father was overstressed by too much work because he always feared that he had to provide for the entire family and he saved for hard times (the financial crises eventually actually hit ;). He never spoke about how much money the ‘family’ had; this is unknown/remains unsaid/is dodged even now. Today, a much more relaxed, beautiful relationship than during my teenage years. The grandchildren have let my parents ‘blossom’ even more and work on their relationship/old role patterns. Ever since my father started spending more time at home than at work, he has developed (even) further ‘socially’. This is a reason why I would like to work part-time to the extent possible, my wife as well.” (Man, age 36)
- 416 “I went abroad when I was 16/17 (South America) and have never really lived at home since then. As a result, I emotionally detached from my parents rather early. They only really fell out with each other when I was already 30. That did indeed trouble me much more than I previously thought it would.” (Man, age 36)



- 417 “Until recently, I had no contact with my mother. She had taken good care of me into my teenage years. I haven’t seen her for over 20 years, which will soon change. My father has always seemed overwhelmed by being a father. I feel closer to my mother and understood by her, who has not been part of my life for more than 20 years, than to my father.” (Man, age 36)
- 418 “No contact with father since my late 20s. I have no detailed information regarding his current life.” (Man, age 36)

### Late thirties

- 419 “Always there for one another.” (Woman, age 37)
- 420 “My parents have been extremely important for me: They raised me with love but also with clear rules, helping me if I needed it but without interfering too much in my personal life. They always appreciated and encouraged my efforts to become an independent person, both financially and emotionally. Now that I am a mother, they are very present in my son’s life as his grandparents, and this is very precious to me. I am happy about the opportunities we have to spend time together, but I also know that I can manage on my own. Your questions have made me think about our relationship.” (Woman, age 37)
- 421 “Compared to my classmates, my upbringing was rather ‘strict’, but I’m grateful for that because we were often out and about in nature and our parents still passed on good values. Special occasions have tended to bind us together even tighter, and you value your parents even more as you yourself grow older. I’m very grateful to have grown up in Switzerland with such a family background. Family and health are very important to me.” (Woman, age 37)
- 422 “The relationship with my parents has always been good. We largely got along very well and respected each other.” (Woman, age 37)
- 423 “I appreciate my parents. For a few years now, it seems to me that we both (my parents and I) have cut the cord, that is to say, that we treat each other as equals, while we know that we are parents and child. We are able to accept each other’s criticisms and advice. Wonderful. Hope that I’ll be able to experience them in good health for a long time to come.” (Woman, age 37)
- 424 “Until the age of 14, both my parents worked. But then we came to live in France because of my mother’s job. After that, my mother worked and my father stayed at home ... until they retired.” (Woman, age 37)

- 425 “I have always had a close relationship with both my parents. My father, who is nearly 90 years of age, suffers from dementia and is in a care home, so I have little contact with him aside from when we return home for the holidays. We stay in my mother’s house when we return (approx. three times a year), and I normally speak to her several times per week on the phone.” (Woman, age 37)
- 426 “I was born in a very traditional Chinese family. My father had the final word in our family during all of my childhood memories. My mum is closer to my brother and me. We are both a little bit spoiled in a good way. We are very lucky that our parents offered us the best that they can do for us. In another way, they have very high expectations for us, which I think we both let them down. After I got married, I have gotten to know my mum more and more. And I will give my selfless love to my children as well. I wish I could be just like an elderly friend to them.” (Woman, age 37)
- 427 “My mother died when I was three years old.” (Woman, age 37)
- 428 “As for our relationship: it was or is based on ‘fundamental respect’, ‘love’ or ‘being understood’ – often without much ado. When push comes to shove, we always stick together and support each other. As long as each of us is independent (financially, health-wise), our contact is sometimes even distanced and loose. During recent years, the relationship with my partner and my brother as well has increasingly been affecting the relationship with my mother (systemic conflicts). Generally, I think that the relationship with my parents was very typical of my generation and my environment (until my teenage years; country, farming, Catholic milieu). I grew up in a three-generation household.” (Woman, age 37)
- 429 “Good????” (Woman, age 37)
- 430 “They were always great and there for me, even today, and I thank them wholeheartedly.” (Woman, age 37)
- 431 “My mother – that’s how I see her – wants to give so much; she is always there when you need something. But she rarely listens; even if you tell her to just listen for once, she doesn’t do that. This often saddens me or ticks me off. That she is very communicative and wants to recount every experience down to the last detail often ticks me off because there is no room for me anymore. She has a job that doesn’t allow her to talk much most of the time; she then makes up for it in her leisure time. What is more, she wants to spend time with me every day, but I don’t want to. I have to constantly set boundaries. It’s really

a pity because she is a good-hearted person. She'd give me the shirt off her back. I perceive my father to be a passive person; he doesn't seem to be happy in everyday life, only when he comes back from vacation. For years, you get the sense that he hates his job; but he has or believes that he can't change that. I sense that and it also makes me sad. Then I feel helpless. What I have come to appreciate over the past years is that he increasingly listens, and I like his calm manner too. During my childhood, he was not really emotionally present. His job cost him a lot of energy; it was a rough time; there was often also a lack of money. He was often very angry when me and my sibling argued, which I can understand, however. He also never picked us up when we, for example, asked him to pick us up when we were out. We had to see for ourselves. Somehow he didn't really care how we got home; it was our responsibility. But when he goes to see relatives and talks about me, he is very proud of me. Then he speaks full of admiration about what I have achieved in this and that respect. My mother also praises me in front of others. I never lose control when I am with my parents; I mostly play the strong one. I do so because I don't want their advice. It has rarely helped me. Despite these differences, I am very grateful for all that my mother and father have done or are still doing for me; they always do what they think is best, which is what we ultimately all try to do. I would only wish that my mother would listen once or preferably all the time without interrupting me at least once. And for my father, I wish that he would find hope again and could appreciate life the way it is; then I would also spend more time with him." (Woman, age 37)

432 "Right now the situation is very difficult because my mummy is terminally ill, and their financial means are very poor." (Woman, age 37)

433 "Like most others, I could go far back and give a weeks-long account. Instead, I only want to mention how much the relationship with my mother has improved since she decided to travel with her camper. These days, we are often both surprised how much more relaxed we are in dealing with each other. I'm glad for the occasion to be able to state that here for the record. The relationship with my father is polite on both ends but mostly indifferent." (Woman, age 37)

434 "My father refused to pay child support, which is why I had to sue him in court. We haven't been in touch ever since." (Woman, age 37)

435 "It's complicated!" (Woman, age 37)

- 436 “Sensational, I couldn’t imagine it being any better. I’m very, very thankful and very happy that I am/was so fortunate to have/have had such parents.” (Man, age 37)
- 437 “Even if sometimes there are misunderstandings, different points of view, or my father hardly shows his love, I know that they will always be there if I need them and that they love me.” (Man, age 37)
- 438 “They sacrificed everything so that their children could have an easier and better life than they did.” (Man, age 37)
- 439 “With my mother passing, I realise how much I miss her and also realise the impact she had on all of us, especially on my father, and still does. I hope my father’s health will allow him to see me getting married and establishing my own family.” (Man, age 37)
- 440 “Yes, I love them and thank them for my upbringing and for the faith in Jesus Christ that they passed on to me – the most beautiful heritage.” (Man, age 37)
- 441 “I’m grateful and glad to have a very good relationship with my parents.” (Man, age 37)
- 442 “Essentially a good relationship with both parents. As soon as there is a distance on account of relative independence, the relationship can develop less burdened. Today, my parents are financially almost better off (baby boomer generation) but are to some degree overwhelmed by digitisation. With regard to the aforementioned, our generations can mutually support each other. (I know, that is very general :-P).” (Man, age 37)
- 443 “We have grown apart. Large spatial distance. Difficult to maintain a relationship. Grandfather not much interested in his grandchildren.” (Man, age 37)
- 444 “Father was never there. Left us and got in touch minimally. I saved my mother’s life several times. She never touched me, but she beat my sister black and blue daily.” (Man, age 37)
- 445 “I don’t know my biological father, even if I had the opportunity to. He simply does not interest me since there is no reason for it. To me, my foster father is the only true ‘father’. He gives me the feeling of being his son.” (Man, age 37)
- 446 “Toxic parents.” (Man, age 37)
- 447 “I am very happy with the relationship I have with my parents.” (Woman, age 38)
- 448 “Despite the (relatively) large distance between my parents and me, we have a respectful and, above all, loving relationship. We are there

- for each other in all essentials of life and help each other wherever we can. Contact with my parents, my siblings, and other relatives is very important to me.” (Woman, age 38)
- 449 “I and my sister have never really felt loved by our father. He has problems showing feelings and is very dominant. Our parents separated twice. So far, none of us has had the courage to stand up to him. He supported us a lot materially during childhood but never much came across emotionally.” (Woman, age 38)
- 450 “I wish my relationship with my father was a closer one; I feel we’ve definitely grown apart over the years. The divorce of my parents may have contributed to the distance in the relationship I have with him.” (Woman, age 38)
- 451 “I have not had any contact with my biological father since I was born.” (Woman, age 38)
- 452 “I spent the entire summer with my father on an alp. We have a very good relationship, and he is a great-grandfather to my son. I’m already looking forward to our next summer together on the alp.” (Woman, age 38)
- 453 “I have enjoyed an uncomplicated, harmonious relationship with my parents. We respect each other, are there for each other, but also give each other space ... live and let live. I don’t have and never will have expectations of my parents; I just enjoy the time together.” (Woman, age 38)
- 454 “I got to know my biological father when I was a teenager. I have had a relationship with him only since I was 30.” (Woman, age 38)
- 455 “My father has Alzheimer’s, in the highest class of care, and no longer speaks. He lives in a nursing home, and we bring him home for a day on weekends.” (Woman, age 38)
- 456 “The relationship was strained because my father was manic-depressive during my childhood.” (Woman, age 38)
- 457 “Since my husband and I are separating/divorcing, there has automatically been more contact with my parents again (since they didn’t like him much). Before we were hardly in touch and there was a lot of potential for conflict since they tried to interfere in our life a lot. Sometimes we didn’t hear from and see each other for months. Now that I am alone with my child, things have changed. They respect my lifestyle and often simply come over without notice and are suddenly interested in our life. Strange somehow, but that’s how it is ...” (Woman, age 38)

- 458 “I grew up in a protective environment but was not really allowed to realise my dreams and desires and was always kept in my ‘box’. Always polite, always ready, always good and not answering back. Accommodating everyone and always helping, saying yes and holding back my own opinion.” (Woman, age 38)
- 459 “Since I grew up with my deceased grandparents, I have no relationship with my father and only a very superficial relationship with my mother. The relationship with my mother has improved since my daughter was born. But it is not the traditional mother-daughter relationship that I would wish for.” (Woman, age 38)
- 460 “2018 was my wedding year. That year, I received exceptionally more expensive gifts than usual: my mum gave me my wedding dress and my dad bought us wine for the whole wedding day.” (Woman, age 38)
- 461 “I was an ‘accident’. Apart from my mother, no one knows who my father is. My mother doesn’t want to tell who it is. I initially grew up with my grandparents. Then I had to move in with my mother without being asked, even though I barely had a relationship with her. A relationship never really developed. When I was born, adoption, a foster family, and who knows what else was considered until my grandfather fought for me to be given to him and my grandmother. From him, I got the love that a child deserves, and at the same time got to feel the grandmother’s and mother’s jealousy. I had behavioural problems and was in psychological therapy several times (even as a child). I’ve been an outsider my whole life, and none of the family members present attempted to find out what my problem might be.” (Woman, age 38)
- 462 “Using the word ‘relationship’ would be exaggerated. Related is more accurate. They regularly forget that I exist.” (Woman, age 38)
- 463 “I’ll never have any contact with my mother again, because she made me suffer too much. And I’ll be closer to my dad.” (Woman, age 38)
- 464 “My father passed away before my tenth birthday.” (Man, age 38)
- 465 “I had a good parental relationship. And my parents did a very good job in explaining the facts of life, sexuality, to us during puberty.” (Man, age 38)
- 466 “I am very grateful that my parents are always there for me when I need help. I would obviously also give the shirt off my back for them so that they are well.” (Man, age 38)
- 467 “My mother and my father separated when I was a little child.” (Man, age 38)

- 468 "I'm in touch with my parents only by phone. I meet up with my parents about three times a year." (Man, age 38)
- 469 "I left home at the age of 19 and never came back, only to visit my parents. That is why I haven't answered many of the questions." (Man, age 38)
- 470 "I live in the house that they passed on to me as an advancement on my inheritance at a more favourable, low rent." (Man, age 38)
- 471 "In spite of it all, I will love them as long as I live, and I am grateful to them for all that they did so that their children would be better off." (Man, age 38)
- 472 "When you get older, you understand how important it is to have parents." (Woman, age 39)
- 473 "I live in a four-generation household and feel very comfortable (my mother, my sister with her daughter and my grandmother)." (Woman, age 39)
- 474 "I was lucky enough to have my mum at home when I was a child. To be able to rely on her for homework, to be there to prepare food, to look after the house and to spend time with us. It's a real treasure to have a parent there when you're a child." (Woman, age 39)
- 475 "They are very important to me, and I value their opinion very much." (Woman, age 39)
- 476 "Very close. Very good." (Woman, age 39)
- 477 "We could always count on each other." (Woman, age 39)
- 478 "My relationship with my parents has greatly improved since I left home and even more so on the day I found my partner." (Woman, age 39)
- 479 "My relationship with my father is very dependent on the way he behaved with my mother." (Woman, age 39)
- 480 "The situation with my mother was more confrontational than with my father, and I had a strong feeling that she was treating my sister unfairly. As a specialist educator, my father has a completely different way of managing and defusing tension and conflict." (Woman, age 39)
- 481 "I had a beautiful childhood in an intact parental home. We did not live in luxury, but we didn't have financial worries or hardships as I saw things. My parents had a clear division of roles. My brother would certainly answer the survey differently. Even though we were raised/treated the same, there was more tension between him and my father. I am very grateful to my parents and try to raise my children with love, respect and understanding as well. My father had a deadly accident. I miss him very much, and he left a gap; the wounds are healing, but

- it still hurts. I would have loved to thank him; doing so verbally in a conversation was no longer possible.” (Woman, age 39)
- 482 “I had a beautiful childhood.” (Woman, age 39)
- 483 “My parents were farmers and always worked a lot and gave their best. But it was not a carefree childhood.” (Woman, age 39)
- 484 “I think the relationship was normal. As there is spatial distance, we don’t see each other so often, but via new technologies, we are in touch regularly, almost daily (WhatsApp Chat).” (Woman, age 39)
- 485 “Since we have forgotten our native tongue, Vietnamese, and it no longer is the language in which we think, the relationship with my parents has become rather superficial. We nevertheless all love and respect each other. I am grateful for all that my parents endured and did for me and my siblings.” (Woman, age 39)
- 486 “Was all very, very difficult!! Both parents were addicted to heroin ... My mother got away from it; my father is still completely at it ... I haven’t had contact with my father for years.” (Woman, age 39)
- 487 “Last year, I had a breakdown. Psychosomatic problems. The psychiatrists diagnosed a complex post-traumatic stress syndrome. Emotional neglect of a child and so on. It has been a year since I broke off contact with my parents, as the relationship with them was no longer bearable for me. For a year now, I have been seeing psychiatrists in short intervals to come to terms with my childhood and deal with my personality deficits.” (Woman, age 39)
- 488 “I love my parents, and if I can help them in any way, I will do that.” (Man, age 39)
- 489 “My parents love me immensely. They always were, and still are, unselfish towards me. I am happy to have them and I love them.” (Man, age 39)
- 490 “The relationship with my father was very good despite the distance to Southern Europe. The relationship with my mother was very good as well. Unfortunately, I don’t have many memories of her because she passed away much too early, when I was still a little child.” (Man, age 39)
- 491 “My father lost his sight in his 30s, so he could not work and accumulate any wealth (so no gifts or inheritance expected etc.)” (Man, age 39)
- 492 “I wouldn’t trade my parents for anything in the world!!” (Man, age 39)
- 493 “My childhood was marked by my parents’ contested divorce. Both of my parents wanted us children to live with them. Before the court, we were asked whether we wanted to stay with my mother or move in with my father. Since we had already been living with my mother for quite a while, we decided we wanted to move in with my father. We were only



- trying to be fair. My mother was crying in the courtroom; my father was delighted. The feeling of having deeply hurt her was one of the worst experiences of my life.” (Man, age 39)
- 494 “My parents let me live my life without interfering. They are always there when I need them, and I am there for them when they need me. I am really grateful to my parents for having been my parents.” (Man, age 39)
- 495 “After the divorce, our father took care of me and my sister and enabled us to complete our education and training.” (Man, age 39)
- 496 “Each year, my mother lives in Eastern Europe for several months and then in Switzerland again. My father sometimes accompanies her for a few weeks and then returns to Switzerland. He himself rarely travels to his home country. Because of language difficulties (both parents never learned proper German), it is not possible for me to communicate with them in Swiss German or only to a limited extent.” (Man, age 39)
- 497 “Love.” (Man, age 39)

## Forties

### Early forties

- 498 “I love them more than anything!” (Woman, age 40)
- 499 “I am lucky to have two wonderful parents. Since I have been a mother myself, I have appreciated them more and more, and I would like to spend more time with them.” (Woman, age 40)
- 500 “I have a very good and close relationship with my parents. We even travel together on vacation several times a year.” (Woman, age 40)
- 501 “I love my parents a lot.” A hug from time to time and saying that they love me would be important to me. That is why I do this with my children. I want them to feel and hear that I love them.” (Woman, age 40)
- 502 “My father moved to France 18 months ago, 650 km away, so our relationship is suffering a little.” (Woman, age 40)
- 503 “I love my parents more than anything!” They are the best that ever happened to me and my siblings!” (Woman, age 40)
- 504 “I think that I have very good parents and am particularly grateful to my mother for everything.” (Woman, age 40)

- 505 “I have a close bond with my mother, but a relatively non-existent emotional bond with my father. I do see him often, though, since I often visit my parents because of my close relationship with my mother (they do still live together).” (Woman, age 40)
- 506 “Thanks that you are there and have always been there for me!” (Woman, age 40)
- 507 “I love and appreciate my parents very much. I am grateful to them for all that they do for me and my family. Specifically, I view the emotional and social security as very valuable. But I also see the parent-child relationship as a constant challenge. This is because the ‘positions’, tasks and issues change over the course of life.” (Woman, age 40)
- 508 “My mother was very withdrawn. She hardly ever told me anything about her youth, her emotions and so on. She had cancer, but she never told me what the doctors told her either. My father was sociable. But he was also addicted to alcohol, and when he drank too much, he was aggressive. Since my parents didn’t speak German well, I had to take care of lot of things for them, and this from an early age on. Nevertheless, I loved both of my parents very, very much.” (Woman, age 40)
- 509 “Only since having/thanks to my children do I again have more and better contact with my father.” (Woman, age 40)
- 510 “Very good contact. When we were little children, we needed them more than they needed us, and now it’s even. Someday it will probably be that they need us more ...” (Woman, age 40)
- 511 “Over the years, I have learned that I needed a certain distance from my father to avoid constant conflict. Nowadays, I again have more frequent contact with my mother, but emotionally I’m now, as before, closer to my mother-in-law/parents-in-law. My mother-in-law lives with us several days a week, and I also see my father-in-law once or twice a week.” (Woman, age 40)
- 512 “During my childhood, I grew up with my grandmother, and the relationship with my mother is therefore rather difficult.” (Woman, age 40)
- 513 “Fortunately, my parents are both in ‘good shape’, for which I’m very grateful. My parents got to know each other in Southern Europe, where my father was supposed to go for a language stay for ‘a few months’. This turned out to be about 20 years, I believe. In my early childhood, we then returned to Switzerland.” (Man, age 40)
- 514 “A great relationship right up to the present day.” (Man, age 40)
- 515 “I love my parents, and that will stay that way.” (Man, age 40)

- 516 “I couldn’t imagine a better childhood and relationship with my parents, respectively, than mine!” Even though not everything seemed perfect or was perfect according to the general standards, I am grateful for and humbled by that which I have been able to experience with, from, and through my parents.” (Man, age 40)
- 517 “My father is an alcoholic.” (Man, age 40)
- 518 “The property where I and my parents currently live was acquired with the idea of living together in a ‘multi-generational house’ and supporting each other.” (Man, age 40)
- 519 “A rather close and harmonious relationship; was always supported by my parents.” (Man, age 40)
- 520 “I cherish my parents and I’m grateful to them for everything. If it weren’t for them, I wouldn’t be who I am today. Today, I’m a healthy and happy person with a wonderful family of my own!” (Man, age 40)
- 521 “It is very good.” (Man, age 40)
- 522 “The relationship between my parents was difficult at times. Before his severe illness, my father was unemployed, and my mother was the only one who brought money home. On top of that, she earned very well because of her good education. That was very difficult for my father. He felt useless, and greater tension emerged after I and my sister had already moved out. But there never were other partners in my parents’ lives – not even secretly. The word SEPARATION did surface for a while but was never followed through. However, my father became ill after that, and my mother cared for him until he died. She is a devout Christian and would have never abandoned him in that situation, no matter how he treated her sometimes.” (Man, age 40)
- 523 “In this questionnaire, I have not described the relationship between my parents and me in a direct but rather in an indirect way. It is quite complicated, and this is due to the relationship between them.” (Man, age 40)
- 524 “All in all, I am very satisfied with my relationship with my parents. Individually it works very well, only together it is difficult sometimes.” (Man, age 40)
- 525 “The questions about the current relationship with my father were difficult to answer because he is suffering from dementia.” (Man, age 40)
- 526 “I find it too bad that they live so far away from me.” (Woman, age 41)
- 527 “Good family relationship.” (Woman, age 41)
- 528 “I am happy and grateful that I am still able to have them with me” (Woman, age 41)

- 529 “Never got to know my father. No information about him and his life.”  
(Woman, age 41)
- 530 “Great relationship.” (Woman, age 41)
- 531 “They taught me to respect others and respect the rules of the country  
you live in.” (Woman, age 41)
- 532 “They were always there for my brothers and me and brought us up as  
best they could.” (Woman, age 41)
- 533 “That my parents, today, have a very good marriage and we have a good  
relationship with one another is due to Jesus Christ, who led us (and  
still does) through processes of forgiveness, restitution and change and  
infused our lives with much love.” (Woman, age 41)
- 534 “My relationship with my parents is also influenced by the relationship  
they have with my sister, with whom I am very close and to whom  
they show little recognition, which often disappoints me. Age is also an  
important factor; as I get older, some of their character traits become  
more apparent, which has an influence on how I view my current rela-  
tionship with them. I only realised this when I filled in your form. But  
they were wonderful parents and are now extraordinary grandparents.”  
(Woman, age 41)
- 535 “The age difference between my parents was clearly noticeable for me  
as a child. My parents were not always of the same opinion since they  
grew up differently. Father always said that they had very strict teach-  
ers.” (Woman, age 41)
- 536 “I haven’t been in touch with my father for about 15 years.” (Woman,  
age 41)
- 537 “No contact with my father. My parents’ marriage was not based on  
love and respect but on power and oppression.” (Woman, age 41)
- 538 “My biological parents had a love affair at the time, and I was the unin-  
tentional product. At that point, my biological mother was single and  
my father was not, but rather married and with children. My biologi-  
cal parents’ parents were strict Catholics and were of course not at all  
amused about the affair and the unintended pregnancy. My biological  
mother didn’t have it easy. Her sister and brother-in-law offered to raise  
me, but my biological mother didn’t want this. A coworker of hers  
told her about a couple that desperately wanted to have children, but  
it didn’t work out. Initially, this couple was temporarily entrusted with  
my care; they took over raising me as my foster parents. My biological  
mother used to visit me often and shower me with presents. Once I  
heard from my parents at the age of seven or eight that they were not

my biological parents, my biological mother no longer came to visit anymore. I was not in touch with her for a long time. When I turned 30, I received a generous gift (money) from my biological mother. We talked on the phone. It was very emotional. But we still had no contact otherwise. About a year or two later, my cousin got in touch with me; we talked on the phone, and she visited us. A while later, she organised for my biological mother and me to meet at her house. It was again very emotional; it was very beautiful and soothing. Then we occasionally mailed each other (e.g., on birthdays), but we had no contact otherwise. I don't know my biological father. He never got in touch with me, and I also never got in touch with him. I don't dare to. I don't even know what he looks like. From my cousin, I know that I look like him. I only know his name, and I do believe that he is still alive. It should be true since I unfortunately don't look like my biological mother. She was a beautiful young woman ... who unfortunately has always been single. I had a very beautiful childhood with my foster parents." (Woman, age 41)

- 539 "I was fortunate to have my parents and am thankful for them ..."  
(Man, age 41)
- 540 "I had the best parents in the world, but unfortunately for me they went to heaven too soon!" (Man, age 41)
- 541 "They were/are loving parents, who have been shaped by their own lives and are the way they are. I can't complain at all and am glad that I had and am able to have such great parents." (Man, age 41)
- 542 "It's a good relationship." (Man, age 41)
- 543 "I don't know my father!" (Man, age 41)
- 544 "I couldn't answer half of the questions properly because I hardly have contact with my parents. We have never talked about finances or things of that kind. I have no idea what qualifications (school/occupation) my parents have or whether they ever received an inheritance." (Man, age 41)
- 545 "My biological mother died a few months after I was born, so I never knew her ..." (Man, age 41)
- 546 "For 20 years, my mother has been suffering from schizophrenia, lives in her own world. She is strongly sedated by medication. Both live in the same care centre." (Man, age 41)
- 547 "I love my parents so much." They are very important people to me. Unfortunately, we have always lived far apart." (Woman, age 42)
- 548 "I had a sincere and honest relationship with my parents. Regret it very much that they are no longer alive." (Woman, age 42)

- 549 “My father was a strict man, who suffered a lot during his life, especially when he was young. He was complicated, but one thing was clear: He loved us children above all else, and he showed it and said so on every occasion. I know many fathers and can say that none of them would make a major sacrifice or die for their children when push really comes to shove. But when it comes to my father, I am 1,000% certain that he would do it without a second’s hesitation, and indeed without expecting anything from us in return.” (Woman, age 42)
- 550 “My biological mother died when I was still little. My father married again two years later.” (Woman, age 42)
- 551 “My father was seriously mentally ill and also died indirectly from this illness.” (Woman, age 42)
- 552 “We deal with each other in a very respectful and loving manner.” (Woman, age 42)
- 553 “My father cheated on my mother with another woman and humiliated her in the worst possible way. I tried to mediate, organised couple therapy. But his behaviour tore open so many old wounds on my part, which he is not able to address together with me, that I have arrived at the point where I will completely cut ties with him.” (Woman, age 42)
- 554 “Their relationship will never serve as a model for me.” (Woman, age 42)
- 555 “Up until my teens, my biological father didn’t know of my existence. My foster father adopted me when I was a young child. My father and my mother separated when I was a little older than ten. Until then, I didn’t know that my foster father is not my biological father. All that never bothered me much, only that my family situation was always a bit complicated, extensive and for this reason rather stressful.” (Woman, age 42)
- 556 “To me, they are no longer more than acquaintances!” (Woman, age 42)
- 557 “My parents, who aren’t churchgoers and didn’t bring us up to be religious, couldn’t stand the fact that I split up a few years ago. They turned their backs on me, they were not supportive – on the contrary. My mother was very angry with me. She had suffered domestic violence and stayed for her children, but she didn’t understand that I was choosing a different path for myself. My father was ashamed of me (I’ve become an embarrassment to the family). I grew up trying to please my parents (since they didn’t love me unconditionally, I tried to shine so that they would see me and love me). So my separation was an act that went against what they taught me. I made a mistake; I defied

their authority ... at the age of 40! For my part, I wanted to retain a relationship between my children and their grandparents, because their relationship was not the same as the one I had with my parents. However, given the physical and psychological violence around which I grew up, the fact that I was finally able to recognise the abuse in which I lived for many years freed me. These days, I no longer maintain a relationship between my children and my parents unless my children want me to (my parents have retained their manipulative – even violent – pattern, even with their grandchildren, and as a mother, I have a duty to protect my children. So I warned my parents that if there was the slightest sign of abuse or hurtful words, they would no longer see their grandchildren until they were adults and old enough to defend themselves). While I don't hold a grudge against my parents (their past is their burden to bear and their behaviour is intimately linked to their painful childhood), and while I know that they did what they could, I now feel justified in no longer maintaining a relationship with them. Not anger, but the distance I needed for my well-being. And when Mum feels good in her heart and mind, she radiates and spreads her happiness to her family (my children, my current partner)." (Woman, age 42)

558 "I love my parents and am very glad to have such ones. Even though it was not always easy (especially for my parents), I will forever be grateful to them. They believed in me and that was worthwhile for all of us. I often tell my parents that I love them!" (Man, age 42)

559 "Very good!" (Man, age 42)

560 "To me, my parents and my family are an important support." (Man, age 42)

561 "I'm in the fortunate situation to have a very good relationship with my parents in many respects." (Man, age 42)

562 "My childhood and the family environment in which I grew up are the foundation of my life. Over time, both children's and parents' personalities and ideas evolve. Mutual understanding and respect are strengthened." (Man, age 42)

563 "I miss being closer to my parents because they live in Brazil. I am very worried about my parents' financial situation, as they are already elderly and there is a major economic, social and security crisis in Brazil." (Man, age 42)

564 "I wish to talk to my biological father about his relationship with my mother. How did he feel when he found out she was pregnant with his

- child? Although she was married to another man, did she really love him? I'd like to discuss a lot of things with my biological father about his relationship with my mother before and after I was born. Before and after her death, and especially how he felt about my existence. Before and after my mother's death. Was it an adventure or a passionate love affair?" (Man, age 42)
- 565 "I love my parents." (Man, age 42)
- 566 "I had and have a very close and good relationship with my parents." (Man, age 42)
- 567 "My parents let me live my own life. I let them live their own lives. We are reasonably close emotionally, and have a strong sense of kinship, despite the distance. Our filial love binds us together without suffocating us." (Man, age 42)
- 568 "I grew up very protected, cared for and loved. I still maintain a very good relationship with my parents, which both sides appreciate very much. We support each other and discuss a variety of topics." (Man, age 42)
- 569 "My father died in an assassination abroad more than 20 years ago." (Man, age 42)
- 570 "I lived with many different stepparents, who abused me physically and mentally." (Man, age 42)
- 571 "The basis of the stable environment was the stable marriage of my parents, who value and love each other to date." (Man, age 42)
- 572 "Being a household of three, we were more like a communal living arrangement. We weren't a family like other families back then." (Man, age 42)
- 573 "Is/was very good." (Man, age 42)
- 574 "My parents were very good parents to me when I was a child. But since I was the latecomer in the family and my siblings were all older, I was presumably also a bit more spoiled. Basically, the atmosphere at home was mostly good. I was really fortunate. At the moment, my relationship with my parents is a bit closer again since I stop over weekly with my little children. Before, this was quite different, and we hadn't been in touch particularly frequently once I no longer lived at home." (Man, age 42)
- 575 "I had a good relationship with my father." (Man, age 42)
- 576 "All in all, I had a beautiful childhood." (Man, age 42)
- 577 "We had always been separated. I was born here in Switzerland, and they were here. When I was a little child, they sent me to Southern



Europe, and that's where I grew up. When I returned to Switzerland, they went to Southern Europe for a few years. I respect my parents. Today, I understand why and for what reason. But it was very difficult ... Today, we have achieved a good relationship. I don't think it could be better." (Man, age 42)

578 "You don't choose your parents." (Man, age 42)

579 "It is very good." (Woman, age 43)

580 "I was five when my father died, so I have no memory of him. Mutual respect." (Woman, age 43)

581 "We have a close relationship and frequent contact." (Woman, age 43)

582 "My parents failed to support me enough during my school days. They didn't promote my self-confidence." (Woman, age 43)

583 "I was seven when my father died." (Woman, age 43)

584 "Without my parents, I couldn't pursue my occupation. I can rely on them, and we have organised ourselves very well. I and my husband are infinitely grateful for that. When they travel, it is a matter of course that I find another way of organising childcare, for we are happy that they are still that fit at the age of 70 and want to travel. They should be able to live that to the full. My mother was often alone with us because of my father's job. And since he worked so much, it is all the better that they can enjoy life (and the grandchildren). Our family had always been organised in a classical patriarchal manner. Mummy at home for us children, Daddy earning money. My husband and I live similarly. The difference being that I additionally have an executive position outside of the home and I nevertheless run the household 80% of the time, deal with children and school nearly 100% of the time and also cultivate our friendships. In spite of my extensive tasks at work, the role model and burden remain shaped by the past. On my husband's side, the image of family was identical." (Woman, age 43)

585 "We've always had a good and balanced relationship. They are very significant others for me!" (Woman, age 43)

586 "I can say that the relationship with my parents is very good. The cultural background results in perceiving certain things as being "self-evident". I have children as well, and I do and will do many things differently." (Woman, age 43)

587 "I love both my parents, but both are mentally ill. Mother depressive, father has a personality disorder, and, being African, his parenting behaviour, for cultural reasons, deviates from the norm compared with the European standard. This strongly characterised my childhood.

- Today, I essentially only have contact with my mother and as good as none with my father since he is so difficult to deal with.” (Woman, age 43)
- 588 “My parents are alive, but I haven’t seen them for more than a year because I live in Switzerland. To me, they are important, and I love them very much because, owing to them, I am the woman who I now am.” (Woman, age 43)
- 589 “I actually have no relationship with my father.” (Woman, age 43)
- 590 “My mother was very loving, but because of her own severe mental and physical problems, she was not able to be there for me. Among other things, she had an addiction problem. Because of this, my relationship with her was sometimes a bit torn. At some point, I eventually detached myself from her to protect myself. My father was rather strict, and affection and praise were granted only when we, for example, performed well in school. I have actually never had a close bond with him.” (Woman, age 43)
- 591 “My parents set me an example of what it means to have a deep, honest relationship with God and Jesus. For that, I am very grateful to them. In many ways, their life is a model for me! When I consider what a rather difficult childhood they had, they did a very good job. However, they are not my closest confidants. Those are more my friends.” (Woman, age 43)
- 592 “Because of the large spatial distance and partly health impairments, it is difficult to regularly visit my parents or for them to visit us. The relationship between my parents has been burdened for years by lingering partnership conflicts, which they have not addressed on their part, although help has been offered and getting help has been recommended. Still today, outside help is difficult or impossible because problems are suppressed (partnership conflicts or health problems).” (Woman, age 43)
- 593 “I will never care for my parents personally because I can’t do it on account of my physical disability. I myself depend on help with everyday tasks. Otherwise, I would of course consider it.” (Woman, age 43)
- 594 “They took too little time for us children, worked too much, punished us too often, failed to show enough love.” (Woman, age 43)
- 595 “I have no contact with my parents, with my father about two times over the past ten years – my daughter wanted to get to know him. As far as I’m concerned, I don’t need any contact with the two. Both were

- not really enthusiastic about becoming parents. We all live our life and are satisfied with that.” (Woman, age 43)
- 596 “I had a beautiful childhood, grew up very protected, and we just loved each other. I would like to be a child like that again. In my case, it didn’t work out with children; in the meantime, I have put that desire behind me. If I had children, I would have always tried to be to them the same way that I had it as a child. I’m satisfied with my life and enjoy what I have accomplished so far in my occupation. And there’s more beyond that. My siblings have a super family with children and a home of their own. I can say that my parents did a more than excellent job.” (Man, age 43)
- 597 “I am happy with the relationship I have with my parents and my brother. I am sorry that I only get to see them twice a year because they live far away. It is too expensive for them to come and see me more frequently; they can’t afford it.” (Man, age 43)
- 598 “Mother lives in her own apartment in our house. We are always there for each other. Mother-in-law even lives in her own household. Father just recently moved away with his second wife. Although I was over 30 when my father married again, I have a great relationship with his wife and their adult children. We all give each other a sense of security.” (Man, age 43)
- 599 “We are there for each other at any time; that’s how we were raised (family first).” (Man, age 43)
- 600 “I have and have had a great relationship with my parents.” (Man, age 43)
- 601 “My adoptive mother is at the end of her life; I often visit her in the nursing home. My adoptive father is distant. We have little contact.” (Man, age 43)

### Mid-forties

- 602 “I grew up in a mixed cultural family as one of my grandparents came from East Asia. As a child, I always tried to understand both ways of thinking, acting and speaking. This made me into a really flexibly minded person and one to seek a solution when I have a little problem. They were very strict, but this also made me have a lot of patience in difficult situations.” (Woman, age 44)
- 603 “I’m very satisfied and happy with my relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 44)

- 604 “I love them both very much. Both my parents always did their best according to their abilities and possibilities. They were very young, and my father not really mature to be a father that young – and they certainly also made mistakes. But nothing inexcusable. I was raised as a very independent child, and I’m glad for that. I never had a doubt that I was loved.” (Woman, age 44)
- 605 “My parents had a very harmonious relationship. My father couldn’t cope with the accidental death of my mother and committed suicide a few years later.” (Woman, age 44)
- 606 “I love Mum and Dad.” (Woman, age 44)
- 607 “The older they get, the less they understand about real-life problems.” (Woman, age 44)
- 608 “They live in Central America, so the relationship is a long distance one with constant communication, and when we can visit them with my kids (more or less every two or three years), we enjoy the visit and stay with them.” (Woman, age 44)
- 609 “The most important thing in the relationship with my parents is our deep trust. There is nothing that I couldn’t approach them with, and the same is true the other way around.” (Woman, age 44)
- 610 “I have little contact with my parents because they don’t have regular Internet access.” (Woman, age 44)
- 611 “My father left raising us kids largely up to my mother. So we had our conflicts with her. She did her best, but her combative nature didn’t go down well with us kids. My calm, peace-loving father now is the one to reap the sympathies of us children. That actually isn’t quite fair.” (Woman, age 44)
- 612 “No contact with my father for ten years.” (Woman, age 44)
- 613 “I saw my father for the last time about 30 years ago. That’s why I also don’t know where he is or lives.” (Woman, age 44)
- 614 “Terrible. None of my parents ever supported me the way you would want them to. My father a little (you have to give him that). But he has a new family with a woman who is 20 years younger (any questions?).” (Woman, age 44)
- 615 “They were the best! Thank you, Mum and Dad :-).” (Man, age 44)
- 616 “I love them.” (Man, age 44)
- 617 “I lived in a normal working-class family in the countryside with my siblings. My parents worked hard to pay for our studies and diplomas.” (Man, age 44)
- 618 “It’s a shame that we don’t live closer to each other.” (Man, age 44)

- 619 “Unfortunately, my relationship with my parents is special ... very good with my mother ... difficult with my father.” (Man, age 44)
- 620 “Ten years before his death, my father had a serious accident and was in a nursing home with a severe disability afterwards.” (Man, age 44)
- 621 “It was the best that they could have given me.” (Man, age 44)
- 622 “My father was an office worker and my mother a housewife. As money became tight when I was about the age of ten, my mother started to work part-time. Initially, only cleaning, later as a server in a restaurant. The relationship, like their conception of life, was very conservative. Vacation trips were very rare for a lack of money. And yet they still enabled me to study at a university of applied sciences and supported me monthly. They didn’t directly show their love and never talked about it. Generally, there was little talking, as the radio was on during meals (news) and the TV in the evenings. There actually never were deeper conversations, for instance, about feelings or personal well-being. I nevertheless appreciate my parents very much. Also despite slaps in the face or spanking of the bare bottom (by hand or the carpet beater). They were nevertheless always there for me. Even today, we, as a family, go to visit my mother every two to three weeks, where she cooks for us on Sundays.” (Man, age 44)
- 623 “We have four children, and my wife and I work full-time so it’s very difficult for us to find the time for our parents unfortunately ...” (Man, age 44)
- 624 “My parents did a super job, and I love them with all my heart. Since they both live in Germany and we live in Switzerland, the relationship is not quite as close. That’s OK with us, but they would probably be happy if we would see each other more.” (Man, age 44)
- 625 “I often felt like a stranger in my own family – paternal absence, which I then repeated with my own son.” (Man, age 44)
- 626 “Relationships are the product of time; they change as we progress through life and mature, and perceptions of the same situation vary greatly at different times. With the arrival of children and realising certain responsibilities, it tends to change perceptions quite a lot.” (Man, age 44)
- 627 “My parents prepared me for life very well, and they are there for me with help and advice when needed!” (Man, age 44)
- 628 “Unfortunately, my mother died when I was young, and I can’t remember much.” (Man, age 44)

- 629 “Hostile attitude toward my mother, rediscovery of the relationship with my father.” (Man, age 44)
- 630 “I left the family home when I was 20 with no money because I wanted to go to university and my parents didn’t want me to. This resulted in several years of arguments and required a family court judge to intervene.” (Man, age 44)
- 631 “My father died before I was born, and I grew up with my biological mother and stepfather. Our family life was very patriarchal, and my mother was never strong enough to support me against my stepfather.” (Man, age 44)
- 632 “I could not imagine better parents!” (Woman, age 45)
- 633 “My parents came to Germany as a young married couple from Yugoslavia, which was rural and socialist at the time and still suffered from the repercussions of the Second World War. My father worked below his qualifications. Although our parents’ behaviour was always influenced by the values of their home country, they attempted to adapt by adopting the modes of behaviour in their environment in Germany. However, since we children had much different insight into ‘German life’ through our friends and classmates, there were nevertheless misunderstandings and also mistaken expectations between us children and our parents. German reunification and the war in Yugoslavia in particular resulted in a complete uprootedness, a loss of identity and orientation, so that only our small family could provide symbiotic security and solidarity, but ultimately fell apart under the burden of these demands. My parents always did their best for their children – or at least what they considered to be the best at the time – and we children are very strongly obligated to our parents. Sometimes, this obligation is also too great, for we children have been shaped by a different society, have been socialised by a different education in school and have been formed by yet very different paths and experiences in life, so that we are all the more aware of the uprootedness of our parents and feel all the more obliged.” (Woman, age 45)
- 634 “Very good.” (Woman, age 45)
- 635 “They are the kindest parents in the world. I love them above all else ...” (Woman, age 45)
- 636 “My mother is much more present in my life. My father is very involved in his wife’s new family. My experience is that women shape and determine family life, and the centres of life thus revolve around the women (also because of the children/grandchildren ...?).” (Woman, age 45)

- 637 “I had a close relationship with my mother; she always took care of everything. My father supported the family and was always there, never interfered with my life. When he came down with Parkinson’s, this strengthened my relationship with him a lot and increased the desire to spend the remaining time with him.” (Woman, age 45)
- 638 “In the last twelve months before my mother’s death, we remained in touch by phone or I visited her about once a month. She lived with her parents, who did her shopping and supported her in the household. But during the last weeks before her death, she became bedridden. During these three weeks, I stayed with her day and night and was able to care for her.” (Woman, age 45)
- 639 “My father left my mother when I was a little child; afterwards I was occasionally with him for a day, never longer. He threatened my mother to take me away from her. When my mother came to meet her new partner a few years later, he adopted me since my biological father had never paid child support anyway, and for that reason he could also no longer threaten to take me away from them. My father = adoptive father. And I have the greatest respect for my mother. In the ’70s, it wasn’t easy, being a foreigner and divorced woman.” (Woman, age 45)
- 640 “Complicated to show feelings; need a lot of effort to understand each other.” (Woman, age 45)
- 641 “I live in Switzerland and my mother in Southern Europe. That said, it’s awkward to answer questions concerning how often I call on her for help with shopping ...” (Woman, age 45)
- 642 “During puberty, it was very difficult to be understood, and my performance was often not sufficient. Sadly, my parents also showed too little confidence in me and time and again stated that I would fail to achieve many things. That statement came more frequently from my mother. Since I have a family of my own, it has become better. When my father fell ill very seriously, they were very glad for my daily care, and they were more frequently able to express that they loved me and appreciated my work very much. That did me good.” (Woman, age 45)
- 643 “My mother was there when I was young but absent later on in my life because of her health. My father was absent in my youth because he got divorced from my mother, but he has been present nowadays in my life.” (Woman, age 45)
- 644 “My father suffers from Asperger’s syndrome, which of course affects the relationship with him.” (Woman, age 45)

- 645 “My mother practically took on all the work of child-rearing alone, and my father stayed distanced in the background. As a child, I suffered very much from my mother’s choleric temper; she also often beat me. Since my father hardly showed any feelings toward me and still has great difficulty talking about his feelings, I unfortunately don’t have a close relationship with him.” (Woman, age 45)
- 646 “The relationship with parents is difficult at the moment.” (Woman, age 45)
- 647 “In the last years of his life, my father suffered from Alzheimer’s disease. I returned to live near my parents to help my mother look after him. He was cared for in a nursing home for the last six months of his life.” (Man, age 45)
- 648 “Excellent, loving and caring.” (Man, age 45)
- 649 “At the material level, my relationship with my parents is very satisfactory and at the emotional level very deficient.” (Man, age 45)
- 650 “I owe my parents a lot and will attempt to pass on the same principles of child-rearing and support to my own children.” (Man, age 45)
- 651 “I like to visit my parents weekly and maintain the garden with them. Working together in the garden and taking a break and drinking coffee is very good form of cultivating the relationship in my view (in the same way that my parents also have learned to communicate and cultivate communication).” (Man, age 45)
- 652 “I’m lucky to have had extraordinary parents.” (Man, age 45)
- 653 “My father was ill for the last three years of his life, which had a major impact on our relationship. Before that, we sometimes fought. Paradoxically, his illness brought us closer together. When he left this world, we parted serenely on a relational level.” (Man, age 45)
- 654 “The relationship with my mother is really bad because she accepts neither me nor my wife. Countless attempts on my part have been to no avail, despite my highly developed social skills. My mother is insanely jealous of all other people who associate with me or my children. To save my marriage, I cut ties with her a few years ago after the last attempt at peaceful co-existence. My marriage is perfect, and I can live without my mother. I would have preferred it differently, but my mother does not let anyone help her. The relationship with my father and his second wife is perfect. His second wife is also ‘GRANDMA’ for my children.” (Man, age 45)
- 655 “Very good relationship, which at times is strenuous on account of my mother overreacting in matters not concerning me.” (Woman, age 46)



- 656 “They are and always will be a role model and a point of reference for me. It would be great if everyone could have a childhood like the one that I had.” (Woman, age 46)
- 657 “Loving, supportive – I miss him!” (Woman, age 46)
- 658 “We are a happy family and I love my parents so much. I wish that they are always happy and healthy.” (Woman, age 46)
- 659 “I was very lucky to have parents who loved each other and loved me.” (Woman, age 46)
- 660 “My parents are very important to me and are always there for me. I grew up very protected and am grateful that it was that way.” (Woman, age 46)
- 661 “I had a very close relationship with my mum, but I had no relationship with my dad, who was an alcoholic. It’s a pity because, according to other people, he was a very good person.” (Woman, age 46)
- 662 “I met my biological father only once.” (Woman, age 46)
- 663 “You never know when you’ll see your parents for the last time. That’s why you should spend every day with them as happily as possible and leave no unasked questions or unspoken reproaches up in the air.” (Woman, age 46)
- 664 “I had a simple but exciting childhood and youth. My parents were caring parents who were always there for us children.” (Woman, age 46)
- 665 “I love them both exactly the way they are!” (Woman, age 46)
- 666 “Today I can only say a big THANK YOU to both of my parents. They took care of me the best they knew how and could, given the circumstances that they grew up in and we all lived in. It was not so easy for me to learn about myself (love, emotions, relationships ... ), but with the contrast they gave me by way of example of how they were living their lives, they were the best teachers ever.” (Woman, age 46)
- 667 “I know my father only from weekends once a month as a child and from vacationing together. But he took great care of me. The relationship between my parents was a catastrophe, however.” (Woman, age 46)
- 668 “My family rarely speaks about emotions. My father never spoke about feelings. And deep emotions are not shown among adults to the extent possible. Everybody works out the important things that they are concerned about by themselves. This is not shared with each other in conversations and so on. Nevertheless, everyone is there for one another. ... This survey wasn’t easy for me since my father died just recently. And

- it is difficult in the current phase of grieving to answer questions about the deceased, who was not just a while ago.” (Woman, age 46)
- 669 “In France, my parents are married under the matrimonial property regime. Any inheritance and endowments come from these common assets.” (Woman, age 46)
- 670 “Honesty was the basis of our family life.” (Man, age 46)
- 671 “Along with my partner, my biological parents are the two most important people in my life. I’ll always be there for them if they need me.” (Man, age 46)
- 672 “They are the best :-).” (Man, age 46)
- 673 “At around the age of 18, I understood (after a discussion with my older brother) that they are always there for me and that their love is unconditional. So since then, I have had no ‘complaints’ about them, just love and understanding.” (Man, age 46)
- 674 “It was always very good until they died.” (Man, age 46)
- 675 “It is very good.” (Man, age 46)
- 676 “I experienced a great childhood. I thank them for everything that they passed on to me.” (Man, age 46)
- 677 “The large distance of 800 km has unfortunately impaired the relationship.” (Man, age 46)
- 678 “A relationship of respect, closeness and love.” (Man, age 46)
- 679 “Can you be totally objective? I’ve done my best to be.” (Man, age 46)
- 680 “Having only had the opportunity to meet my father on a handful of occasions throughout my life, it’s difficult for me to talk about him in any depth.” (Man, age 46)
- 681 “My parents deserve a huge ‘well done’ and ‘thank you’!!!” (Man, age 46)
- 682 “As a latecomer, the relationship with my parents was warm, but physically somewhat distanced – also and above all with my much older siblings. There are probably reasons for this: Our father grew up in very modest circumstances as the youngest child among very many children in a farmers’ family. As a child born out of wedlock, our mother was raised as a foster child in a farmers’ family with many children (likewise in very, very modest circumstances). For a long time, she was very submissive, ‘swallowed’ everything and never wanted to be a burden on anyone. This has continued until now up until very old age. In my mother’s words: ‘In THIS generation, there was less closeness between parents and children. I wish I had physically shown you children more that I love you. Hugging you more and the like. The way parents do

today.’ Both of them had to be independent early on, that is, help on the family farm to reduce the burden on their parents/family. It was the same with us. We moved out of the parental home as soon as possible. It would have been inconceivable to be ‘a drain on their pocket’ longer than absolutely necessary. I took the frequent arguments between my parents personally, and they would have most certainly separated if it wouldn’t have been for me. But they did ‘pull through’ then to the bitter end. Respect for their persistence and how they got us through childhood/youth. With my father’s small salary and my mother’s supplementary income. We always had everything that we needed and were never beaten. It would have never occurred to us to speak disrespectfully of our parents. But the entire family maintains a hearty distance from each other. None of us want to burden each other with problems. Each one of us is too independent and proud to do so. But we all know that we would ‘be helped’ in the event of an absolute emergency.” (Man, age 46)

683 “My parents loved strangers more than me. No relationship anymore.” (Man, age 46)

### Late forties

684 “Excellent; I don’t help them because they’re totally independent, and they don’t help me with everyday life because I don’t need them!” (Woman, age 47)

685 “It’s a beautiful relationship, which has grown over the years.” (Woman, age 47)

686 “My parents always did the best they could with the means and knowledge they had. I am infinitely grateful for what they have given me, and I love them from the bottom of my heart.” (Woman, age 47)

687 “I was able to experience a wonderful childhood, even after the death of my father (I was a teenager then).” (Woman, age 47)

688 “A very warm, close relationship. I received every kind of support, encouragement and affection as a child. My parental home was a warm cave, which you could look out of and later go out from. As an adolescent and adult, many visits, trips together and conversations, still a close relationship. From my parents, I received a solid foundation/basis for later life, and they imparted important values. With advancing age came the worries about my parents and have partially dominated the relationship with them.” (Woman, age 47)

- 689 “I’d say that I have a very healthy relationship with my parents because we communicate with each other. Honest and transparent. Not frequently, but whenever necessary, we have selectively ventured to have an honest talk. This communication process has continued with my mother, and even more so as we grow older. The relationship with my mother mostly involves topics of personality development toward awareness. As daughter, I am more likely the one to initiate these conversations. But my mother faces my inner conflicts, which are rooted in my upbringing. Understanding and healing through communication.” (Woman, age 47)
- 690 “I miss my mother a lot.” (Woman, age 47)
- 691 “In spite of difficulties in the couple relationship between my parents, these were never carried out at the children’s expense.” (Woman, age 47)
- 692 “I wasn’t ever really shown how to live a relationship. They gave all that they could and supported me in my personal decision-making: choice of occupation, further education.” (Woman, age 47)
- 693 “I get along with my parents well.” (Woman, age 47)
- 694 “Today, my relationship with my parents is good, closer than it used to be, especially with my mother. We have looked at many incidents; they did it the way that they felt was right and the way that they were raised. When you have several children, not everything is optimal success. I have worked a lot, and I am glad that we can hug each other today in a way that wasn’t possible previously. They mean a lot to me – it’s where I’m from. I see many things through different eyes since I have children of my own. I appreciate them for what they were able to do.” (Woman, age 47)
- 695 “We help each other wherever necessary. In the past, my mother looked after the children, cooked for them. We help them with bureaucratic as well as digital things.” (Woman, age 47)
- 696 “I run a restaurant. My mother actively helps run the business. She is a great support to me.” (Woman, age 47)
- 697 “Out of gratitude for the intense care during their first years of life, children should not be sparing with loyalty and leniency toward their parents.” (Woman, age 47)
- 698 “Both my parents grew up with missing parents (divorced or deceased). They themselves never experienced a ‘nest’ as a child. They had to experience emotional pressure. I did have a ‘nest’ but with few emotional bonds. Each one just somehow lived their life. Alongside one another.

- We are there for each other, help each other immediately, but there is no deep emotional, warm attachment. Neither to my parents nor to my siblings.” (Woman, age 47)
- 699 “The relationship with my parents became more difficult after my father’s retirement because my parents have difficulty in coming to terms with the situation that they are more around each other again on a daily basis. My parents have difficulty finding commonalities.” (Woman, age 47)
- 700 “Following my dad’s death, my relationship with my mum deteriorated to a point where we stopped talking to each other. It’s a real shame because it seemed to me that I had a special relationship with her, as I was her only daughter.” (Woman, age 47)
- 701 “My relationship with my parents was loveless even when I was a child. This has continued to the present.” (Woman, age 47)
- 702 “We have a very good relationship in our entire family. We are all there for one another, and we never quarrel.” (Man, age 47)
- 703 “My parents have been married for 50 years and raised me and my siblings well and enabled us to live a good life. Great parents!” (Man, age 47)
- 704 “Best parents in the world. I appreciate their lives and help.” (Man, age 47)
- 705 “My mother and maternal grandparents gave me the best they could, and I can never thank them enough.” (Man, age 47)
- 706 “Currently, my parents are faced with health problems and increasingly limited resources. My father is not self-sufficient and is being looked after at home. My mother takes care of him. It was not possible to put him in an old people’s home because it was too expensive. Once they are no longer self-sufficient, this will pose a serious financial problem if we have to rely on a nursing home.” (Man, age 47)
- 707 “I experienced a carefree happy childhood with my parents.” (Man, age 47)
- 708 “The relationship with my parents has not always been easy because they frequently had rows. To a certain degree, this has affected the relationship between my mother and me and between my father and me.” (Man, age 47)
- 709 “I spent my childhood and adolescence with two completely different parents. I can safely say that my mother and my father were the opposite of each other. My mother was a shy, bigoted, very religious, anxious and incredibly apprehensive person. My father on the other hand was an atheist, a very risk-taking, explosive entrepreneur without a parachute.” (Man, age 47)

- 710 “My relationship with my parents remained fairly short because the decision was made within the family that my sister would care for our parents once they needed support as they increasingly grow older. My sister did an excellent job of implementing the agreement.” (Man, age 47)
- 711 “Good in the first ten to fifteen years. They grew apart later. They separated after 30 years of marriage but never divorced. My father always supported my mother financially after their separation and was present during her illness.” (Woman, age 48)
- 712 “We often had to be very understanding. They were deaf-mute.” (Woman, age 48)
- 713 “Along with my children and husband they are/were the most important people in my life.” (Woman, age 48)
- 714 “To me they were perfect parents, who passed on values that are priceless.” (Woman, age 48)
- 715 “I had a good relationship with my father and have a good relationship with my mother. We support each other and also leave each other the space that a good relationship needs. We are there for each other and cultivate our relationship, which has evolved since I became independent. It is all well embedded in a large family and relatives who help and are there for one another. I have a sense of being in good hands even if we don’t always have the same opinions.” (Woman, age 48)
- 716 “To me, my parents raised me in an exemplary manner. There was a break in the relationship with my father when my parents separated (at advanced age).” (Woman, age 48)
- 717 “To me, my mother is a great asset and a role model with her inner contentment with herself and her environment. My relationship with my religious father took a bit of a toll and was deeply challenging to him due to my early pregnancy.” (Woman, age 48)
- 718 “I used to have a wonderful relationship with my mum, but unfortunately she had a stroke that changed her completely. And as for my dad, without going into too much detail, my dad drank a lot and never knew how to show his feelings.” (Woman, age 48)
- 719 “I love them and accept them as they are. The distance that separates us has deprived me of their presence, their spontaneity, their joy of living, their help and their involvement with our children. Parents are at the heart of the family.” (Woman, age 48)
- 720 “I love my parents!” (Woman, age 48)
- 721 “My parents separated many years ago; they divorced later. My father has lived in Central America ever since. My sister and I aren’t in touch

- with him at all. For this reason, we also don't know anything about his personal financial situation and his health." (Woman, age 48)
- 722 "I didn't know my father since he died early on. My mother had COPD and gradually died from it. Naturally, her illness changed her character and mood." (Woman, age 48)
- 723 "I have/had the best parents." (Woman, age 48)
- 724 "It's just the way it should be: respectful and everyone supports each other wherever possible." (Woman, age 48)
- 725 "My mother lives in a nursing home and suffers from Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. She is only minimally aware of other people." (Woman, age 48)
- 726 "We respect each other. Because of the distance between where we live and our individual activities and commitments, we see each other fairly rarely (about every two months)." (Woman, age 48)
- 727 "We must consider how little free time we have (after work) to visit or look after our parents." (Woman, age 48)
- 728 "My parents haven't divorced but have been living separately for many years." (Woman, age 48)
- 729 "My father had been suffering from senile dementia for several years." (Man, age 48)
- 730 "A very friendly honest relationship. My parents have given me a lot, and I try to give back. My brother and I grew up in a wonderful family and had a great childhood." (Man, age 48)
- 731 "My parents are always there for me and my sister." (Man, age 48)
- 732 "Very good relationship as it has matured." (Man, age 48)
- 733 "I'm visually impaired. This led to a close relationship." (Man, age 48)
- 734 "It's a very precious thing to have had my two parents together all the time." (Man, age 48)
- 735 "Very pleasant and instructive." (Man, age 48)
- 736 "Hope that my parents will be able to lead a long, qualitatively good and independent life in their shared home." (Man, age 48)
- 737 "A distant relationship, not a warm relationship." (Man, age 48)
- 738 "Relationships calm down over time but do not change fundamentally." (Man, age 48)
- 739 "I haven't seen my parents for 25 years." (Man, age 48)
- 740 "Have the best parents in the world; unfortunately, they live very far away from us." (Woman, age 49)
- 741 "We have a very close, open and warm relationship. They should use their money for their life and for travelling, as they always worked a

- lot and I don't expect to inherit anything and don't want to either."  
(Woman, age 49)
- 742 "My father died during my childhood. At the time, my mother had to get by on her own with her many children and a small farm. It was a hard time for all of us. But during that time, we learned what it means to stick together as a family. We still benefit from that today." (Woman, age 49)
- 743 "Parents: In old age, the relationship became closer again. When I was young and my parents were still working, we had a bit less contact. Father: My father was very ill before his death. Sometimes I wish I would have been there more, I would have talked with him more. The last years of his life were very intense, also burdensome because he was so ill. Even ten years after his death, my father is very present. Sometimes I have an inner dialogue with him, know exactly what he would think or say in some situations. And sometimes, I think that he would certainly be happy for me or proud of me in certain moments. Mother: Up until recently, my mother was a very independent person with a large social network. Now her visual impairment is becoming increasingly worse. She can only visit familiar places on her own, and she can hardly read and write anymore. This has required more and more support. She still lives alone in her flat." (Woman, age 49)
- 744 "Wonderful people who left us far too soon :-(" (Woman, age 49)
- 745 "I have very young parents, whom I am particularly proud of and to whom I am grateful. I find it sensational to live in such a great environment." (Woman, age 49)
- 746 "My father died the year I was born, so I have no memory of him and have not been able to answer any questions about him." (Woman, age 49)
- 747 "I clearly have a closer relationship with my mother. Yet since she is suffering from slight dementia on account of a stroke, my father has acquired a different role, which has forced all of us to reconsider how the roles are distributed and to engage differently with one another." (Woman, age 49)
- 748 "I had good and loving parents." (Woman, age 49)
- 749 "In the last twelve months before her death, my mother developed Alzheimer's. She lived in a facility for dementia patients and ultimately died of cancer. Our relationship was extremely reduced to being together, without words, and contact was often only possible through physical contact." (Woman, age 49)



- 750 “My father died when I was seven, I don’t remember everything, plus he worked a lot, so I didn’t really see him in the years before he died.” (Woman, age 49)
- 751 “I grew up, with my brother, living with my mother. My mother worked as a waitress in a restaurant and was on break when we were in school. My brother and I were mostly on our own, my mother often overwhelmed by the situation. My brother and I nevertheless have a close relationship with our mother. During the past 20 years, she has given us what she couldn’t give us during our first 20 years. I didn’t see my father often during my childhood. As far as I can remember, only three times. Only once there were grandchildren did our contact become steadier and I was able to get to know my father over the past 20 years, which was very important to me. My brother and I, together with my father’s wife, accompanied my father during the last days leading up to his death.” (Woman, age 49)
- 752 “My parents and my child are the people I care about most in the world. I really admire all three of them, especially my mum.” (Woman, age 49)
- 753 “I love my parents with all of my heart and could not ask for better/ other parents. I dearly hope that my children feel for me the same way that I feel for my parents: love and gratitude.” (Woman, age 49)
- 754 “My parents: they are wonderful parents. They have taught me so much about how to spend my life.” (Woman, age 49)
- 755 “Given that my father died when I was nine, all the answers about him go back a long way.” (Woman, age 49)
- 756 “For about 20 years now, the relationship of parents-child has become one of friendship and respect.” (Woman, age 49)
- 757 “Five years ago, I distanced myself from my mother somewhat because she was very close to me before that, even too close, and it was too much of a burden. At the time, I felt obliged to be there for her a lot.” (Woman, age 49)
- 758 “The biggest relationship issues that I had with my parents can be traced back to the conflictual relationship between my mother and father. During my entire childhood, they would ‘bark’ at each other every day (the arguments were almost entirely based on my mother’s constant criticism of my father: “Don’t do it like that!” “Just think a bit!” “You went the wrong way again, we should never have followed you.” etc.), without the situation leading to a divorce, however. This created a very stressful atmosphere at home, with a lot of yelling, and

- this grim atmosphere led me to move out as soon as possible (just before I turned 18). Even when I visit my parents now, I'm concerned about the disparaging remarks my mother makes towards my father. Another thing that weighed heavily on me as a child was the fear my mother always showed about anything I might do ("Don't run." "Careful, you'll fall over." "Why are you two minutes late coming home from school, I was so worried!" etc.). According to those close to me, I was a very lively baby who climbed everywhere, but I turned into an anxious little girl, afraid of everything, especially being late for anything. As I know that my mother's fears about my safety are rooted in her own early childhood (she was born at the start of the Second World War and experienced bombing raids and food restrictions), I don't feel any resentment towards my upbringing: in the end, everyone does the best they can with their own baggage and character ...” (Woman, age 49)
- 759 “It is lovely that they are still alive and I can spend time with them every year during vacations :-).” (Woman, age 49)
- 760 “My parents would like for all their children to live in their large house. An extended family like in the old days. Whoever does not go along with this is cast out.” (Woman, age 49)
- 761 “Very complicated!” (Woman, age 49)
- 762 “I have had no contact with my mother for years because the situation in my family of origin is extremely complex. Contact with my father, however, has been improving the older he gets.” (Woman, age 49)
- 763 “Sadness and not being appreciated by my mother.” (Woman, age 49)
- 764 “My relationship with my adoptive parents was basically good and lovely. But the roots, the genetics, leave a deep hole; not to know who your biological parents are and what I inherited from whom and so on.” (Woman, age 49)
- 765 “It was hard and they died much too early.” (Man, age 49)
- 766 “The best parents in the world. For what they did for me and my sister. The word respect is too small to describe what they did for us/me.” (Man, age 49)
- 767 “I wish everyone such a beautiful relationship like I have with my parents. But there is one drawback. Approaching 50, I am frightened by the thought that I will one day have to live without their backing, because they are still very present in my life, so that I sometimes have the impression of being dependent on them, because they support me a lot in every respect. Can parents who are too close to their children cause a lack of autonomy later on?” (Man, age 49)

- 768 “The relationship with my parents was/is the kind of relationship that you would ask for. Very close tie, supportive and very loving.” (Man, age 49)
- 769 “My parents did a huge job, for my brother and I have both been ill since birth. It wasn’t easy for them. Both tried to shape our lives as if we were healthy, which was very difficult, however. I think my mother broke down over us and for this reason came down with cancer. I’m grateful for what they did for me, but the death of our mother tore the whole family apart. This is why conversations and contact are difficult nowadays. My father expects infinite gratitude from me, which I cannot give him, however. He would never get in touch with us voluntarily. If we meet, there is always a reason, a funeral, a milestone birthday or so. When we get in touch, it is only because of an effort on my part, which can be strenuous. Moreover, our discussions are mostly superficial. For that reason, I have been avoiding family festivities like Christmas and so on for years. It’s actually a shame, but with my disabilities I have enough on my plate. That’s why I live our life with my wife, and my father lives his life.” (Man, age 49)
- 770 “Very good.” (Man, age 49)
- 771 “I was raised in a household that raised children in an open atmosphere. My opinion and ideas were always respected and topics and problems were debated in open discussions. My own opinion was respected and, with their support, also asserted against the state (military) and bureaucracy (school).” (Man, age 49)
- 772 “The relationship between my wife and my mother is strained.” (Man, age 49)
- 773 “It’s always been a conflictual relationship.” (Man, age 49)
- 774 “It’s a pity that my relationship with my parents developed that way because of their divorce.” (Man, age 49)

## Fifties

### Early fifties

- 775 “The best parents of all, with a wonderful childhood, out in nature a lot.” (Woman, age 50)

- 776 “My father lives in Eastern Europe. I live in Switzerland. But I love my father. I have sisters in Eastern Europe. I know and am sure that all of my sisters there are caring for my father.” (Woman, age 50)
- 777 “The questions regarding my father aim at my begetter (biological father). He lived in the same village where I and my parents did. I had the opportunity to experience a happy, carefree childhood in the home of my biological mother and my father, who was not my biological one and which he never let me feel. My parents were always there for me. I was able to grow up in a protected environment despite partly difficult circumstances. I loved my parents a lot and still miss them today.” (Woman, age 50)
- 778 “The relationship is like in a storybook! Live and let live and being there for each other. His daughter clearly means the world to her father, and her father the world for his daughter! Cast in the same mould.” (Woman, age 50)
- 779 “My mother was seriously mentally ill. She took her life through suicide.” (Woman, age 50)
- 780 “I won’t change them anymore, and they won’t change me – all is wonderful.” (Woman, age 50)
- 781 “It couldn’t have been better. I’m very content, had a happy childhood and felt loved very much.” (Woman, age 50)
- 782 “Absolute trust.” (Woman, age 50)
- 783 “I love my parents the way they are.” (Woman, age 50)
- 784 “I have/had a very good relationship with my parents. When I was a child, my father was very strict, which sometimes burdened me a bit. Over the years, our relationship increasingly improved, and he became more and more affectionate toward me and my family. The relationship with my mother was always very good!” (Woman, age 50)
- 785 “Rather difficult. My mother and father are both from abroad and have always been very traditional. For instance, no relationship before marriage, get married and have a family. But that applied only to me as a daughter and not to my brothers.” (Woman, age 50)
- 786 “I grew up in a multi-generational home. Mother, father, grandparents (my mother’s parents). I always was what was called ‘father’s daughter’ and additionally had a very close relationship with my grandmother. Although I get along with my mother well, I never had a very close relationship as she is more of a reserved person. She frequently just had demands but never provided support. My father always supported but never pressured me. Neither parent nor any of my grandparents forced

- any gender roles upon me, and they gave me a free hand in choosing my career. I also shared many hobbies with my father.” (Woman, age 50)
- 787 “I have a dual impairment: I’m blind and in a wheelchair. For this reason, my parents help me a lot in everyday life. They live in Germany while I live in Switzerland, but all of us near the border, less than 25 km apart.” (Woman, age 50)
- 788 “My mother has changed incredibly. She had been a beautiful, slender, hardworking woman. Now she is a very obese, lazy, unkempt woman who feels very comfortable in the victim role. Now she expects me to support her, which I cannot and do not want to, however. In my opinion, she would definitely be able to do everything herself . . . if she had the will to do so. My father is a very satisfied happy old gentleman. I think that he suffers a lot from realising that he is no spring chicken anymore. He is in excellent shape and still does everything together with his new wife. I admire his desire to live. He never needs my help because he has a young wife who would take care of everything for him should he ever need it. I would nevertheless also do it for him anytime.” (Woman, age 50)
- 789 “I was mentally abused as a consequence of the difficult traumas of my parents during their childhood (war and their parental home). However, over the course of therapy, I have come to terms with my childhood and can now deal with it well.” (Woman, age 50)
- 790 “I experienced a very good and very beautiful childhood and teenage years, free of worries and very protected. I’m very grateful for that and, particularly in retrospect, appreciate it a lot. They passed on, and I was able to adopt from them, a lot of spirit and serenity for my pathway through life. All in all, a positive, very lovely time, always with a ‘home’ and not just a roof over your head.” (Woman, age 50)
- 791 “I hardly had any relationship with my father. He was rather introverted. Since I was the youngest child, I always felt unimportant. My mother gave me the feeling of never being good enough. I literally fled from home when I was 15.” (Woman, age 50)
- 792 “It is difficult since my sister is more than ten years younger.” (Woman, age 50)
- 793 “Unfortunately, a cold loveless relationship.” (Woman, age 50)
- 794 “My parents did not protect me when I was a child. All that I am and have achieved to the present, I accomplished on my own. Nowadays, my parents occasionally need help. But I can’t give them any because I

- didn't receive any as a child either. It's just not possible." (Woman, age 50)
- 795 "To my parents, I was simply not the proper sex. They wanted to have a son. Unfortunately, my brother died. After that, it became worse." (Woman, age 50)
- 796 "There was no relationship since I never had contact with my parents." (Woman, age 50)
- 797 "It is a wonderful relationship, and I wouldn't want to miss a moment." (Man, age 50)
- 798 "They raised me on the basis of good values. Thanks, Mum & Dad." (Man, age 50)
- 799 "A normal and happy relationship, based on mutual respect and an appreciation of the important principles of life." (Man, age 50)
- 800 "Gratitude!" (Man, age 50)
- 801 "On the whole, I had a good childhood." (Man, age 50)
- 802 "I'm currently trying to distance myself more from my parents because I feel responsible for everything that is going on with them ... Of course, I know that I am not ..., but that's just the way it is ... Although because of this 'distancing thing' I feel rather tied to my parents and I've even thought about it being 'better' if they were no longer alive, I cannot imagine a life without them ... and I don't want to either ..." (Man, age 50)
- 803 "A HUGE thank you to my parents!!!" (Man, age 50)
- 804 "My mother has senile dementia." (Man, age 50)
- 805 "My parents both worked a lot, which is why no close relationship evolved." (Man, age 50)
- 806 "Live and let live." (Man, age 50)
- 807 "The burden of ageing parents is often a constraint that adds to our busy lives. That said, I'm happy to do it because it seems normal to me. However, out of modesty and respect, I won't be sharing my home with them, nor will I be able to give them the physical and medical care they need." (Woman, age 51)
- 808 "My parents are a great couple." (Woman, age 51)
- 809 "They always supported me with my ideas, also to leave the country to go to Central America to live there, even though the guerillas were active at the time. Unfortunately, they never tried to get me to attend baccalaureate school, although I had excellent grades. They accepted and never criticised how we raised our children and our ideas in this respect." (Woman, age 51)

- 810 “Apart from my own family, they are the dearest and best that I have.”  
(Woman, age 51)
- 811 “I was lucky.” (Woman, age 51)
- 812 “I received everything you could wish for as a child and teenager ...  
A great life with my parents. Fair parents with foresight.” (Woman,  
age 51)
- 813 “In the last few months of their lives, I was not as close to them as I  
would have wanted to be considering their poor health. But we were  
living 1,200 km apart from each other, in different countries, and I had  
a family with young children and a demanding job. Whenever I could,  
I was there for them, however. For their daily support I relied on my  
brother and his family, who lived in the same town as them.” (Woman,  
age 51)
- 814 “Like every family, mine too has its weaknesses, which can be evaluated  
depending on one’s perspective. I have taken complete responsibility  
for MY life and therefore have a neutral perception of the past, as it  
does not in any way affect me in the present.” (Woman, age 51)
- 815 “I had a brilliant childhood. My parents quarrelled very rarely, even  
though my father is an alcoholic.” (Woman, age 51)
- 816 “I’m grateful for my parents, especially because I can live in peace even  
after their death and enjoy thinking and talking about them.” (Woman,  
age 51)
- 817 “The great distance facilitates tolerating each other’s peculiarities. Some  
differences would presumably not be as easy to bridge were we to have  
to deal with them constantly.” (Woman, age 51)
- 818 “My mother suffers from dementia (Alzheimer’s disease).” (Woman,  
age 51)
- 819 “My father suffered from depression when I was still at school. My  
mother didn’t really understand what was going on – I felt very alone. I  
was very disappointed with the relationship with medical services. That  
period of my life was extremely difficult, but now that they’ve passed  
away, I feel at peace. As for the rest, my parents gave me some basic  
values that I have passed on to my children: honesty, respect, faith and  
so on. I also taught my children the importance of setting limits to be  
respected. You have to know how to love yourself before you can love  
others ...” (Woman, age 51)
- 820 “When I changed to another religious community, my father broke off  
contact with my family. On the day of his funeral, my mother resumed  
contact with me and my family.” (Woman, age 51)

- 821 “People and also relationships change considerably with age and illness. My relationship with my parents is much different now than in my young years.” (Woman, age 51)
- 822 “My mother and I were both very ill during her last months of life, and we lay in neighbouring rooms in the hospital for about a month. This resulted in a very soft, warm relationship. My father is a good person. Unfortunately, he is emotionally faintly present and way too preoccupied with himself. I miss that even today ...” (Woman, age 51)
- 823 “The tension is still there, and a lot is hushed up. You would think that, because you grow older, stuff from the past is over with, but that’s not true. It would be good to come to terms with it together before their death.” (Woman, age 51)
- 824 “The relationship with my mother is often difficult because she is borderline and time and again has periods of excessive drinking” (Woman, age 51)
- 825 “My mother is in an older people’s/nursing home and cannot talk, walk and has no awareness anymore.” (Woman, age 51)
- 826 “I grew up in a very religious and traditionally minded family in a small village. What counted was always the values perceived by others. Interests and ideas of your own, to realise yourself, was almost inconceivable. ‘What will the other people think of us?’” (Woman, age 51)
- 827 “I was a little child when my mother passed away, and my father raised five children on his own. I and my siblings grew up without a mother, and I only have very few memories of my mother.” (Woman, age 51)
- 828 “I never had a good relationship with them because they wanted a son and I was nothing like they expected. In fact, during their lifetime, they gave their property to my younger sister, with whom I’ve had no contact for over 20 years.” (Woman, age 51)
- 829 “My mother still lives in the same house and has the right of residence.” (Man, age 51)
- 830 “Relationship with my mother very strong, unfortunately considerably affected by her long illness. Relationship with my father problematic, but it was probably often my fault (as a teenager you likely don’t know any better).” (Man, age 51)
- 831 “Always a good relationship.” (Man, age 51)
- 832 “I found your questionnaire interesting, and I realise that I often gave very positive answers. I’m lucky with my parents. If my wife had answered in relation to her family, she would have expressed more tension.” (Man, age 51)



- 833 "I had a great childhood and will forever be thankful for what they did for me!!!!" (Man, age 51)
- 834 "My parents always supported me within their possibilities. I am very grateful to them for all that they have done for me! It was only later that I realised what it must have meant to grow up as a *Verdingkind* [child in care used for labour] and what kind of deprivation this must have involved ...! You also often noticed this in their behaviour ... Of course, you figure this out only later ... that is, too late!" (Man, age 51)
- 835 "RIP Dad, love my mom." (Man, age 51)
- 836 "Super relationship and great childhood." (Man, age 51)
- 837 "The relationship with my parents has become looser as a result of their moving to Southern Europe. This is for geographical reasons. Prior to that, I had a good relationship with my parents with the usual, normal tensions. Especially during my teenage years. I appreciate and respect my father in particular very much." (Man, age 51)
- 838 "I didn't always understand my parents, but I always accepted them the way they were. In retrospect, I would have liked to have more time for them during their last years of life, but that was not possible for job-related reasons." (Man, age 51)
- 839 "We live in an open and honest relationship." (Man, age 51)
- 840 "Unfortunately, my mother has had multiple sclerosis since the age of 30. This made the relationship with my parents a bit unique as my father cared for her 100% until her death." (Man, age 51)
- 841 "Parents were separated ever since we were kids. Father didn't have any visitation rights since he wasn't paying child support." (Man, age 51)
- 842 "Deep love and caring, in spite of a conflictual childhood." (Woman, age 52)
- 843 "My parents live together in the same household and are a happy couple." (Woman, age 52)
- 844 "I loved my parents dearly, and they loved me and my brothers and sisters. It goes without saying that there were conflicts, just like in all families, but I am proud of them, and I am happy to have been born of their union. It is such a shame that they died so young!" (Woman, age 52)
- 845 "Before her death, my mother suffered from severe leukaemia for about 30 months." (Woman, age 52)
- 846 "My mother suffered from dementia before her death." (Woman, age 52)
- 847 "The type of relationship which I have had with them is a result of the education I received from them." (Woman, age 52)

- 848 “My father is stubborn and peculiar. My mother lives in a nursing home and suffers from dementia.” (Woman, age 52)
- 849 “Father unknown, separated from my mother when I was one, never seen again.” (Woman, age 52)
- 850 “My mother has Alzheimer’s. Because of this, I couldn’t really answer some of the questions.” (Woman, age 52)
- 851 “My father had a bad temper, which wasn’t always easy for us children and our mother. But there was no physical violence. We were afraid of his temper tantrums. For those experiencing them, this was always also very sad. His bad temper settled down with increasing age.” (Woman, age 52)
- 852 “My mother requires some care. It has been very difficult to organise relief for my father and support for both ahead of time, which has created tension between my parents and me since I need to plan well in advance when it comes to predictable requirements to be able to reconcile job demands and my private life. My parents, by contrast, are more oriented toward the short term and don’t like to plan in advance – to them that is too strenuous. For this reason, I have reduced my workload to have time to support my parents with daily tasks.” (Woman, age 52)
- 853 “My father worked hard but was rarely present. But he always worked to support us.” (Woman, age 52)
- 854 “I met my father for the first time when I was about 20.” (Woman, age 52)
- 855 “After severe experiences with my father during childhood and after a dispute over inheritance, I completely broke off contact with him and my siblings. It was much too stressful for me.” (Woman, age 52)
- 856 “My father was the worst person I know.” (Woman, age 52)
- 857 “I felt more drawn to my father, and we often had a lot of fun together. My mother was a rather emotionally cold person. Particularly when it came to upper-secondary education and searching for an apprenticeship, I would have needed support but never got any. In certain situations, I was ashamed of my parents. I nevertheless look after my mother ...” (Woman, age 52)
- 858 “Since my parents emigrated abroad 30 years ago, some questions were more difficult to answer than if they had stayed in Switzerland. To me, providing care and help, if desired, would, however, be a matter of course if my mother lived in Switzerland.” (Woman, age 52)

- 859 “A great many things have remained unsaid both in my relationship with my father, who died much too early, and in my relationship with my mother. My relationship with my father was lovely when I was a young child and was very difficult later because he was an alcoholic. Only toward the very end did we become a bit closer again. He then died unexpectedly and very rapidly. There are many things with my mother that are also difficult and have been left unspoken. I feel that she treated me unfairly. She always favoured my brother and still supports him even today. He doesn’t have to work, travels all over the world and I get nothing!” (Woman, age 52)
- 860 “My parents have been separated by court order. However, my father still rules over my mother. She has no bank account of her own but is allowed to withdraw money from their shared account. There is plenty of money there, but my mother is extremely frugal. It annoys me extremely that my mother was pressured into signing this stupid separation agreement. This is why I want to witness as little as possible how my father continues to dominate my mother. I can’t do more than offer my mother my help. She would have to change it.” (Woman, age 52)
- 861 “There has been no contact with my biological father for four years now.” (Woman, age 52)
- 862 “Despite many despicable experiences, I was able to forgive myself and them and shape my life independently. This started at the age of about 30 years, which brought much relief to the relationship and contributed to me being able to accompany my father with his dementia. The relationship with my mother always remained distanced.” (Woman, age 52)
- 863 “My mother and I had a very close relationship after my father’s death. Over time, I found out that she drinks secretly and that she is a heavy alcoholic with depression. She denies all this. Ever since we found her completely unkempt and no longer responsive in her flat last year and informed her family doctor and the KESB [child and adult protection authority], she doesn’t speak with us anymore and broke off all contact. However, she claims that I am mad at her and that this is the reason why we are no longer in touch ...” (Woman, age 52)
- 864 “My biological mother died when I was born. To me, my ‘stepmother’ always simply was my mother, with whom I had a very good relationship. I grew up with her, and my answers would have been entirely different had I related them to her.” (Woman, age 52)
- 865 “I’m glad and happy to have no contact.” (Woman, age 52)

- 866 “It has been crucial and very positive for me that I grew up in a family of sound and just principles. This taught me that you have to fight for and earn yourself friendship and respect and wellbeing, and that you have to appreciate also small things in life, that you need a sense of duty towards other people, towards nature and our environment. What more can I say, only that I would have liked to enjoy my relationship with them for longer and would have wanted it to be more profound. That wasn’t possible because of various circumstances in life and because they died early.” (Man, age 52)
- 867 “Happy.” (Man, age 52)
- 868 “Our parents were always there for us children. Fortunately, my mother was ‘only’ a housewife for us children! We always maintained a family atmosphere. That is why I experienced wonderful years of childhood! My parents were never rich – but they gave us their time!” (Man, age 52)
- 869 “I had good parents, a bit old-fashioned, but they taught me the right values in life. I have been lucky!” (Man, age 52)
- 870 “The relationship with my parents always was/is good and involves mutual respect.” (Man, age 52)
- 871 “My parents were honest, uncomplicated and simple people, which is why I am proud of my parents. They were happy and satisfied.” (Man, age 52)
- 872 “Since my father died early and always worked away from home, I didn’t have such a close bond to him as to my mother. Overall, they were both caring and loving parents.” (Man, age 52)
- 873 “It wasn’t always easy, but if I compared it with others, then it was probably all fairly average and not as intense as it appeared to me. There was a lot of laughter in our family, and I cherish that until today.” (Man, age 52)
- 874 “My mother died much too early in a traffic accident almost 30 years ago.” (Man, age 52)
- 875 “My parents’ home is an outright psycho-geriatric institution. Narcissists, egoists, and thanks to medication, it’s more or less tolerable. Still my parents.” (Man, age 52)
- 876 “A working-class family at odds with one another. We have no contact, also among us siblings.” (Man, age 52)
- 877 “I adored my father and miss him every day. My mother is a fighter and a creative person, and I love her very much too.” (Woman, age 53)

- 878 “My father came to Switzerland when he was a child. That my parents now live in Southern Europe is like a homecoming to him. We all feel attached to that region. His mother also comes from there. My father became an alcoholic after my teenage years, I suppose. Nowadays, he drinks in a controlled manner. We have few conflicts, but when we do, it is mostly related to that. My concern for my mother is rooted in these teenage years. The fact that my father drank was a point of concern for my mother, which I have yet to come to terms with. Although making compliments was never part of our upbringing, my parents make me feel very appreciated nowadays. One sibling withdrew from our family.” (Woman, age 53)
- 879 “During the last year of my father’s life, I was very busy due to his numerous hospitalisations, as well as working 80% and bringing up my two youngest children on my own, who were in their early teens. Four months after my father’s death, I was burnt out and spent nine months on sick leave.” (Woman, age 53)
- 880 “My father spent his last years in assisted living. He was able to live there until he died because my sister and I supported him on a daily basis. Our parents were always there for us kids, and when they needed it, we were always there for them as well!” (Woman, age 53)
- 881 “My parents quarrelled a lot. For this reason, the relationship with my father was difficult. Since my mother died, we have become very close. My father has changed for the better with age.” (Woman, age 53)
- 882 “During his last years of life, my father suffered from dementia. For this reason, our relationship was one-sided (from child to father). It was nevertheless close and affectionate.” (Woman, age 53)
- 883 “I miss them.” (Woman, age 53)
- 884 “I had a super relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 53)
- 885 “Were always there for me!” (Woman, age 53)
- 886 “My mother suffers from dementia, is confined to a wheelchair and lives in a nursing home in the place where I live.” (Woman, age 53)
- 887 “My father had an accident in the ’70s and came to be 100% dependent on care. He lived in a nursing home until he died. My mother practically raised us five children on her own and looked after us.” (Woman, age 53)
- 888 “I had wonderful parents who made the best out of the means available to them. Within my family circle, I was able to enjoy a strict but happy childhood. Unfortunately, my mother died much too early.” (Woman, age 53)

- 889 “I don’t know my father personally.” (Woman, age 53)
- 890 “I find that our relationship is and was good ;).” (Woman, age 53)
- 891 “My father has dementia and is cared for by my mother and supported by us children.” (Woman, age 53)
- 892 “They have been happily married until the present (more than 50 years now!) and live a content life together and enjoy their shared time like a gift.” (Woman, age 53)
- 893 “Our relationship has improved over the years. When I had children of my own, I understood and appreciated my mother more. She was also gentler with my children than with us, and I was able to discover a new side to her. At the time, I thought that I hadn’t seen/felt how much she cared for me. When we were children, it was my mother who was ‘in charge’ dealing with most of our upbringing, housekeeping, organisational worries etc. (today we’d say ‘the mental load’). So I think it’s normal that I clashed more with her. She hid her marital conflicts with my father; I think that must have stressed her too and subsequently weighed on our relationship. My father was more self-effacing, but I still had conflicts with him (particularly over pocket money; everything was too expensive and that made me stingy for several years afterwards). After their divorce, he remarried and unfortunately his new wife took him away from us and slandered us, so I hardly saw him for about two years and he hardly knew his grandchildren (my children, that is). It was very painful. When he moved to a nursing home, I was able to see him more often, as his wife wasn’t always there. This allowed us to get back in touch, and I rediscovered the good aspects of our relationship as it was. I’m happy and at peace with myself having been able to reconnect with him in this way. In fact, I was the one who was alone with him in his final moments, and it was very powerful – like a gift he was giving me to have ‘been able’ to let go in my company.” (Woman, age 53)
- 894 “My father just recently fell ill. I’ve had more frequent contact with him since. Before it was much less frequent, perhaps three times a year, much more frequently with my mother. Recently, I’ve been having more conflict with my mother, but the relationship with my father has improved. Yet I never have received recognition and praise from him!” (Woman, age 53)
- 895 “During the last three months before her death, my mother suffered from dementia. In her last twelve months, it was impossible to have a conversation with her.” (Woman, age 53)

- 896 “Yes, in the terminal phase of his life, my relationship with my father changed entirely. I saw and experienced a completely different person. It was positive. It was a formative, curative experience.” (Woman, age 53)
- 897 “Unfortunately, my parents could not accept my choice of partner. They even broke off contact with their grandchildren!” (Woman, age 53)
- 898 “I loved my parents and also had a beautiful childhood. However, my mother clung on too much, even more so when my father passed away. She needed help with everything and reproached me for not stopping by enough and so on. She also didn’t listen. Ten years ago, she killed herself. She was very dissatisfied and got upset over everyone and everything. For that reason, I distanced myself quite a bit because I could not bear it.” (Woman, age 53)
- 899 “Tense.” (Woman, age 53)
- 900 “Generous, caring parents who are always devoted to their children, but who gradually become more focused on their health problems as they approach 90.” (Man, age 53)
- 901 “I was very content with the way it was.” (Man, age 53)
- 902 “The relationship with my parents has become closer with increasing age, after it had become more distanced for reasons of time during my time with my family, clubs and work. On top of that was my mother’s interfering when our children were still little, which was often annoying. You might say that, after my apprenticeship, the relationship declined, which then became stronger again after 20 years and is very good today, with frequent contact.” (Man, age 53)
- 903 “My relationship with my parents was exceptional; they were always there when I needed them. I hope I’ll be like them with my children.” (Man, age 53)
- 904 “Very good, relaxed relationship with my father in particular.” (Man, age 53)
- 905 “My parents are the average Kurdish family parents. They were child-friendly and very loving people, and they are simply terrific. All of us children had a very joyful childhood. I am very grateful to my parents. They enjoyed having children. They had many children. They made sure that we were all able to study at a university and have a good job and/or future. They treated their daughters just as they did their sons. On the one hand, they saw to it that we would be more self-confident and independent; they always trusted us. On the other hand, our parents were our best supporters if and wherever we had problems. We talk a lot with each other but rarely argue or not at all. Unfortunately,

- I have been separated from my parents for more than 20 years now for political reasons. Since I cannot go to my home country, I also can't meet up with my parents. I have been able to see my parents only once since. They were my guests about a month ago. For the first time, they were able to see my children, their grandchildren, and my children their grandparents." (Man, age 53)
- 906 "I have (mother) and had (father) really great parents, despite modest financial means at home, despite various difficult situations (brother died young, divorce). My parents enabled me to experience a basic sense of trust. I love my parents unconditionally the way they are or were." (Man, age 53)
- 907 "It was very good. I had and have great parents." (Man, age 53)
- 908 "My parents only have a very few contacts outside the family and never got involved on behalf of the public at large. My grandparents were *Verdingkinder* [children in care used for labour], and my mother had many siblings. My father was born out of wedlock. He grew up with his grandmother and came to Switzerland as a teenager. She paid most of her attention to one of my brothers, which often also led to tension." (Man, age 53)
- 909 "My parents are still legally married and live in the same household but have been estranged from each other for over 25 years. They are together only out of convenience/necessity as my mother is too afraid to be on her own, doesn't feel confident she could support herself." (Man, age 53)
- 910 "I remember getting beaten up frequently. I don't know my biological father. It was a sad childhood with an alcoholic stepfather and a violent mother with mental problems, which had been caused by her ex-husband, who died of alcoholism and left her alone with four children to bring up ..." (Man, age 53)
- 911 "During my childhood until their separation, a lot of quarrelling, including violence, between my parents. Then, until I moved out, mental and, up until teenage years, physical abuse through my mother. In addition, a lot of pressure from my actually cowardly and materially often stingy father to accept his new wife." (Man, age 53)

### Mid-fifties

- 912 "Together with my mother and with the support of my brothers, my family and the palliative care provider for people with dementia, I cared



- for my father at home until his death. When he died, my 14-year-old daughter lay next to him.” (Woman, age 54)
- 913 “My relationship with my parents has always been excellent. Lots of love and respect. Even though I’ve been living abroad for a long time, we communicate very often. I go to South America regularly. I’m in a better financial situation so I help out a lot financially, but also emotionally. Since my father died, I’ve been especially attentive towards my mother.” (Woman, age 54)
- 914 “I had very dear parents, who really looked after us and cared for us. I try to give as much back as possible and look after my mother a lot, who has been living in an older people’s and nursing home for a few months.” (Woman, age 54)
- 915 “We maintain an open, honest, friendly relationship and support each other. That’s lovely!” (Woman, age 54)
- 916 “My parents are wonderful and open-minded.” (Woman, age 54)
- 917 “I had a very beautiful childhood (although money was always scarce). Experiencing both parents’ long-term illness until their death left a major mark on my later life.” (Woman, age 54)
- 918 “My father passed away when I was a little child. For this reason, I have no memory of him and there was no relationship with him. He died of a heart attack. He already had heart problems beforehand, but at the time there was no way to help him medically. My relationship with my mother was good and affectionate until his death.” (Woman, age 54)
- 919 “It is a great blessing at my age to still be able to enjoy both parents living nearby.” (Woman, age 54)
- 920 “My father died when I was a teenager and was the last child to still live at home. That was a massive watershed moment in my life. The early death of my father rendered the relationship with my mother ambivalent and close, detaching became difficult. In old age, my mother fell ill with Alzheimer’s dementia and was cared for and looked after at home until a year before her death. During her last year, she lived in a nursing home, with us children and some of her grandchildren visiting her a lot, but she no longer recognised us. I owe both parents a lot. They gave me the gift of life and accompanied me along my journey.” (Woman, age 54)
- 921 “My relationship with my parents is very good.” (Woman, age 54)
- 922 “Hard to reflect a relationship using a multiple-choice questionnaire.” (Woman, age 54)

- 923 “The relationship with my parents was good. This day and age no longer allows the elderly generation to live well free of financial hardship.” (Woman, age 54)
- 924 “It’s not easy to lose your parents when you’re only in your twenties.” (Woman, age 54)
- 925 “It was incessantly complex, difficult, sad, tearful and speechless for me as a child. When I was a little child, my father rejected my mother and didn’t speak a single word with her – I never experienced my parents talking with one another, let alone treating each other lovingly. He locked her up in their bedroom when he went out in the evenings: parent-teacher conference, trips, concerts and so on. The mood was infinitely bad, scary, inhuman, psychogenic. I frequently nearly wet my pants for fear that they would kill each other, thought it was MY fault. I could speak with NO ONE about it, was laughed at/picked on/bullied because of our family situation. I frequently escaped into isolation, worked it all out for myself – my parents couldn’t help me; I parented them. Only now, at more than 50 years of age, can I look at it, slowly fathom it and understand my own pathway through life ...” (Woman, age 54)
- 926 “It’s good the way it is. In my family, we have a super social network. Everyone helps everybody without restricting each other. Whoever needs help says so.” (Woman, age 54)
- 927 “My parents are on their own for the time being. They’re very close, and they’re pretty much self-sufficient at the moment.” (Woman, age 54)
- 928 “It’s very difficult when we’re 2,400 km apart. When they fell ill, I went to see them several times a year. And I was with my dad when he left; that wasn’t the case for my mum and it broke my heart.” (Woman, age 54)
- 929 “My relationship with my parents has always been good. Just the usual. My parents always stood behind me. They made me strong!” (Woman, age 54)
- 930 “I saw my father only once, and the relationship with my mother was ended before I was born.” (Woman, age 54)
- 931 “Very close relationship, not only with our parents but also with the entire family of siblings. Our parents were great role models.” (Man, age 54)
- 932 “Very harmonious relationship up until very old age: both parents are over 90 and still out and about independently. They keep in close touch with us and their grandchildren. I’m very grateful for that.” (Man, age 54)

- 933 “Now as before, it is great respect and a grateful appreciation of my parents’ talent and giftedness present in matters of raising us children.” (Man, age 54)
- 934 “We love each other.” (Man, age 54)
- 935 “Them being my parents, I love them, but I live my own life.” (Man, age 54)
- 936 “On account of my mother’s Alzheimer’s and my father’s cancer, the last twelve months weren’t really representative. The time in between, when I moved out, was much more important to me. It was lovely to have such parents!” (Man, age 54)
- 937 “Although we were a rather large family with low income, I felt comfortable during my childhood. Even though we had little, we nevertheless had everything we needed in life.” (Man, age 54)
- 938 “My parents belonged to the war generation, which had to fear for life and survival. They weren’t really a good fit for each other. Children weren’t important to my father. My mother was a good-hearted woman whose life didn’t really go well. Unfortunately, I understood all of that too late.” (Man, age 54)
- 939 “Unfortunately, I can’t say anything about the relationship with my father since he passed away when I was not even in kindergarten yet. As my mother never entered a new partnership, she had to assume the role of mother AND father, and she was also responsible for earning a living. That was not always a whole lot of fun for neither my mother nor us kids ... It seems self-evident from my point of view that this also had to lead to conflicts.” (Man, age 54)
- 940 “I had the happiest and most beautiful childhood and youth, on good terms with my parents and my many siblings (where I am in the middle).” (Man, age 54)
- 941 “I learned from my mother that my foster father, my mother’s husband, was not my biological father. ‘The milkman’s child.’ I was over age 30 at the time. As my biological father was very wealthy and married and had children as well, he never committed to his fatherhood in my case. After learning of this, I made a considerable effort to see and meet my father. This was refused and he died a year later. I knew my father as ‘a friend of my mother’. The relationship with my mother was subject to increasing anger toward her because of the longstanding lie. This anger has eased, however. Subjectively, I suffered considerably from the circumstance that I was so late to learn about this biological fatherhood. I miss that father or having a father very much, which led to me

- wanting to meet him, once I knew that he was my biological father. This was actively prevented, and I wanted to do the proper thing, as he was described as old and confused. Whether this was his true state is doubtful.” (Man, age 54)
- 942 “Since my last payment, there has been no contact anymore. From now on, my sister is in charge of any further help. Since then, I refuse to provide help of any kind. I suffer a lot from this situation.” (Man, age 54)
- 943 “They are the best parents one could ask for.” (Woman, age 55)
- 944 “It was very difficult for me to lose my mother to cancer. I had to come to an arrangement with my father. My emotional bond with my mother was very strong, with my father, by contrast, conflicting and difficult. In my younger years, I didn’t feel supported by him, neither emotionally nor financially. He was strict, and patriarchy reigned. I was able to provide terminal support to my mother and father. Only in the phase of illness and dying was my father able to give emotionality, love, empathy, which I had hardly experienced previously. Our parting was a gift and very impressive, touching. In the case of my mother, love, empathy, understanding toward me and providing me a sense of security was ‘normal’, always a given.” (Woman, age 55)
- 945 “I always had a very close relationship with my mother. Before he retired, my father was quite a tyrant. ‘As long as you live under my roof ...’ In that context, I have to say that he had to make a living for his wife and the many children with his salary, and in this respect we never lacked anything. We didn’t have luxury or a vacation at the ocean, but we had everything we needed in life. Only once he retired did he change, became more understanding and affable. He helped all of his children if necessary (financially or organisationally, with repairs etc.). Emotions were not really his thing.” (Woman, age 55)
- 946 “Our relationship is rather pleasant for all of us. Respect, trust and love are normal among us. When I had a severe accident, my parents cared for me a lot! I have wonderful parents!” (Woman, age 55)
- 947 “My parents enabled me to have a beautiful childhood and never put me under pressure. They taught me to be responsible and modest. I hope that they are able to enjoy a long life. Inheriting isn’t important to me. They worked for all that they have and should also be able to spend it.” (Woman, age 55)
- 948 “The relationship was more loving than it would appear according to the survey. It involves/d the certainty that we can absolutely rely on each other and count on our mutual support.” (Woman, age 55)

- 949 "I have a good relationship with my parents and think highly of and respect them. I let them live their life, and they let me live mine." (Woman, age 55)
- 950 "It went from being very hostile to calmer, particularly once I had children of my own, and when they supported me without judgement when I separated from the father of my children, without taking sides but by supporting me financially immediately after the separation. I wanted to appease the relationship so that they wouldn't die without me having been able to make peace with our previous conflicts. They have been loving and attentive grandparents to my children, and that has meant a lot to me and my children." (Woman, age 55)
- 951 "All in all, we have engaged in a lively exchange with each other and still do." (Woman, age 55)
- 952 "My mother lives in a nursing home and, after a stroke, has been confined to a wheelchair for several years now." (Woman, age 55)
- 953 "My mother was often in the role of the victim and turned responsibility over to me. My father was the patriarch." (Woman, age 55)
- 954 "Father unknown = difficult." (Woman, age 55)
- 955 "It was not easy to be their child." (Woman, age 55)
- 956 "I could not imagine better parents." (Man, age 55)
- 957 "Very good." (Man, age 55)
- 958 "The relationship with my parents has changed for the better." (Man, age 55)
- 959 "All was rather well, just like in the immediate and wider environment. Not comparable to today. The world has turned further with all the advantages and disadvantages. Respect was certainly more pronounced in the past. Nowadays, child-rearing is distributed among both parents and the father is not just the 'breadwinner.'" (Man, age 55)
- 960 "My father had a very tough childhood. His mother died when he was still a child. He grew up in poor circumstances, was always required to work and also punished severely. Until the end, he sought to show everyone how strong he was. He would have done everything for his family, only he couldn't show his feelings. I am nevertheless very grateful to him. My mother was a calm, very loving, emotional person, looked after everything and everyone in the household. I believe that she loved my father dearly but also suffered from his behaviour. She cared for him with devotion until the end. After his death, she was very exhausted. She suffered from heart problems for many years. I looked after her, her household, finances, doctor's appointments. Later, she

- was additionally diagnosed with cancer. Surgery, radiation therapy ... with only delaying effects because of problems with her heart and from old age, in need of care. Working full-time and caring became too much for me. After thorough consideration, I gave up my job to care exclusively for my mother. I'm glad that I made that decision." (Man, age 55)
- 961 "Good, normal." (Man, age 55)
- 962 "I went to boarding school in England at the age of seven. I would see my parents only three times each year (until I was 18) because they lived abroad." (Man, age 55)
- 963 "Up until a year before my father's death, I had no contact with him anymore. After he died, I received an inheritance. I hadn't received anything before that. My father often beat my mother, abused her and had alcohol problems until he died. Because of that, as an adult with a household of my own, I no longer had any contact with him. Moreover, my father only wanted to have daughters and treated me accordingly (beatings and other punishment). For that reason, I mostly lived with my grandparents until kindergarten age." (Man, age 55)
- 964 "No contact with my father for almost 40 years." (Man, age 55)
- 965 "Often very difficult since my mother liked to drive a wedge between me and my father." (Man, age 55)
- 966 "My relationship with both parents was strained considerably, especially also because of their new partners." (Man, age 55)
- 967 "The relationship is good. We look after one another." (Woman, age 56)
- 968 "The relationship with my parents was basically loving, very stable and reliable. The way that my parents shaped the parent-child relationship was strongly characterised by them belonging to the war/post-war generation. People didn't talk much about emotional issues. The role distribution was clear. I nevertheless always sensed that I was 'alright'. My parents were deeply (rigidly) rooted in rural Catholicism. I had the 'bonus' of being the latecomer/nestling. But during puberty, the large age difference between me and my parents sometimes became a point of friction. The last two years of my father's life were marked by severe dementia. The beautiful part within that severity was, however, that he could (finally) live out his very emotional side – there were the first moments that we could hug and 'cuddle' each other and he could say straightforwardly that now 'the one is coming whom I love the most'. Only then could he express at the emotional level much of that which

- could always be sensed. As he was still healthy, he was, above all, the providing, steady, good father, the patriarch and boss.” (Woman, age 56)
- 969 “I had a happy childhood; my parents looked after me and my sister and taught us to love and be curious about the world.” (Woman, age 56)
- 970 “The death of the first of my parents made me aware that this involved the loss of a part of my past. This has raised an awareness to shape and appreciate more consciously the time with the surviving parent.” (Woman, age 56)
- 971 “In our culture (Japan), the relationship between parents and children in my generation was reserved. I did, however, have an emotionally close attachment to my parents.” (Woman, age 56)
- 972 “We gave each other appreciation and love.” (Woman, age 56)
- 973 “My parents are and always were important to me, and I respect my mother a lot. With increasing age and the physical problems and mental deterioration that it entails, I feel growing pressure, which is to say, I ought to be able to make more time for my mother.” (Woman, age 56)
- 974 “I had fabulous parents, who always supported me very much. Unfortunately, my mother came down with a severe depression from which she has not recovered until today. Moving to a nursing home while my father was still alive became inevitable, which my father never got over.” (Woman, age 56)
- 975 “The tensions and misunderstandings between my father and me mostly occurred during my teenage years. I often wondered whether we would have got on and understood each other better a few years later.” (Woman, age 56)
- 976 “I wish the relationship were better. But I have come to accept it the way it is. My parents don’t care to change it. We have grown too far apart.” (Woman, age 56)
- 977 “I am proud of my parents, all they did so that I am the way I am now.” (Man, age 56)
- 978 “We are all glad that we have preserved our family!” (Man, age 56)
- 979 “My father was emotionally crippled and unable to show feelings. Our relationship was tense – but OK.” (Man, age 56)
- 980 “I have and had a very good relationship with my parents.” (Man, age 56)
- 981 “A good relationship in which we respect and regard each other.” (Man, age 56)
- 982 “Very colourful childhood and teenage years.” (Man, age 56)
- 983 “Life in a shared two-family home was a personal privilege! This enabled me to take on various personal tasks in secondary employment in

- our community. For my wife, the situation with my parents was certainly not always easy. But I always stood by my family 100%.” (Man, age 56)
- 984 “Father: respectful, unobtrusive. Mother: motherly, charming.” (Man, age 56)
- 985 “Nothing to say except that we all live on the same planet and share the same life. Even if ...” (Man, age 56)
- 986 “My parents lived in a nursing home for several years. Toward the end, they were strongly dependent on care and my mother also suffered from dementia so that I had to say goodbye ‘step by step’ because the relationship was no longer really possible.” (Man, age 56)
- 987 “Since I married my wife, the relationship unfortunately has been very tense. My parents don’t accept her, which has led to us not being in touch with them at all for some years. We eventually got that sorted out to some degree until things blew up again. Since then, I have had only occasional contact with my parents.” (Man, age 56)
- 988 “It deteriorated as a result of my illness.” (Man, age 56)

### Late fifties

- 989 “Three generations of us live on the same floor of our building.” (Woman, age 57)
- 990 “My parents passed the values they believed in on to me. They have been an indispensable source of inspiration for me.” (Woman, age 57)
- 991 “Exemplary parents in every way.” (Woman, age 57)
- 992 “My parents were always there for me and my sister, despite their divorce. I had a carefree childhood and am grateful to my parents for that. I can enjoy my father, still in good health; I visit him every Sunday.” (Woman, age 57)
- 993 “My mother was extremely loving and educated. She taught us a lot about nature and was able to inspire enthusiasm in us for art and culture. She stood on her own two feet, earned her own wage, administered our family budget, took care of the household and so on. My father was the most loving father in the world and my role model. Even though he was not allowed to go to university, he completed two apprenticeships and has a master craftsman certificate. Although he did not receive much cultural education in his own home, he was very well-read and interested in culture. He always encouraged me to stand on my own two feet, be emancipated and financially independent. He



- also spoke fluent English and French and loved to travel. My parents are proof that it doesn't matter how much time you spend with your child but rather how you use that remaining time with your children. I wish everyone could experience such a beautiful youth like we did." (Woman, age 57)
- 994 "As a teenager, I found my parents horrible. As I moved away from home to go to university, I began to appreciate them, and today, I am happy for our understanding and warming relationship." (Woman, age 57)
- 995 "I have a very close relationship with my parents. Sometimes even too close ..." (Woman, age 57)
- 996 "I had a very lovely childhood, and during adulthood we were also always there for one another." (Woman, age 57)
- 997 "Until my parents separated, I had a good relationship with both of them, but after that, my relationship with my father became difficult since he left my mother when she started receiving disability allowance. This situation hurt me. That's why I stayed with her, and her health deteriorated little by little." (Woman, age 57)
- 998 "The best parents one could ask for." (Woman, age 57)
- 999 "It was somewhat of an emotional relief that I could speak with my father about certain things before his death ... and that I could let go of him filled with love, despite the great emotional stress that he had caused me. That I was also able to make peace with my mother and we could mutually forgive one another has made me personally a strong person. And I feel much more love in my heart for my parents than I used to ..." (Woman, age 57)
- 1000 "Now, I miss them." (Woman, age 57)
- 1001 "My father was an alcoholic, a tyrant and a thug. It was fortunate for us that he died that early. My mother was a strong woman. We would have been lost without her." (Woman, age 57)
- 1002 "I always respected my parents very much! Even though we could not afford a lot, I was able to enjoy a beautiful childhood." (Woman, age 57)
- 1003 "In all these years, our relationship was characterised by mutual respect." (Woman, age 57)
- 1004 "My parents had a long marriage that was typical of the time (man goes to work, woman takes care of the household and raises the children). Since I have a sister with a disability, my mother in particular had little time for her other children. Care, therapies. As my father came down with dementia and lived at home until shortly before his death, the

- father-daughter relationship became increasingly difficult because of his illness since he was cognitively strongly impaired.” (Woman, age 57)
- 1005 “My father passed away before my 30th birthday on account of cancer. After the death of my father, my mother was deeply affected mentally. She spent the last years of her life in a nursing home; her mental illness made our relationship difficult.” (Woman, age 57)
- 1006 “Have the best parents; it’s lovely that the two are still alive :-) !!!” (Woman, age 57)
- 1007 “My parents are both over 90 years old. My mother depends on care and is cared for at home. My parents are glad that they can enjoy their remaining time together. Their immediate family, including their great-grandchildren, now comprises almost 50 individuals. We all meet at least once a year, often also on vacations or at large family festivities. Family from its most beautiful side!” (Woman, age 57)
- 1008 “I would have liked to have a much closer relationship with my parents. It has been difficult to accept that they never had this desire.” (Woman, age 57)
- 1009 “I haven’t been in touch with my parents for a good 30 years. My mother was mentally ill, and we children protected ourselves by cutting off contact. My father decided to support my mother and did not understand us. We maintained contact to our grandmother on our mother’s side and supported her until her death. Our mother and her mother were also at odds with each other.” (Woman, age 57)
- 1010 “I had good parents who took care of me.” (Man, age 57)
- 1011 “I lived with a lovely family.” (Man, age 57)
- 1012 “I was lucky to come across them and live with them :-).” (Man, age 57)
- 1013 “Difficult with my mother. Very understanding with my father.” (Man, age 57)
- 1014 “The relationship was always respectful and warm. In old age, there is of course the care providers, more doctor’s appointments and so on.” (Man, age 57)
- 1015 “I can consider myself fortunate to have such parents. We never had much money, but we were happy, and they gave me the gift of a protected childhood.” (Man, age 57)
- 1016 “Basically, it was actually a normal youth for growing up on a farm.” (Man, age 57)
- 1017 “My parents live in Italy and receive an Italian pension. We live more than 1,200 km apart. There are many relatives who support them when they need help. I have been living and working in Switzerland and I

- have not been able to do anything for them. But in seven years when I will have retired, I will be able to return to Italy and help them as well!!” (Man, age 57)
- 1018 “There was actually no relationship with my parents from age 16 on once I left the parental home.” (Man, age 57)
- 1019 “My mum has been living with my partner and me for almost five years. It’s been very rewarding for me, because before I left home, we didn’t get on very well and we sometimes argued. But I’m nearly 60 and she’s past 90. I still miss my dad even after almost 30 years.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1020 “Given MY physical disability, I helped my parents as long as I could.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1021 “To me, my parents were always the greatest role model in my life. Even beyond their death.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1022 “Fantastic parents.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1023 “I had a very beautiful, protected childhood and youth. My parents and we children maintained a lovely and close relationship, which we children deliberately cultivated after the death of our parents as well and which is also very important to us. I am glad that I have been able to pass this sense of family on to my own children. Each of us lives their own life, but we have lovely contact and are there for each other if necessary.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1024 “Grateful for so many things. Beautiful childhood. My parents lived a lovely appreciative couplehood.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1025 “As my father died when I was a little child, the relationship with my mother was all the closer and deeper.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1026 “It was good.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1027 “Simply exemplary.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1028 “Very good relationship.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1029 “It was a generation where children had to behave. My wishes and needs remained wishes, but I hardly expressed them. I knew that I had to behave.” (Woman, age 58)
- 1030 “I was raised very strictly (which was normal at the time). Only once I was 18 was I allowed to be out on Saturday until 10 o’clock! My father never could show his emotions, in contrast to my mother. However, I always knew that both loved me in their own way. And when there were problems, they were always there for me (even though they still punished me sometimes).” (Woman, age 58)

- 1031 "My mother was an alcoholic and drank excessively off and on until age 60. For that reason, my childhood and teenage years were very conflictual." (Woman, age 58)
- 1032 "We have a harmonious relationship with each other." (Woman, age 58)
- 1033 "It was a very normal child-parent relationship, an honest and respectful relationship." (Woman, age 58)
- 1034 "It was very good. My father died in an accident when I had not grown up yet. After my father's death, my mother had less financial means (underage children) and no vocational education (which meant cleaning)." (Woman, age 58)
- 1035 "Talking and showing emotions was never an issue in our family. I think that times were different for my parents. Back then, other issues were more important. I often felt like an outsider; that's why I moved away and lived my own life after my apprenticeship." (Woman, age 58)
- 1036 "Difficult because of an extremely dysfunctional family / massive mental, emotional and sexual abuse that was never brought out in the open. As an adult at a distance, much better." (Woman, age 58)
- 1037 "Contact with my biological mother for 50 years." (Woman, age 58)
- 1038 "My biological parents were both very loving. My biological father had cancer and spent much time in and out of hospital. I was a child when he died. My mother remarried and had a happy relationship. I would visit my mother and stepfather often in Great Britain, and they would visit me often in Switzerland. My mother had severe Alzheimer's when she died. She initially experienced periods ranging between incoherence and lucidity. As the illness progressed, she became more incoherent. My stepfather is still alive at over 90, and I visit him in Great Britain several times a year." (Man, age 58)
- 1039 "I had a great youth since I was the youngest in the family. My parents were fair but also strict when necessary. My mother was the boss at home. We were a simple working-class family, and our father passed principles on to us that our family would always stick together." (Man, age 58)
- 1040 "My parents always had differences of opinion." (Man, age 58)
- 1041 "Both my parents died of cancer. My father cared for my mother until her death." (Man, age 58)
- 1042 "The relationship was not durable because of the large geographical distance." (Man, age 58)
- 1043 "We didn't talk much, but we always had a good relationship." (Man, age 58)

- 1044 “They always let me do my own thing and only rarely interfered even when I was a child. Their praise and recognition lent me a lot of self-confidence early on.” (Man, age 58)
- 1045 “To my parents, family was the most important.” (Man, age 58)
- 1046 “A good healthy relationship.” (Man, age 58)
- 1047 “I am one of six siblings, the other five all live near our parents. I live far away and always have. They are well taken care of, and I am the prodigal son :).” (Man, age 58)
- 1048 “They quarrelled a lot with each other.” (Man, age 58)
- 1049 “I had good parents, hard-working and serious, who brought us up well and showed us the right way. I don’t know if I would have done as well ...” (Man, age 58)
- 1050 “We (five children) had a happy childhood, although we were never able to enjoy family vacations with our parents (a worker’s wages didn’t allow for that)!” (Man, age 58)
- 1051 “There has been tension within myself concerning the relationship with my father, but not outwardly, because expressing different opinions would have escalated the situation and would have been sanctioned. My mother was not very interested in our lives, our children or our circumstances, and she was not able to show her feelings towards us children. Nor was she interested in caring for our children from time to time (‘I have cared enough for five children in my life!’). Nevertheless, I think that both my parents have done all in the best way they could according to their emotional capacities to care for us. For this, I appreciate and love them. My motto is, ‘Just because my mother did not show her loving feelings to us does not mean that she did not have such feelings for us!’” (Man, age 58)
- 1052 “I don’t know anything other than the relationship with my parents and am basically happy with it. I would have liked to have had more contact and personal conversations with my father, and I regret that I was not more persistent. But at that time, it was just different. I would have liked to have had more open discussions and exchanges of opinions with my loving, empathetic, sensitive but also often very strict father during my childhood. Nevertheless, I would never wish for other parents.” (Man, age 58)
- 1053 “Every generation has their own interests, the younger one just like the older one!” (Man, age 58)
- 1054 “They are over 90 ...” (Man, age 58)

- 1055 “I was only able to live a life of my own by escaping the influence of the family tyrant (father) and his second (mother, who probably did not adopt this role voluntarily) and therefore cut off ties of any kind.” (Man, age 58)
- 1056 “They were exemplary parents, very strict but decent. They were together their whole life and passed on important values to us for our path through life.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1057 “We didn’t have much, but they were always there for me/us (five children and foster children).” (Woman, age 59)
- 1058 “I had marvellous parents.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1059 “The relationship was normal, considering the generation to which they belonged. My mother died of Alzheimer’s disease after 15 years of illness. As a result, the answers regarding my relationship with her are slightly distorted by her illness.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1060 “A respectful and exemplary relationship.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1061 “Both parents treated my brother and me in a much more modern manner than one would have expected on account of their birth date. My mother in particular was always way ahead of her time when it came to child-rearing, whereby she was able to influence my father positively as well (my mother’s father was a well-regarded teacher with a modern style of instructing – he also applied this style to parenting at home, whereas my father’s father preferred a stricter style of parenting).” (Woman, age 59)
- 1062 “Since both of my parents died in a nursing home, my help with caring was very limited. After several strokes, my mother was highly dependent on care so that it was not possible to care for her at home. We tried for a year. Three years after my mother died, my father voluntarily wanted to move to a nursing home.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1063 “My father lives in a nursing home and unfortunately suffers from dementia.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1064 “I always had a closer relationship with my father than with my mother. He respected me, accepted me the way I am – we were very similar! My mother was always very critical of what I was doing – still today, she does not accept me, who I am – in conflicts at school, work or in life, she always came to the defence of the others and sought fault with me ...” (Woman, age 59)
- 1065 “In the last twelve months before her death, my mother was severely ill with Alzheimer’s.” (Woman, age 59)

- 1066 “My parents were basically always supportive when I needed it. In this sense, I felt secure. Over a span of about two years, we were not in touch (I was about 24 years young then). A rift had emerged between us on account of our worldviews. This distancing later gave us the opportunity to experience and encounter each other ‘anew’ (today, I see that as ‘cutting the umbilical cord’). Once I had started my own family, including having completed education and training and having gained job experience, I felt accepted as an ‘adult’. I’m the youngest child. That influenced everything.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1067 “I’m grateful to my parents for the way that they set an example for us by how they lived, for how they accompanied and, where necessary, supported us. Respect was also lived. My father died a bit early so that my feelings of gratitude and also of reconciliation increasingly emerged only after his death. My parents dealt with their conflicts and worked on their relationship. Today, we give my mother the same respect – I see her the most since I live next door – she is cherished by all (even admired), and that is wonderful.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1068 “My relationship with my mother was very loving. Since my father was very evil, especially toward my mother, my relationship with him was very chilly. I experienced a large number of traumatising situations as a child, daily emotional or physical violence within our family.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1069 “Father was strict and very religious; he subordinated many things to his faith. Mother didn’t have a whole lot to say; was able to flourish more after his death.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1070 “My father was an ‘old school’ patriarch. Women didn’t have much of a say. My mother suffered from this a lot.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1071 “I was often in conflict with my mother, but I always took care of her until she died to lighten her load. As for my father, I was working abroad in the twelve months before he died, and I regret not having been able to help him more.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1072 “My parents both had a difficult childhood and youth. They had few positive role models but always tried to give their best. I was born as the third child. They already had marital and financial problems then. And my father additionally had problems with alcohol. I was not wanted and often suffered from it.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1073 “My mother was a rather negative person, a pronounced pessimist. Only her view of things counted. This did sometimes lead to discussions. In the last three years before her death, she developed dementia

- and became dependent on care. Since she had already been placed in assisted living, care could be quickly organised. My father died of cancer. After his death, my mother developed depression.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1074 “My parents sold my brother the parental home without part of our sisters knowing about it. This has changed my relationship completely. I am of divided opinion on whether such an act can all of a sudden really ruin the family life of several siblings or whether I can be above it. We try to maintain contact again, particularly since each of us gets by very well. The wound is a much greater problem than the financial issue.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1075 “Since my parents have no or almost no contact with their other children anymore (because of disputes), I am the only significant other. That weighs on me at times. Additionally, my father has Parkinson’s and dementia, and my mother still cares for him all by her own for the time being.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1076 “Respectful.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1077 “I was raised very strictly by a dominant father; my mother had no say. Wasn’t able to pursue vocational education and training after compulsory education. I made up for this once my children were older ...” (Woman, age 59)
- 1078 “I felt as if my mother had only ‘adopted’ me, although I was her biological child. My father was happy about his daughter but was emotionally overwhelmed. I was a bit small and sickly so that they quickly planned for a ‘replacement’ for me. Thus, for my mother, it was probably unplanned to have to raise me after all. Furthermore, she was always jealous of all the opportunities we had (education, hobbies) and what all she was denied. A gift improved her standard of living – and ours – considerably. (Woman, age 59)
- 1079 “I didn’t know my father very well.” (Woman, age 59)
- 1080 “My relationship with my mother was good to very good for a large part of my life. It started to go wrong when my mother had to sell her house and split up with her partner at the time, when I had young children, was happily married and was going to buy a house ... Jealousy set in, she probably started suffering from ill health and our relationship completely broke down: incessant criticism from her, misunderstanding on her part, recurrent nastiness, a lack of respect etc. And yet, despite working full time, she took care of my children a lot at the time. But she also said nasty things about me, especially to my daughter. I’m no longer angry with her anymore; she’s very ill and totally dependent.



She's gone back to being nice and I feel sorry for her. I only see her two to four times a year. With my father, it was rather the opposite. He was quite absent and often stressed during our childhood. He hardly looked after his grandchildren either. In contrast, he has always supported me professionally, and despite our huge political differences, we have a great deal of respect for each other and can talk about many subjects. He's in great shape despite his age, and it's a real blessing to be able to talk to him every week. He never criticises me and is always delighted when we can see each other. If I don't call him in over a week, he calls just to make sure it's because of a busy workload and that everything is OK." (Woman, age 59)

1081 "My mother was forced into exile from Eastern Europe and is strongly traumatised and rarely speaks about it. Her father was sent to prison and died there. My father supports her and, together with her, has formed an impregnable fortress. They live in a self-constructed world, which easily collapses once questions are asked, which is why asking is not allowed. I realised that just a few years ago." (Woman, age 59)

1082 "The relationship between my parents ... is sometimes this and sometimes that. When my father married, he had a daughter in the same year (a half sibling) but not from our mother. All these years, until his death, my father never talked about this daughter. This daughter got in touch with us after his death. The mother of our mother (our grandmother) lived in our household. Our parents were on business trips a lot, and therefore our grandmother raised us most of the time. Clothes and reputation were very important to our mother. More important than her children." (Woman, age 59)

1083 "The cultural differences at the time made it extremely difficult." (Woman, age 59)

1084 "I was born out of wedlock. I did not know my biological father." (Woman, age 59)

1085 "The relationship with my parents was very proper, in my teenage years strict. Since I grew up on a farm, there was always plenty of work for us. They were very affectionate, the best parents; you cannot ask for any better." (Man, age 59)

1086 "I was lucky to have had my parents, despite their financial problems. The love and the rules they gave me have offered me the opportunity to have a better life than them." (Man, age 59)

1087 "As far as the questions regarding the last twelve months of my father's life are concerned, it has to be considered that during the last four years

- of his life he was hospitalised and suffered from Alzheimer's disease and that he was not of sound mind. He had been a pretty strict father. But he had been wonderful with my mother, and he had been a fantastic father for all of us four children; we all remember him very fondly." (Man, age 59)
- 1088 "My parents were already over 40 years old when I was born, and their understanding of the societal changes in the '60s and '70s was a bit difficult. It was important and good that my oldest sister lived nearby and had children my age." (Man, age 59)
- 1089 "My mother's positive attitude toward life, her modesty and healthy lifestyle have always been an example for me." (Man, age 59)
- 1090 "I will always have the best memories of my parents!" (Man, age 59)
- 1091 "Always good." (Man, age 59)
- 1092 "My father was presumably under a lot of job-related stress, psychologically-mentally ill. My mother was very brave and mostly understood masterfully how to shield us from the gravity of my father's death. I owe both great respect and gratitude!" (Man, age 59)
- 1093 "My mother was chronically ill, very dependent and more like a little sister to me. The family was run by her parents. They also brought about the separation from my biological father after my birth, which was intended to be 'asthma therapy' for my mother. I got to know my biological father only after I was 30 years old. For this reason, my relationship with my biological parents was 'mature' (without the typical conflicts of growing up, emotionally, however, strongly marked by their absence during my childhood)." (Man, age 59)
- 1094 "It is what it is, and it's good that way." (Man, age 59)
- 1095 "I am grateful to my parents. I perceive the relationship as trusting and good to very good. I have problems with my mother, but they are rooted in onsetting dementia. A conversation is now possible with her only to a limited extent." (Man, age 59)
- 1096 "Mother always dominant, sure of herself (at least toward others), likes to put herself in the foreground, frequently criticises my father (and other people), insensitive, more preoccupied with herself than considerate of others. My father always in the background, fairly low self-confidence, sensitive, shows emotions at least indirectly, not very communicative." (Man, age 59)
- 1097 "Today, I would spend more time with my parents, especially once their mobility and health deteriorated." (Man, age 59)

- 1098 “Prior to her death, my mother developed dementia to the point that she couldn’t remember anyone.” (Man, age 59)

## Sixties

### Early sixties

- 1099 “I have a very close and loving relationship with my parents. Unfortunately, I live too far away, and it hurts me every time I have to end my visit with them (every one or two months at the most, for a few days) and return to Switzerland. I would love to be able to support them both more with my presence.” (Woman, age 60)
- 1100 “An intact marriage until the spouse’s death. I’m proud of my parents.” (Woman, age 60)
- 1101 “To me, they are and were the best!” (Woman, age 60)
- 1102 “My parents wanted to have more children. That’s why I and my family were their all. However, this is also the reason why I feel obligated to them and now to my mother. But they always gave me leeway.” (Woman, age 60)
- 1103 “Wonderful parents who always supported and loved me. They taught me and enabled so many things.” (Woman, age 60)
- 1104 “They were very good parents, and they just did it the way they could and knew how.” (Woman, age 60)
- 1105 “Because of the tension between my parents, their history, wartime experiences, flight, the rape of my mother, their traumata, my relationship with them was tense before I moved out. But I think they didn’t really perceive it that way. We had a normal family life, except for the quarrelling and sometimes erupting violence. The goal was always for us children to receive a vocational education, for us to have it better. A lot of pressure, a lot of obligations. My siblings and I were glad to leave; I went particularly far away. I needed more space to blossom. But I always stood by my parents; I also look after my mother from a distance. I also took care of my father before he died. But as an experienced nurse, I saw that he would soon die, yet I didn’t stay at the hospital. I couldn’t.” (Woman, age 60)
- 1106 “I had good parents who cared about us children a lot.” (Woman, age 60)

- 1107 “I often had a guilty conscience because I spent too little time with them.” (Woman, age 60)
- 1108 “My parents had the intelligence to divorce without getting angry, protecting my peace of mind and respecting each other. They have both always been there for me. They respected one another, even after their divorce. I greatly admire their attitude. Their respective spouses (after their divorce) have always been kind to me, so thank you to them too.” (Man, age 60)
- 1109 “It is a very warm, close and trusting relationship.” (Man, age 60)
- 1110 “I had a wonderful youth and parents who raised me very well and loved me a lot. This basis helps throughout life. To me, my parents were the BEST.” (Man, age 60)
- 1111 “The relationship with my parents was very good.” (Man, age 60)
- 1112 “It was great. They always had an open ear for me.” (Man, age 60)
- 1113 “During her last year of life, my mother was in a nursing home and increasingly suffered from dementia. My father had a clear mind until the end, however, was increasingly physically impaired.” (Man, age 60)
- 1114 “There was frequent tension up into my teenage years. For example, I was hit with a carpet beater or a belt, had to strip down naked in the bathroom beforehand and wait until I received the beating, mostly from my mother. Very humiliating.” (Man, age 60)
- 1115 “My relationship with my mother evolved, meaning we hardly saw one another in the last twelve months of her life. Fortunately, the last time I saw her, the meeting went off without a hitch.” (Man, age 60)
- 1116 “I was still a child when my mother died, thus my memories are rather weak.” (Man, age 60)
- 1117 “Generally good, pleasant and open relationship.” (Man, age 60)
- 1118 “I had the greatest parents!” (Man, age 60)
- 1119 “My father was very self-opinionated and my mother had to go along. She was dissatisfied at times. I myself was often with my grandmother in the same house, and that relationship was extremely good. This frequently led to conflicts with my father (jealousy). My father was often not at home, and I didn’t always conform with his ‘ideas’. I’m a completely different type (more along my mother’s line). But all in all, I had a good youth – as mentioned, also because of my loving grandmother.” (Man, age 60)
- 1120 “Being the oldest and, on top of that, an unwanted boy, I was the whipping boy at the time ...” (Man, age 60)

- 1121 “Both my parents were in very poor health. My father was hospitalised in the psychiatric ward, and my mother was resident in a nursing home, firstly because of a very high level of physical dependence and then for the last three years because of psychological dependence (senile dementia). I have very bad memories of their last years of life, and I know very well that this is not what they wanted ... It’s the eternal problem of old age and all the difficulties that go with it ... They expressed this very often. Personally, I felt that the end of their lives lacked dignity and that it didn’t suit them at all. They suffered greatly, as did we – my brother and sister – who surrounded them as best we could. And it went so far that I’m going to make arrangements for my own end of life ... I don’t want to end up like this and I wouldn’t wish it on anyone ...” (Woman, age 61)
- 1122 “I look after my mother, who is still living at home. Other family members and health professionals also look after her to keep her at home.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1123 “My father, with whom I had a very good relationship, suffered from Alzheimer’s disease for two to three years (I supported my mother more since she looked after him a lot).” (Woman, age 61)
- 1124 “I had a wonderful relationship with my parents. It has been a strong foundation for my life.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1125 “Thanks to my parents, I had a beautiful and carefree childhood and adolescence. They were very supportive.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1126 “I was always close with my parents.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1127 “What makes support more demanding is that we live 100 km apart.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1128 “My mum has a hard life in the house!” (Woman, age 61)
- 1129 “After my parents divorced, the contact with my father was cut off by his second wife.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1130 “During her last year of life, my mother was barely responsive anymore (dementia). My father spent his last six months mostly in the hospital, so that I could support and accompany him only verbally.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1131 “My parents left me way too early.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1132 “Since my mum has severe dementia, the situation between my father and me has become even more difficult.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1133 “We are there when they happen to need us.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1134 “The situation is very personal since my very elderly parents are now in a retirement home and my mother is ‘losing her mind’, as they say!” (Woman, age 61)

- 1135 “I had very good parents. Now, after their death, I realise more and more what kind of people they were. I am thankful for being fortunate to have had such parents.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1136 “I had very much made up with both in the last years of their life and could appreciate what they had given me. Conflicts were a long time back: I was well able to maintain a distance and still stay within the relationship. For that I am grateful.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1137 “We had a beautiful youth, but one busy with work.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1138 “The distanced relationship with my parents over many years has become closer only in recent years. My sister died of cancer 30 years ago, now I’m also affected.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1139 “Relationships changed at the end of my father’s life because of his illness. They improved. It made for some wonderful moments of intimacy.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1140 “Lots left unsaid, family secrets.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1141 “My family situation is still pretty difficult, even now.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1142 “Barely knew my father. My mother was mentally ill. Significant other: grandma????” (Woman, age 61)
- 1143 “To me, my father was my all.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1144 “As an infant, I came to foster parents and don’t know, and don’t want to get to know, my begetters. Just know that they died.” (Woman, age 61)
- 1145 “Love, love, love ...” (Man, age 61)
- 1146 “I loved and appreciated them more than anything else.” (Man, age 61)
- 1147 “It was always very good.” (Man, age 61)
- 1148 “It was a normal relationship, where they helped each other with the day-to-day tasks and activities. As far as their financial means are concerned, they were a normal family. They owned their own home, but they didn’t have any savings.” (Man, age 61)
- 1149 “Balanced; my father worked rotating shifts.” (Man, age 61)
- 1150 “We seven kids always had a good relationship with our parents.” (Man, age 61)
- 1151 “I was unable to answer many questions about my relationship with my mother since her faculties are severely impaired (Alzheimer’s disease) and she no longer recognises me ...” (Man, age 61)
- 1152 “Difficult relationship with my parents since I was an unwanted child.” (Man, age 61)
- 1153 “Both my father and my mother had progressing dementia some years before their death.” (Man, age 61)

- 1154 “Not very affectionate, not much warmth; it was all rather functional.” (Man, age 61)
- 1155 “My parents never supported me, never motivated me to learn a vocation. My father always favoured my siblings. I more or less never mattered to him.” (Man, age 61)
- 1156 “They were great parents. I would wish everyone to be so lucky!” (Woman, age 62)
- 1157 “I had wonderful parents who taught me so much and gave me so much LOVE.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1158 “I am very grateful for everything that my parents were for me and passed on to me. They weren’t perfect, but they supported their children, that they should have a good education and a good life!” (Woman, age 62)
- 1159 “I had wonderful parents and miss them a lot.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1160 “My father and mother had a very good relationship, such that we children now still have very nice memories of them. Unfortunately, he died early so that I could not experience a lot with him.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1161 “I could write a book about all the things that I have experienced. It was what it was, couldn’t have changed the situation then anyway!” (Woman, age 62)
- 1162 “I lost my mother far too early, and I’ve missed her all my life as a mother. My father did what he could to bring me up, and I thank him for that.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1163 “Was a very good relationship.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1164 “I and my husband both respected my parents. Unfortunately, they died much too early.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1165 “My parents are old but are still leading an independent life. I am really lucky.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1166 “Moving away from our country of origin caused a lot of distance with my mother, but not with my father. Dad chose to leave Northern Europe for professional reasons (major promotion), while Mum was uprooted in a way. My mother was bitter throughout my childhood and that weighed heavily on me. I struggled with her discontent and heard some rather hysterical arguments, whereas my younger sister was completely unaware of it. I silently took Dad’s side, and much later, I learned from him that he had taken mine because – in his opinion – Mum favoured my little sister too much. Personally, I’ve come to terms with it by becoming very independent and secretive. Looking back, I would say that the bad relationship with my mother paradoxically had a positive impact on the rest of my life! My sister was less well equipped

- to cope with the challenges we face, by force of circumstances. Especially as our father wasn't much of a psychologist – like his generation generally – and awkwardly neglected his youngest daughter (according to her).” (Woman, age 62)
- 1167 “They were always there for our family, went on vacation with the children.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1168 “We liked and respected each other.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1169 “My father became an alcoholic in the second part of his life. My mother always stood by him, even though she didn't have it easy with him, his addiction, his melancholic, depressive nature. She loved him nevertheless. My father loved my mother too – he also told her so now and then. My father was not a family person. He retreated into his own world.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1170 “Satisfied indeed.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1171 “Very loving and caring.” (Woman, age 62)
- 1172 “I loved and appreciated my two parents, mother and father, very much. And I think they loved me too. Throughout our entire lives, we had a very good relationship, and this empowered me in my life.” (Man, age 62)
- 1173 “During my childhood, my father was frequently absent for job reasons. Particularly after his retirement and my mother's death, the relationship with my father became very close.” (Man, age 62)
- 1174 “We help and support each other whenever there is a need for it. My widowed mother is currently financially quite well off. She is still vigorous and largely manages her daily tasks on her own. I mostly support her in administrative matters (taxes, authorities, formalities etc.). My mother's wealth is reserved exclusively for herself, in particular for future elderly care (nursing home). Our family agrees that my mother should remain independent in her own home as long as possible and should be able to lead her life as independently as possible. We hope that she will remain healthy and sprightly for a long time and that admission to a nursing home will be necessary only at a very late point. Nowadays, I talk with my mother a lot. Unfortunately, I failed to do that with my father, so that I can now no longer find out anything about his life from him directly. I perceive this as a personal loss. I would have liked to know more about his youth and his experiences.” (Man, age 62)
- 1175 “The relationship with my parents was warm. I come from an extended family, and my parents gave their best.” (Man, age 62)



- 1176 “My parents lived together in a nursing home for two years; since then, my mother has been there alone. My parents live(d) in a mountain village. I studied in German-speaking Switzerland and remained there but closely connected with my origins and family.” (Man, age 62)
- 1177 “I experienced a happy youth.” (Man, age 62)
- 1178 “I’m very sorry I didn’t understand my father and didn’t talk to him enough, and as far as my mother was concerned, we understood each other without words.” (Man, age 62)
- 1179 “We were a completely normal family.” (Man, age 62)
- 1180 “My father has dementia :-(...” (Man, age 62)
- 1181 “The relationship was always good, and my wife has contributed a lot to our good relationship and regular contact.” (Man, age 62)
- 1182 “The last twelve months before her death, my mother was in a nursing home, with senile dementia. My father suffered from Alzheimer’s. This renders making statements concerning the last twelve months a bit difficult.” (Man, age 62)
1183. For two years now, I have been living with my adoptive father and my siblings with my mother. Up until today, we still have good family ties. I have never known my biological father.” (Man, age 62)
- 1184 “I barely knew my biological mother, or more precisely, I can barely remember her. She suffered from severe depression and ultimately shot herself. My stepmother cared for me very lovingly.” (Man, age 62)
- 1185 “I always had a very good relationship with my parents, and I am grateful to them for a beautiful time during my youth.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1186 “Unforgettable! They will always continue to be present in my life.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1187 “I didn’t really know my biological mother since she died in a car accident when I was just two years old. My biological father died when I was just age 30.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1188 “During my parents’ phase of separation and divorce, I suffered considerably from the tension. I was often drawn into their quarrels and so on. My teenage years were anything but pleasant since I had to deal with the problems of adults much too frequently. Yet I loved them both even though I had to see and experience many painful things.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1189 “My mother was the best mother and friend that one could ask for. My father was an embittered and jealous person who forced me to make a choice: him or my family!!!!” (Woman, age 63)

- 1190 “They were the most important people in my life, and they did everything for my education and well-being.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1191 “Mother: a strict Catholic, suffered from my father’s frugality. Father: Reformed, a rather sparing relationship between my parents, was difficult over the years. My siblings always sided with my mother; I didn’t want to leave my father alone and for this reason always stood by him. My mother forced me to eat meat every day through my entire childhood (until 16), even if I had to throw up. I was not allowed to go to school before my plate was empty. Until last year, I was always there for my mother, always went to see her. Since then, our relationship has been upset because, despite her age, she makes decisions (together with my siblings) that are incomprehensible.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1192 “The relationship with my parents wasn’t easy. Emotionally, I felt compelled to help and support them, which I also was happy to do. Unfortunately, my parents returned to their home country in Southern Europe once they retired. I was therefore in the situation that I wanted to help but couldn’t because I live here in Switzerland. Especially since my mother had a heart attack, her situation has become precarious and I have been emotionally torn.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1193 “I had a close relationship with my father. We understood each other without words. We were kindred spirits. We loved each other a lot. My mother only saw my brother and favoured him; that was very painful. She never showed me her love much; I was unimportant to her.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1194 “My parents were honest, simple and hardworking farmers.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1195 “Unfortunately, I never managed to get closer to my father again during this time and to make my peace with him after a lifelong rather difficult and distanced relationship. Only after my mother’s death have I understood him better and also realised how much I’m actually like him. I also had a rather loose relationship with my mother because she didn’t always agree with my life or pathway. Once our roles reversed in the last phase of her life (she no longer the strong woman but rather the child and I the mother), my mother became very dear to my heart and I realised how much good she did for me (and for my siblings) and which sacrifices she also made. Accompanying her in the last weeks prior to her death was very intense, and her death has changed my life in many respects.” (Woman, age 63)

- 1196 “My father passed away after my first birthday. For that reason, I have no memory of him.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1197 “I grew up in an orphanage, so I had very little connection with my parents.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1198 “The relationship with my parents was very difficult, because of my mother, who did not want me.” (Woman, age 63)
- 1199 “To me, they were a great example and made an imprint on my life.” (Man, age 63)
- 1200 “I had very little contact with my father, who died when I was 17.” (Man, age 63)
- 1201 “Some questions are partly biased by the fact that a verbal relationship with one of my parents was almost impossible in the last years of his life.” (Man, age 63)
- 1202 “Flight from Tibet, then refugee camp for children, after that in Switzerland with a foster family.” (Man, age 63)
- 1203 “My mother died when I was still a child, and my father had a nasty disease. He was moved to a care home when he was a teenager.” (Man, age 63)
- 1204 “My mother suffered from cancer almost 20 years until she died. My father was in a nursing home the final years before his death.” (Man, age 63)
- 1205 “The relationship with my father was not as strong because my father always worked night shifts during all of his active working life. For this reason, we also didn’t see each other much.” (Man, age 63)
- 1206 “Good.” (Man, age 63)
- 1207 “I had a very beautiful childhood thanks to my parents.” (Man, age 63)
- 1208 “Yes, I had a beautiful childhood and have good memories of my parents.” (Man, age 63)
- 1209 “My father spent the last years of his life in a nursing home because he suffered from dementia.” (Man, age 63)
- 1210 “Because of their many children, my parents had very little time for their flock of children.” (Man, age 63)
- 1211 “I was fortunate to have parents who were wonderful examples. I hope that I have also passed on this ‘gift’ to my daughter.” (Man, age 63)
- 1212 “My parents returned to Italy, and so we met three or four times a year for short periods of time, during the summer breaks, for bank holidays or for short visits. However, the relationship was always very pleasant, also due to the distance that separated us. I have to tell you that my father was an emigrant from a few years after I was born until I was

- 16, which is when I joined him in Switzerland. My mother grew up in a family with many kids. She never had the chance to go to school, which is something that was still common at her time, due to poverty, the war and so on. My father, on the other hand, was a kind of peaceful revolutionary guy. He decided to emigrate in order to be able to work and to make a living for his family.” (Man, age 63)
- 1213 “They wanted the best for their children, came from a simple farmers’ background and were rather reserved both in terms of communicating and expressing their emotions. Accordingly, prolonged conversations and, for instance, hugging was rare.” (Man, age 63)

### Mid-sixties

- 1214 “I was lucky enough to have parents who listened to their children, who were curious about life, open to the world and full of empathy. I’ve tried to pass these values on to my children! My father died of a heart attack and my mother of aggressive cancer.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1215 “I am very proud that I always had a wonderful relationship with my parents.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1216 “We lived in harmony with both our parents being constantly present, while also sharing the farming activities.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1217 “My parents were in a nursing home during their last years, in full care.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1218 “I had fabulous, understanding and loving parents!” (Woman, age 64)
- 1219 “Father passed away when I was still little. I lived in the same household with my mother until I was 30, afterward in the neighbouring building. Then, after I moved away once I had married, I soon cared for my mother (taking turns with my sister) in my own household for a few years. Shortly before her death, nursing home.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1220 “My father died in 1959 when I was five, so I don’t remember much.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1221 “Love for my mother / hatred for my father.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1222 “My father was a patriarch. When in about 1965 my mother was asked by her boss at the time to resume working part-time, he wouldn’t allow her to do that. My mother was not allowed to get a driver’s license; she had to give up all her sports activities. For her, a divorce was out of the question only because she wanted to be there for us children in the family! In my early childhood, my father abused me for the first time! This happened on an irregular basis until late childhood. My mother

- found out about it only much later. I thought that I could keep this 'matter' my secret until the end of my life. It was very saddening for my great mother and was a heavy burden on her. – Owing to psychological treatment, I have come to terms with this past; it's part of my life history. Today, I lead a happy life." (Woman, age 64)
- 1223 "Yes, I loved my mother. I would have loved and supported her in spite of everything. As far as my father is concerned, I would simply have preferred not to be his daughter. It has been very good for me to live far away from him. It may be sad, but it has helped me not to repeat the same patterns and to respect and love my own children." (Woman, age 64)
- 1224 "For many years, my mother had polyarthritis; my father cared for her until he died. My mother was very unhappy, couldn't accept her disease and let those closest to her feel her 'anger' and impotence." (Woman, age 64)
- 1225 "We had a strict but overall lovely youth. My mother's dementia made the situation difficult in the last two years. Our parents would have done everything for us children. Despite initially difficult financial circumstances." (Woman, age 64)
- 1226 "For nearly 20 years, we have been living in separate flats in the same building. We chose this housing arrangement in mutual agreement and voluntarily. We have treated each other with respect and consideration from the beginning. (We enter the flats only after ringing the doorbell, except for emergencies.) However, all of us know that we are there for each other. Should an occasional conflict emerge, we seek to talk with one another. To me personally, there is nothing more satisfying than helping and supporting fellow human beings in need." (Woman, age 64)
- 1227 "We had a lot of fun together, even if life oftentimes wasn't easy for my parents, especially financially." (Woman, age 64)
- 1228 "My parents ran a farm. The division of labour was traditional. My father was out in the field and barn. My mother inside, running the household and raising the kids." (Woman, age 64)
- 1229 "Our relationship was affectionate but not very intimate or effusive (relatively elderly parents who were old-fashioned)." (Woman, age 64)
- 1230 "As a married couple, the two were not a good fit; they were quite the opposite of each other. My father had a problem with alcohol!" (Woman, age 64)
- 1231 "My father died when I was ten years old." (Woman, age 64)

- 1232 “Because of their own background, my parents could not give us the love that we would have needed. But they passed on values to us and were (mostly) supportive and decent. They were role models in terms of free thinking and their actions. My mother suffered from ALS during the final 20 months before her death. My father left with Exit after the surprising death of his partner.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1233 “For that time, the relationship was alright. My parents couldn’t communicate their emotions well.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1234 “My mother was overwhelmed by four children and an alcoholic. Especially being the only daughter, who was born unwanted, I did not have a nice childhood. Instead, particularly my grandfather supported me. When my father was sober and at home, I have lovely memories. Currently, I am still in the process of coming to terms with my childhood because of my mother. Only after her death have I become aware of how much she overwhelmed me. This was bad to the extent that I had only a very few positive experiences.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1235 “I grew up in a foster family and had it good. I have always been in touch with my biological mother. I know who my father is but have no contact with him. My biological parents were a couple only for a short time.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1236 “Brought up by my grandparents; I didn’t have much contact with my mother, who never wanted to bring up my brother and me.” (Woman, age 64)
- 1237 “The relationship has gone from communication to communion since the loss of a child.” (Man, age 64)
- 1238 “My parents supported me in every respect. They enabled me to study abroad. They also supported me financially during my first year of marriage. I had and still have great respect for my parents, even though they are both no longer alive. They were both very kind and affectionate people and showed us kids their love. They were very generous – also toward other people. At home, our door was always open to people who needed help or support. Of the little money that my mother had for our household, she donated a certain sum every month to aid organisations. All in all, my parents were an example for us children in every respect.” (Man, age 64)
- 1239 “We let each other live, and football provided a close tie.” (Man, age 64)
- 1240 “I was fortunate to have had a very happy youth. My parents made many things possible for me.” (Man, age 64)

- 1241 “The relationship was and is alright. But it wasn’t characterised by mutual closeness and tenderness.” (Man, age 64)
- 1242 “I have helped to maintain my mother for 35 years.” (Man, age 64)
- 1243 “The relationship with my parents was very good.” (Man, age 64)
- 1244 “My father suffered from considerable dementia, that is to say, our relationship during the last twelve months must be seen in this context.” (Man, age 64)
- 1245 “Was alright.” (Man, age 64)
- 1246 “My father idolised me and bought me back from my mother for a few tens of thousands of francs when I was eleven, following a four- to five-year divorce and sometimes after bloody fights. This meant I could go and live with him instead. My sister stayed with my mother, and I didn’t go on holiday with my mother anymore, sometimes with my sister, whom I saw once or twice a month.” (Man, age 64)
- 1247 “What are parents? Would have loved to have had some!” (Man, age 64)
- 1248 “I had a very beautiful time with my parents!!!” (Woman, age 65)
- 1249 “Given the circumstances of LIFE, our parents educate us according to their own backgrounds. They think they’re doing the right thing, whatever decisions they make. I’m grateful to them for bringing me into the world. They remain a point of reference despite differences of opinion arising from our own life choices (adolescence, profession, family life, choice of spouse etc.)” (Woman, age 65)
- 1250 “He didn’t listen at all.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1251 “We were frequently together when my father was still alive. After my father’s death, the family never was together like that again.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1252 “They were always great role models to me in all situations in life, even today. I am thankful to them for everything, way beyond the grave.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1253 “My parents ran a store in the countryside. Already as a child, I was involved in the store a lot. It was a great pleasure. My mother was mobility impaired since I can remember. She had to be helped a lot. But she tried to do as much as possible independently. I loved my parents, and they loved me too. But sometimes the age difference bothered me. Therefore, I never wanted to have children late in life. My sisters were very close to me and often mediated between me (the little one) and our parents.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1254 “Very harmonious, very respectful interaction. Received the necessary support if needed.” (Woman, age 65)

- 1255 “My mother had dementia for about ten years.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1256 “I always loved and respected my parents. They were a role model to me in many ways. What I appreciated the most is that I could trust them blindly and that they always accepted me the way I happened to be, even though they didn’t always agree with how I lived or what I did during my younger years. In particular, I appreciate what I was able to learn from my parents. Both were always very hardworking and used their time and resources well. From my mother, I learned to run a household economically and ecologically aware without being stingy, healthy nutrition and a healthy lifestyle, natural remedies and methods, the significance and importance of integrity, loyalty, and, in her later years, I was impressed by her serenity, which derived from her trust in God. My father was also a mostly calm, patient, thoughtful and satisfied person.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1257 “My parents were of the same mind in their relationship. It worked for them.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1258 “Mother: As my mother passed away very unexpectedly, there were no conversations or activities between us to prepare for it during the last twelve months. Many questions that I still would have liked to ask her remained unanswered. What preoccupies me now is that my mother never spoke of her inner life (I sensed her), her desires, and she couldn’t pursue her interests and passions – large family. During my childhood and later, it frequently concerned me that she didn’t assert herself more in her role as a wife and mother. Father: My father was in a nursing home the last twelve months before his death. Since I was a single mother with several children and worked, I often didn’t have the time to share it with my father. In the last months and years, he became more mellow and was also often sad. During my childhood and later, my father was very strict and dissatisfied at home. Yet I always sensed that he was a sensitive person and would have wished for a simpler life, childhood. He worked a lot to feed his big family. He also had many interests and was able to pursue some of them. Parents: My mother and father were socially minded people and politically active. With this, they showed us how one can live in dignity. Me: Although I had siblings and parents who cared for and fed me, I often felt alone at home.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1259 “Answering the questions made me aware of how independent we are from each other, but also how little room there has been for personal exchange.” (Woman, age 65)



- 1260 “My parents raised me well, stayed together because of their children, until I was 18 years old. Afterward, they divorced peacefully. Each parent remarried another person. My mother lived abroad for a long time, returned to Switzerland again as a widow. The relationships to all family members have always been very open and affectionate.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1261 “I had good parents.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1262 “My mother is a good 90 years old; the relationship has changed since the death of my father; I got to know her much better and understand her better (also because I realise how similar to her I was or still am). I increasingly support and accompany her in addition to the homecare and other care providers. The relationship with my father never really was personal; I realised that in its full significance only after his death.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1263 “My mother was a single parent. She had a relationship with my father; he died before I was born. Since I also lost my mother when I was 14 years old, I could never ask her how things were at the time. She told me that my father had died in a car accident. We visited his grave every now and then. My mother died as a result of surgery. My caregiver was actually my grandmother. I also had a very good relationship with my grandfather.” (Woman, age 65)
- 1264 “My relationship with my parents has always been shaped by respect and self-love.” (Man, age 65)
- 1265 “My parents lived in simple conditions. But they gave us a home in which we felt comfortable and could experience a carefree childhood. Our parents were always there for us. We could count on them.” (Man, age 65)
- 1266 “Everyone ought to have such parents!” (Man, age 65)
- 1267 “With my parents, I experienced a carefree and rather unproblematic youth. They supported all five of their children and dismissed them into independence with the best ‘tools’, me too. In advanced age, my mother’s and father’s health was severely impaired. For this reason, I specifically, who lived nearest by, was heavily burdened during their last years, which every now and then led to tension and differences of opinion (support, admission to a nursing home).” (Man, age 65)
- 1268 “A partnership with children is already a huge challenge as it is. An intercultural relationship like that of my parents – of Indian and Swiss origin – is an incomparably greater challenge.” (Man, age 65)

- 1269 “The relationship with my parents was harmonious throughout. My father was 50 years old, my mother 44 years old when I was born. During my childhood, I always felt protected; I knew where I was at home. I nevertheless grew up rather independently. We rarely had much to say to each other because we simply understood each other without further ado. I have very, very good memories of my parents.” (Man, age 65)
- 1270 “I have always respected and loved them.” (Man, age 65)
- 1271 “They both lived thriftily and modestly. Were open, tolerant, affectionate, and I – by the standards of the time – enjoyed great freedoms even as a teenager.” (Man, age 65)
- 1272 “Very good relationship.” (Man, age 65)
- 1273 “I really didn’t know my biological father.” (Man, age 65)
- 1274 “My father and mother were divorced, and I had no contact with my father.” (Man, age 65)
- 1275 “My parents pursued a good line between parents and children. Clearly showed us what was expected and how they saw parenting. We were well off, and no complaints can be raised about the relationship with our parents – it was harmonious and completely familial.” (Man, age 65)
- 1276 “I had good parents, demanding, intelligent and well-balanced.” (Man, age 65)
- 1277 “I would generally call my father an ‘absent father’. My mother was often overwhelmed by six children (working-class household). Because of the cramped conditions, there was often conflict. My parents (with a few exceptions) nevertheless tried to make the best of the situation, the circumstances.” (Man, age 65)
- 1278 “Since my father couldn’t handle money, this resulted in continuous tension in the family.” (Man, age 65)
- 1279 “I had a very strict upbringing. I had the feeling that I was a ‘prestige child’ for my parents. Only the best clothes and shoes, always forced to go the barber – and this in the heyday of long hair (Beatles, Stones etc.). There was indeed often quarrelling over such petty matters.” (Man, age 65)
- 1280 “Since they are old and fragile, ill, have dementia, I have forgiven them of all that I once blamed them for. Relationship with my father closer for about two years. Never got close to my mother. As mentioned, have forgiven them, though.” (Man, age 65)
- 1281 “We always respected each other but were always bound by deep love. Our daily visits or phone calls attest to this. My parents, my father in particular, were my most significant others. Even though my parents

- have been gone for almost 20 years now, I still miss them every day.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1282 “I loved my parents very much and always felt supported and loved by them. I could not help them so much during old age as they lived in the UK and I lived in Switzerland with my family. I was widowed young and had my children to support here too. We visited as often as we could.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1283 “We had a very close, mostly harmonious relationship. I miss them both even now and am very grateful to them.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1284 “The relationship with my parents is (was) essentially good.” Despite some differences or differences of opinion, I have tried to accept my parents the way they are (were). These parents are indeed the only ones I have.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1285 “The relationship with my parents was always very good – especially with Mum. Dad never concerned himself much with us but was always there when we needed him. My youth was very lovely.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1286 “I had a good relationship with my parents despite them separating when divorce was unusual. I’m very grateful to them. I have very fond memories of them both.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1287 “My parents were the best that one can imagine.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1288 “I was able to learn a lot from my parents. The values that they lived by have formed me. They gave me stability and emotional security.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1289 “Patriarchal relationship between my parents. Because of dementia, he spent his last year in a nursing home; my mother continued living at home. Physically she was fit, but her macular degeneration gave her trouble. With only 20 per cent vision in one eye, she no longer managed to do the work in and around the house. Passed away unexpectedly after staying nine months in a nursing home. There were no particular signs beforehand; she just fell asleep one night.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1290 “My father was ill with cancer the last two years of his life and came down with dementia in the final year so that barely any relationship with him was possible during his last year. My mother has been living in a nursing home for three years and needs professional support. My relationship with my mother is affectionate.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1291 “Three years before my father died, I was able to settle a lot of things with him. During the last three years, I was able to accompany him

- with much trust, which was a good way of letting go. My mother lives in a nursing home at a very advanced age. She has dementia, and I try to enable her to live the autumn of her life with dignity.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1292 “At age 18, my father had to take over the farm because his father died of an accident and he had several younger siblings. My mother died in a nursing home. She lived there her last ten years and suffered from severe dementia.” (Woman, age 66)
- 1293 “My parents were never in a position to care for their many children. We were beaten, my father was an alcoholic, my mother was afraid of him. When I was 15, I fled to an acquaintance and was able to complete an apprenticeship there. I have come by a super husband and also parents-in-law, who have provided me with a sense of family. Thanks to my parents-in-law, I was able to pursue a second education and was appreciated by my employers. In summary: The first 15 years were to be forgotten; super since then!” (Woman, age 66)
- 1294 “My mother had Alzheimer’s disease and was living in an old people’s home near my home. This meant I didn’t have to care for her, and our emotional exchanges were limited and altered by the illness.” (Man, age 66)
- 1295 “My parents never interfered in my business, even when I married. In the end, they were both in a nursing home.” (Man, age 66)
- 1296 “Until the age of 12, I saw very little of my father, who worked away from home to make a living. There was no real relationship; I only saw him on the weekend every other week.” (Man, age 66)
- 1297 “Good relationship. After their divorce, a longer pause in the relationship with my father.” (Man, age 66)
- 1298 “I perceive myself as extremely fortunate to have had THESE parents. We children could always sense that they loved us (while among this generation use of the word ‘love’ was too much like in a romance novel). And once we had grown up, they were able to feel that we greatly enjoyed being with them, even though we, too, did not make much progress in expressing this verbally either. Their life was the family.” (Man, age 66)
- 1299 “The relationship with my parents was always very affectionate and characterised by mutual respect, deep love and a constant willingness to help. A happy family!” (Man, age 66)
- 1300 “My father’s health is severely impaired; he is increasingly mentally confused and in care in a nursing home. He sunk into poverty and

completely depleted his once considerable wealth within a few years by engaging in gambling, lotteries and giving dubious gifts to unfamiliar people (e.g., dog boarding kennel) and so on. My mother lives in a small flat of her own and is looked after daily by the meal-service provider and the local care provider.” (Man, age 66)

1301 “I wish it were normal.” (Man, age 66)

1302 “Left some things to be desired.” (Man, age 66)

1303 “I had a very happy childhood, although the financial situation was not the best. My parents always gave me a lot of confidence and gave me a lot of freedom.” (Man, age 66)

1304 “We grew up in impoverished conditions, six children; our parents had little opportunity to shower us with love. It is absolutely OK.” (Man, age 66)

### Late sixties

1305 “We always had a very affectionate relationship with one another until their death.” (Woman, age 67)

1306 “I had a wonderful childhood. My parents were always proud of me and were always there for me.” (Woman, age 67)

1307 “I had a lovely childhood and was able to grow up in orderly circumstances. My father was a factory worker, and Saturday evenings he repaired bicycles and mopeds in his workshop, some of which he also sold. We never had to go hungry, but we also lived in modest circumstances. My father always worked a lot to be able to feed his family including his daughters. All of the children were allowed to pursue an apprenticeship. Being the youngest, I still lived at home when my father died. Then I lived with my mother until I married. Afterward, we lived in our own flat but in the same house (my parental home, which I bought).” (Woman, age 67)

1308 “We had very affectionate relationships; both parents were very ill twelve months before their death, dependent on care, that is, no longer responsive.” (Woman, age 67)

1309 “To summarise, I felt less of an affinity with my father than with my mother, but I’m very grateful for everything they both gave me (education, inner balance, good relationships with my brothers, good financial situation).” (Woman, age 67)

1310 “I had a very lovely youth; both parents were always there for me. Absolutely nothing to complain about.” (Woman, age 67)

- 1311 “Ever since I can remember, it was uncomplicated, affectionate and respectful.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1312 “I am grateful to my parents for the loving attention that I and my family have received.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1313 “I had a very happy youth, and my parents always supported me in my career choices and stays abroad. They also were very loving grandparents.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1314 “We were a happy content family on a farm.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1315 “Could unfortunately not establish a relationship. My mother was ill very early on and passed away. My father remarried, and, after school, we were not welcome at our stepmother’s. Haven’t seen my father since I was a teenager and also didn’t know anything about his illness and his death.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1316 “My father was of Yewish origin, and my mother was ill for 30 years.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1317 “Since my mother gave me away when I was a few months old, to me her relationship status was like an aunt. My foster mother (great aunt), by contrast, became my actual mother.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1318 “We had to obey, full stop. We knew that in those days children were always accidents, unwanted children ... (The poor parents)! Astonishingly, we remained very respectful right up to the end.” (Woman, age 67)
- 1319 “It was super.” (Man, age 67)
- 1320 “A very balanced childhood with caring parents. Financially, we have all been independent (except for childhood). Less because of large inheritances and more through diligence and reliability. I was the only one in the family to obtain a university entrance qualification and complete university studies. I’m proud of my parents, who taught me the most important values and principles that I could rely on throughout my entire life.” (Man, age 67)
- 1321 “We always had a very good relationship.” (Man, age 67)
- 1322 “Those were years when couples did not separate. Between my mother and my father, there were always strong conflicts. My mother spent a lot of her time in Switzerland, where she was from. Until I started school in Italy, I was often in Switzerland with my grandmother and her. I had strong conflicts with my father when I was young. Also because of the rows between my parents, I left home at the age of 21 (at that time the legal age of majority was 21) ...” (Man, age 67)
- 1323 “Until my mother’s death, it was very good.” (Man, age 67)

- 1324 “The relationship with my parents was very good; we were very close.” (Man, age 67)
- 1325 “I had it good and am satisfied.” (Man, age 67)
- 1326 “In general, I had a good relationship with my parents.” (Man, age 67)
- 1327 “I have very good memories of my parents. Very simple people, but they taught me sound principles such as honesty and respect for other people and other people’s ideas.” (Man, age 67)
- 1328 “We were six children in total. In my view, we received everything that was possible at the time. Financially, we got by more or less thanks to my mother working at home.” (Man, age 67)
- 1329 “I had a good relationship and at the same time a healthy distance as well.” (Man, age 67)
- 1330 “Instead of gifts, all of us children received an advancement on our inheritance to purchase real estate.” (Man, age 67)
- 1331 “A very good understanding; respectful, positive, appreciative.” (Man, age 67)
- 1332 “My father died as a military pilot during the Spanish War, when I was 11 months old.” (Man, age 67)
- 1333 “My father had his own business. He died when I was ten years old. From then on, my mother ran the business and the household. She didn’t have any time for luxury.” (Man, age 67)
- 1334 “My mother often strongly overestimated me and praised me before there was anything to see (or to praise). My father criticised me a lot during my childhood and only rarely encouraged or praised me. From this imbalance, I had to construct my own standards. Later in life, my father and I found a good way to communicate and were able to communicate about personal issues as well. I never managed to overcome the distance to my mother that had evolved during puberty. We could talk about experiences but only rarely about personal matters.” (Man, age 67)
- 1335 “My relationship with my parents was not close. From the age of 13 on, I was on a farm in a neighbouring village, had a room of my own and a very good situation there.” (Man, age 67)
- 1336 “I haven’t been in touch with my parents for 30 years now.” (Man, age 67)
- 1337 “In the last twelve months of her life, my mother had severe dementia.” (Man, age 67)
- 1338 “We had very little, mostly below the existential minimum, but were always content.” (Woman, age 68)

- 1339 "I had very generous, liberal parents, who gave us two daughters a good education. I am grateful to them for a loving childhood with good guiding principles. The last year in my mother's life unfortunately became very difficult on account of Parkinson's." (Woman, age 68)
- 1340 "A wonderful relationship that shaped my life." (Woman, age 68)
- 1341 "They brought us up as they were brought up. Mum a little less so. She was more open. I don't blame them." (Woman, age 68)
- 1342 "I had a normal relationship with both my parents all the time. After marriage to a Swiss citizen in the diplomatic service, we were posted all around the world. When my father died, I was with him and was helping him during his last days. When my mother died, I unfortunately was not at her side at the moment of her passing because it was a sudden death." (Woman, age 68)
- 1343 "My mother was a good mother when I was a child. Things got worse for me when I became an adult. I think there was an element of jealousy. And in the last few years, she relied solely on me when she was having trouble. Strange. My father was always the same." (Woman, age 68)
- 1344 "I was a planned child. The relationship with my parents was always good and based on mutual respect and affection. But that has been a tradition across all the generations that I know of." (Woman, age 68)
- 1345 "My parents weren't very demonstrative, but they were there for me when I needed them." (Woman, age 68)
- 1346 "Although my parents were poor, I never lacked anything. By cleaning offices out of town, my mother even enabled us to spend vacations in Switzerland. My parents were strict but indeed very loving. Only as an adult did it become clear to me what a beautiful carefree childhood and adolescence I was able to experience. I think my parents should have received more love from me. Unfortunately, both suffered from severe longer-term illnesses in the years before their death. Many, many thanks, my dear parents, that you loved me and raised me this well!" (Woman, age 68)
- 1347 "The relationship with my parents was loving, demanding, complex and conflicting." (Woman, age 68)
- 1348 "My father was very dominant and often ignored my mother. Although he appreciated her a lot, he always stood in the foreground. That bothered me, which is why my relationship with him was ambivalent. I had a much more relaxed relationship with my mother. Caring for her in old age before her death was easier." (Woman, age 68)
- 1349 "The relationships changed over the course of life." (Woman, age 68)



- 1350 "I was never in touch with my biological father." (Woman, age 68)
- 1351 "Both parents were in a nursing home during the last twelve months before their death. I had a good relationship with my parents and am grateful for them." (Woman, age 68)
- 1352 "My mother came down with dementia and, for this reason, could no longer communicate with me during her last two years. She spent the last five years in a nursing home." (Woman, age 68)
- 1353 "I had a good relationship. They took good care of us, even though it wasn't easy with seven children. I have occasionally asked myself how my mother could do all the work and still knit for us all. We saw each other often on birthdays, family festivities, Christmas and joint vacations. My children unfortunately knew their grandfather only briefly as he passed away early. My mother often looked after my children when I attended a course. After my father's death, my mother was always with us during winter vacations. The whole family, my siblings with spouses and children, still get together regularly at summer cookouts, on death anniversary and Christmas." (Woman, age 68)
- 1354 "To me, the relationship was good." (Woman, age 68)
- 1355 "My father was ripped off by a younger woman. She feigned love. My father and the lady only laughed at us when we children intervened. My stepbrother helped her rip off my father and cashed in as well. Both lied to our father, but he had become compliant to the lady. For this reason, hardly any contact with my father anymore." (Woman, age 68)
- 1356 "Kindness, strictness, openness, happiness, relaxed relationships despite shortcomings." (Woman, age 68)
- 1357 "For a long time, almost my entire childhood, there was not much of a relationship with my parents. I was raised by my grandmother and saw my parents only during holidays. That changed when I was 16. Then I moved in with my parents, which naturally didn't go without tension." (Woman, age 68)
- 1358 "I feel as if I grew up without parents. Like an orphan." (Woman, age 68)
- 1359 "We were so many children that it was normal that our demands on our parents were extremely limited and that we automatically tried to support our parents as much as possible. The example of our parents was the basis for our good upbringing." (Man, age 68)
- 1360 "I had fantastic parents! (I would have never exchanged them for any others)." (Man, age 68)
- 1361 "Mother was responsible for child-rearing and the household, father for earning a living. Because of the parenting methods of my mostly

- overwhelmed mother, there was often tension with us children.” (Man, age 68)
- 1362 “It was always good.” (Man, age 68)
- 1363 “I grew up in modest circumstances. Yet it was always important to me to also bear personal responsibility. Even during my school years, I was lucky enough to be able to earn a little money in a neighbouring gardening shop in my spare time to be less of a burden on my parents. This way I learned the relationship to money.” (Man, age 68)
- 1364 “Since I am more endowed with my mother’s genes, I love life in agriculture. Consequently, I became the person accompanying my grandfather when I was as young as three years old. My father worked in haulage, and agriculture was not his favourite thing.” (Man, age 68)
- 1365 “My father died of a sudden heart attack. My mother was in a nursing home for 13 years, seven of which she was 100% in need of care.” (Man, age 68)
- 1366 “Actually typical (lower) middle class: No amicable relationship. Too bad and a pity. My parents couldn’t help it. Or they never faced the challenge.” (Man, age 68)
- 1367 “Since we were a large family and not financially well off, there was frequent tension, especially originating from my mother.” (Man, age 68)
- 1368 “Profound process of coming to terms with my father since my childhood and later, even at the age of 50, yet somewhat attenuated, with my mother. Today, I have overcome this in both cases.” (Man, age 68)
- 1369 “My mother had a borderline personality disorder, which placed a heavy burden on the relationship among the family members! (I had the role of the scapegoat and was frequently wrongfully blamed!)” (Man, age 68)
- 1370 “We were never interested in one another. My parents separated when I was still a little child. For this reason, I couldn’t care less about my biological father. My mother bore me when she was 17; I was not a planned child. That also shaped my relationship with my mother. But I never suffered from the situation. We just both went our own way.” (Man, age 68)
- 1371 “Grew up as a foster son. I did not know my biological mother. Initially, I grew up with my grandmother.” (Man, age 68)
- 1372 “I didn’t see my father for the last five years of his life.” (Woman, age 69)
- 1373 “It was good to very good.” (Woman, age 69)
- 1374 “We had a peaceful relationship.” (Woman, age 69)

- 1375 “An affectionate relationship built on trust, fruitful exchanges and mutual respect.” (Woman, age 69)
- 1376 “A postwar period without major conflicts?” (Woman, age 69)
- 1377 “Over his last three years, my father suffered from dementia. During my childhood, he almost never had time for us children. He had his own business, and therefore my parents worked seven days a week.” (Woman, age 69)
- 1378 “All in all, the relationship was very good with my father in particular.” (Woman, age 69)
- 1379 “My mother didn’t recognise me for the last twelve years of her life (Alzheimer’s), so I couldn’t do anything for her except visit the nursing home (250 km from home, accompanied by my young children). Otherwise, I would have supported her as much as possible. I was able to look after my father until he died of a heart attack.” (Woman, age 69)
- 1380 “I was Dad’s child. Mum and I were probably too similar. Nowadays, I feel that I was too strict in judging my mother.” (Woman, age 69)
- 1381 “Excellent, beautiful family that every child should have.” (Man, age 69)
- 1382 “I had a beautiful youth with my parents, followed by an independent unproblematic life as an adult. In old age, my parents received the necessary attention and help from me and my brothers.” (Man, age 69)
- 1383 “My relationship with my parents was generally very good.” (Man, age 69)
- 1384 “My parents raised me on the basis of solid middle-class norms within the framework of their own conceptions accordingly. Some wishes have remained present latently on both sides even during my time as an adult, were not mentioned at all or only incidentally. The reasons for this are of various nature. Alongside much that is lovely, that is a pity. I nevertheless would have never wanted to trade my parental home.” (Man, age 69)
- 1385 “In my view, a completely normal relationship – it was just a bit more authoritarian at the time than it is today ... My parents gave their family their full support in every respect – we (I and my deceased brother) had a happy childhood. Without much money but happy nonetheless.” (Man, age 69)
- 1386 “My parents raised us children (there were six of us!) strictly but also always treated us decently. However, their financial means were rather limited. Yet they nevertheless gifted us with a wonderful childhood.” (Man, age 69)
- 1387 “Father extremely dominant and full of expectations but willing to help if necessary. Dialogue was never possible since another opinion was

- never accepted. I lived completely withdrawn to avoid conflicts. Mother fought the divorce for many years (presumably because of finances). As a schoolchild, I was constantly caught in the middle, which stressed me a lot. I myself emigrated to Papua New Guinea to gain distance. That was the positive 'turnaround' in my life." (Man, age 69)
- 1388 "We married and thus 'separated' from our parents in a very natural way. We've had four children of our own and have been happily married until today. Our parents have been very interested in us and our children and have also helped us a lot, above all with the business but also by babysitting our children and so on. They didn't interfere in our family life, which we know to appreciate very much. Our children are also all married and we have had 20 grandchildren altogether, while we in turn are happy about each one of them and keep up with how they are doing. In this sense, we are very grateful for the example of our parents, who worked hard and taught us to do so as well. They were able to conclude their lives in tranquillity, peace and without debt of any kind." (Man, age 69)
- 1389 "We children learned to work and take responsibility early on. In my case, there was tension because I did not want to take over the farm." (Man, age 69)
- 1390 "Ten years before his death, my father had a major stroke. He was paralysed, couldn't speak anymore and his mind was confused. My mother cared for him at home during those ten years." (Man, age 69)
- 1391 "In my perception, I have no parents; was only a mishap." (Man, age 69)

## Seventies

### Early seventies

- 1392 "Warm, affectionate and trusting." (Woman, age 70)
- 1393 "I had a very beautiful childhood and got along very well with my parents." (Woman, age 70)
- 1394 "As my parents died in Italy, I often had to go and look after them during their illness; my mother in particular since she remained paralysed for the last five years of her life." (Woman, age 70)

- 1395 "In 'my day', manifestations of affections were virtually absent, but my parents were present and loved us in 'their own way'." (Woman, age 70).
- 1396 "They were good parents." (Woman, age 70)
- 1397 "The relationship with my father was wonderful until the age of 12. Then it started annoying me that he was a control freak. I had a wonderful relationship with my mother (a quiet, sensitive and delicate person) especially after my father's death." (Woman, age 70)
- 1398 "I'm grateful. They taught us and set an example by the way they lived: modesty, reliability, honesty, piety ... " (Woman, age 70)
- 1399 "Unfortunately, both my parents passed away early." (Woman, age 70)
- 1400 "I and my four siblings had very dear parents. I lost my father much too early; I would have loved to give him something back." (Woman, age 70)
- 1401 "I perceived their relationship as a fundamental one, even though not a particularly close one based on their interests. My mother managed the family, and my father was glad that she did." (Woman, age 70)
- 1402 "My father died of a heart attack when I was two years old." (Woman, age 70)
- 1403 "My parents never lived together; my father only visited now and then." (Woman, age 70)
- 1404 "To me, the relationship with my parents was very beautiful and valuable; they passed on a lot for my pathway through life. My mother was able to see her grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow up and it made her very happy to experience this. She was an excellent storyteller. She was delighted to do this and, in this way, established a close connection with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was able to maintain this until shortly before her death." (Woman, age 70)
- 1405 "I am grateful to my parents that they raised us to become independent people early on and valued a good education. For this, they made great sacrifices. Their modesty, their diligence showed me the way. Although they had to make ends meet for their family with the most minimal means, they never complained. My mother's early death of cancer shocked me deeply. After my mother's death, I felt a closer connection with my father. He quietly took care of everything and never demanded anything of me. I supported him for a few years in looking after my youngest siblings (every weekend with household chores, during my siblings' holidays, their education and training). Until he remarried, I frequently helped him tidy his household, do laundry and

- cook on weekends, although he never in any way asked me to do it.”  
(Woman, age 70)
- 1406 “Thank you to life for bringing me into this home and into this country. I’m grateful to my parents who gave me material well-being, but above all emotional well-being. It’s a great privilege.” (Woman, age 70)
- 1407 “Because my parents were divorced and we kids lived with our father, the relationship was difficult. My siblings were the more important part.” (Woman, age 70)
- 1408 “Seen from today, my parents were very strict. But they supported their children and made sure that they were able to get a good education. At the time, this was not yet a matter of course for girls. In this respect, they were progressive. All in all, however, our relationship was rather distanced and also hierarchical, with our father in particular. At times, I suffered from this somewhat. Looking back, however, I must say that, on the whole, it was OK the way it was.” (Woman, age 70)
- 1409 “I had a good relationship with my mother; in my perception, not affectionate enough. The relationship with my father was not very close and not very warm, perhaps like with an uncle. He was a real patriarch.” (Woman, age 70)
- 1410 “My father died when I was two years old.” For that reason, I practically have no memory of him.” (Woman, age 70)
- 1411 “I didn’t have a real relationship with them. I lived with my mother for only three years. I saw my father the first time when I was perhaps eight years old. After I married, I was in touch with the two now and then.” (Woman, age 70)
- 1412 “Both parents died very early, which is why my brother and I had only childhood relationships with our parents.” (Man, age 70)
- 1413 “It was very harmonious. We were spared strokes of fate. The values of life were lived and upheld.” (Man, age 70)
- 1414 “I had wonderful parents.” (Man, age 70)
- 1415 “The answers about my father are difficult because I was 16 when he died.” (Man, age 70)
- 1416 “They were exemplary.” (Man, age 70)
- 1417 “I had very dear and caring parents.” (Man, age 70)
- 1418 “Very few conflicts given the age gap.” (Man, age 70)
- 1419 “I’ve always had a good relationship with my parents.” (Man, age 70)
- 1420 “I had a very good and close relationship with my parents. We always supported and helped one another wherever possible. I worked in various countries (and on various continents) and visited my parents in

- Switzerland as much as possible or invited them to spend vacations with us as long as their health allowed. Both my parents came from poor families, but, through diligence and hard work, they were able to afford a comfortable life. I am very proud of them.” (Man, age 70)
- 1421 “The times were tougher than today, the people as well, without them being aware of that. It must also not be judged in that context. That’s the way it was in modest circumstances at the time. People didn’t speak or discuss that much. Yet this excludes neither understanding nor warmth. Love and affection were not shown as openly.” (Man, age 70)
- 1422 “Typical Swiss bourgeois postwar parents.” (Man, age 70)
- 1423 “I was satisfied in general. They did what they could with their few means. I always understood them and accepted my parents’ poverty.” (Man, age 70)
- 1424 “I was able to experience a great and harmonious childhood with my parents.” (Man, age 70)
- 1425 “The contact with my father ended 60 years ago.” (Man, age 70)
- 1426 “Father pressured me into an apprenticeship as a craftsman. I actually wanted to attend a conservatory. To him that was nonsense. A pity. I wanted to learn the harp. But it was typical of his age group. He was of the opinion that I should pursue an apprenticeship. I could become a train driver afterward, in which case I would be eligible for a pension from the state. It was well-meaning of him after the war years. I understand him today. It was not so good for me. I understand him, even though it didn’t correspond with my plans for life. That’s just the way it is. If I were young again, I would carry through with it. In my youth, you were expected to obey.” (Man, age 70)
- 1427 “A difficult relationship with divorced parents. At the age of thirteen, my mother and stepfather (whom I loved very much) sent me to boarding school and then, at the age of 15, sent me to live with my father, whom I hardly knew and with whom I didn’t get on very well. Sadness and regrets.” (Man, age 70)
- 1428 “As can easily be seen, early divorce, having lived with a stepfather, the relationship with my parents was a bit unique. Three years before my mother’s death, the relationship with her fell apart. We never got in touch again.” (Man, age 70)
- 1429 “Both parents were in a nursing home during the final twelve months of their life. I was very close with my parents. Even today, they are still omnipresent to me.” (Woman, age 71)

- 1430 "I always had a lovely, close relationship with my parents. Unfortunately, my father passed away at a very early age. I am glad to have had such a relationship." (Woman, age 71)
- 1431 "I loved, appreciated and respected my parents. Both were very ill during their last year. I visited them in the hospital, nursing home, several times a week but not daily." (Woman, age 71)
- 1432 "Recognition." (Woman, age 71)
- 1433 "My parents had been married only for a few months when my father died of a car accident." (Woman, age 71)
- 1434 "I was satisfied with my parents and would have not asked for any others." (Woman, age 71)
- 1435 "According to the times, the relationship was good." (Woman, age 71)
- 1436 "During the last year of their lives, my parents were both very ill. For this reason, they were not able to provide help if I would have needed any." (Woman, age 71)
- 1437 "Everyone lived their own life." (Woman, age 71)
- 1438 "From my parents' point of view, they did their best for me. For my father, I was never good enough, and my mother gave me too much advice on how to raise my children, which burdened our relationship. Nevertheless, I am very grateful for all that life has taught me! I am among the healthy and very happy people who love life unconditionally!" (Woman, age 71)
- 1439 "Immediately after completing school, I moved away from home. Because, to me, it was too boring at home. I never felt homesick, only had a longing for faraway places even when I was little and even today. My mother was very insecure and also hit me a lot. But I'm not angry with her; she had a childhood that was much worse. She then simply died on the couch at home. My father was more patient and always very optimistic. And thank God, I also have these positive traits from him." (Woman, age 71)
- 1440 "My parents tried to give us the best they could, considering the problems they had then. They could not show feelings because it was then considered to be weak. My mother had the responsibility for the household and upbringing of the children, and my father only had to work and bring the money home to cover the main needs. (Woman, age 71)
- 1441 "My parents divorced shortly after I was born, and I was not allowed to stay in touch with my biological father. My mother prohibited that." (Woman, age 71)



- 1442 “My father passed away at a fairly early age. It was very difficult for my mother and us children.” (Man, age 71)
- 1443 “I was very fond of my parents. I considered my mother to be ‘irreplaceable’. She’ll always be a part of me and I’ll be a part of her. A mother is the greatest thing there is.” (Man, age 71)
- 1444 “We were six people living in a three-room flat, which is why father was often out (at the pub).” (Man, age 71)
- 1445 “As life wasn’t really a bed of roses for our family, all adults worked in different areas during our childhood. Initially, an older single lady lived in our flat (without a bathroom/shower, washing machine, dishwasher, electric heating etc.) as a subtenant. Despite this, or perhaps just because of this, we children grew up well protected and experienced a happy youth. This was thanks to our parents, who were financially often just barely above the minimum, who supported us in the best way during our time at school and in making our career choices and who, to the best of their ability, made sure that we lacked nothing. Unfortunately, my father died too early, and my mother (over 90) lives alone but happy and content in her own flat.” (Man, age 71)
- 1446 “I wrote a book about them.” (Man, age 71)
- 1447 “I had a good relationship with my mother. I loved her. My mother was the centre of the family, however. My father was just there. He brought the money home. Other than that, I had no particular relationship with my father.” (Man, age 71)
- 1448 “A difficult life with one parent being manic depressive and the other becoming an alcoholic. Boarding school difficult but more stable than living at home. In spite of all this, they loved us dearly and were brought down by their respective problems.” (Woman, age 72)
- 1449 “I had a very happy childhood, felt loved, until my parents passed away.” (Woman, age 72)
- 1450 “I had a good, also happy and stable parental home.” (Woman, age 72)
- 1451 “During the last twelve months, my father was mentally ill. He was in full need of care. My mother was in a nursing home.” (Woman, age 72)
- 1452 “I’m grateful to my parents for always supporting me in my choice of studies (both morally and financially until I graduated).” (Woman, age 72)
- 1453 “I had very good parents.” (Woman, age 72)
- 1454 “It was very lovely with them. Sometimes we just lived too far apart from each other to look after one another more!” (Woman, age 72)

- 1455 "My father was killed in the war before I was born. My parents hadn't married yet. After the death of his mother, I received an inheritance as his biological daughter." (Woman, age 72)
- 1456 "I loved my parents, and for them it was important that I could learn a profession that would enable me to live an independent life." (Woman, age 72)
- 1457 "I felt close to my parents but suffered from my mother's alcohol addiction and my father's frequent absence and his hot temper." (Woman, age 72)
- 1458 "My mother spent the last two years of her life in a nursing home, and my father the last three." (Woman, age 72)
- 1459 "I had a very good relationship with my parents." (Woman, age 72)
- 1460 "My mother lived in a nursing home for three years and died there. My father died suddenly of a heart attack before I was two." (Man, age 72)
- 1461 "My father died at age 54, and my mother lived another 30 years." (Man, age 72)
- 1462 "Good relationship, lived separately at times: I in Switzerland, my parents abroad so that we were in touch mostly by letter, rarely by phone (was expensive)." (Man, age 72)
- 1463 "I'm grateful to my parents that they raised me with their very modest financial means. My parents' modesty has left a deep mark on me when it comes to my professional and political activities." (Man, age 72)
- 1464 "The position my father occupied at work was reflected in the way he educated us children." (Man, age 72)
- 1465 "My parents' marriage was strained during my lifetime. Father's alcoholism." (Man, age 72)
- 1466 "To me, it was a good, eventful relationship." (Man, age 72)
- 1467 "My mother had dementia, laid in bed in a nursing home for five years and didn't recognise me anymore ..." (Man, age 72)
- 1468 "I had no complaints. I liked my parents, but the relationship was actually extremely constraining. When I was 16, I mostly went (had to go) my own way." (Man, age 72)
- 1469 "My father was old school in the sense of a family dictator. My mother suffered from his strict regimen." (Man, age 72)
- 1470 "I was independent in my thoughts and actions early on." (Man, age 72)
- 1471 "It was very good." (Woman, age 73)
- 1472 "It was perfect when I was young and continued, but obviously differently, when I lived in Switzerland." (Woman, age 73)

- 1473 “The relationship with my mother was affectionate. She kept the family together. I knew my father only being ill.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1474 “Since I lost my mother when I was 17 years old, I cannot say anything of relevance about (mutual) care and support in adulthood.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1475 “My mother was an imaginary invalid who lived to be 97 years old. That’s why I had a special relationship with my father.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1476 “I have great respect for them still today, and my thoughts are often with them. Would like to show them how I live with my family.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1477 “My relationship with my father was really bad. He was authoritarian and brutal also toward his wife, my mother, who fell ill with MS. There was never a normal life. That burdens me still today.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1478 “I thought highly of and respected my parents. On the farm, we had to work a lot. That has made its mark on us and formed us into strong personalities.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1479 “Since I was the eighth of nine children, I didn’t receive much affection from my parents. My oldest sister compensated for this, however. I understand my parents’ situation. We had good parents.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1480 “My parents raised me to be independent. They placed a great deal of trust in me and gave me quite a lot of freedom.” (Woman, age 73)
- 1481 “In his last years of life, my father suffered massively from Alzheimer’s. My mother (97 years old) has mild dementia, is in a wheelchair and, for this reason, dependent on care.” (Man, age 73)
- 1482 “I had a very close relationship with both parents. We grew up in modest circumstances without substantial financial means but never went hungry and had a happy youth in the countryside.” (Man, age 73)
- 1483 “It was always close and built on mutual respect and help (parent-child / child-parent) until both parents passed away.” (Man, age 73)
- 1484 “I could not bear my father’s wielding of power toward my mother. For this reason, I sought no contact. After my father died of an accident, I was in touch with my mother again.” (Man, age 73)
- 1485 “My father was a war refugee. He never could treat us properly; he was a so-called ‘Herrenmensch’ [member of the ‘master race’]. I never could understand his behaviour and broke off the relationship with him.” (Man, age 73)
- 1486 “We mutually respected each other at all times!” (Man, age 73)
- 1487 “My relationship with my parents was always good.” (Man, age 73)

- 1488 “They got along well and tried to support their six children as best as possible, within the limits of their abilities and resources.” (Man, age 73)
- 1489 “We were frequently in touch with one another throughout their entire lives. We, that is, my family including my two sons.” (Man, age 73)
- 1490 “Tension on account of the religious affiliation of our children.” (Man, age 73)
- 1491 “For me, my father was also my mother.” (Man, age 73)
- 1492 “My mother had dementia (living in a nursing home) for the last three years of her life.” (Man, age 73)

### Mid-seventies

- 1493 “I loved and appreciated my parents. They were always there for me and my family when I needed them. My mother was able to pass away in our home and didn’t have to go to a nursing home. Unfortunately, I could no longer keep my father at home during the last months of his life because he needed increasingly more care and our household was not wheelchair-accessible. Terrible for my father was that his brother had to die a few months prior to him.” (Woman, age 74)
- 1494 “My parents were very honest, hard-working, loving people. I often disagreed with their strict upbringing, but I’m certain they were always well-intentioned.” (Woman, age 74)
- 1495 “The relationship was better than the one we have today with our children! After looking after our grandchildren when they were younger, now that they’re older ..., we feel let down ... Not even a phone call! It’s the new generation! It’s sad!” (Woman, age 74)
- 1496 “My parents were very loving and ready to support my family.” (Woman, age 74)
- 1497 “I loved my parents dearly. Since I had to earn my own money from the age of 16 on, I couldn’t pursue an apprenticeship. My parents had very little money; they had a modest family home instead. My parents experienced two world wars. For this reason, they lived in modest family circumstances, which I always knew to appreciate very much. From their own experiences, they wanted me to have it better.” (Woman, age 74)
- 1498 “They were both in a nursing home for about 15 years because my mother came down with dementia.” (Woman, age 74)
- 1499 “I had good parents, who had a very hard life and worked a lot. They went on vacation only once, which my brother and I paid for. They always stuck together.” (Woman, age 74)

- 1500 “They lived harmoniously and content!” (Woman, age 74)
- 1501 “The relationship with my parents was good overall. Even though they were not always in agreement with my goals in life, they never put obstacles in my way and did support me, both morally and financially (university studies, self-employment).” (Woman, age 74)
- 1502 “My parents were very concerned about us children. But money was always also an issue and also the cause of conflict. My mother was a very diligent housewife, who understood how to provide us with a lovely and cozy home with little means. She was very good at all handi-crafts, sewed our clothes herself, also out of necessity. Through my parents, I experienced that sharing creates happiness even if you don’t have much. When I was born, there were difficult times. Nevertheless, our home was an open house for all people who needed one. That has influenced me and my life. More difficult for me was that my parents had strict principles concerning the conduct of life and relationships. The age difference to my older siblings was almost ten years. The protest movement of 1968 and their demands resonated only with me but wasn’t comprehensible to my parents and older siblings. But they did learn and respected me, even though not without raising questions. Prior to their death, that was no longer of any significance. For that I am grateful.” (Woman, age 74)
- 1503 “My parents didn’t have a good relationship; they expected me early on to choose sides or act as a referee. In the process, they lost sight of me as a person. I never confronted them with my own problems or conflicts; that would have been met with complete incomprehension. In the case that they learned about them from others, they intervened in ways that were no way in line with my intentions and interests. (By the way, I became a psychoanalyst.)” (Woman, age 74)
- 1504 “I miss them ...” (Man, age 74)
- 1505 “I was able to experience a lovely childhood in harmony and peace. My parents always supported me along my path.” (Man, age 74)
- 1506 “I was five when he died and I couldn’t understand why he left.” (Man, age 74)
- 1507 “I had super parents. There was nothing to complain about.” (Man, age 74)
- 1508 “I had a very good relationship with my parents. We had it good with one another.” (Man, age 74)
- 1509 “It was all a good fit.” (Man, age 74)
- 1510 “We lived a long way apart and rarely saw each other.” (Man, age 74)

- 1511 "Father and mother were ill for many years in old age. They were able to live with their oldest son at home." (Man, age 74)
- 1512 "I had a very good relationship with my parents and a good upbringing." (Man, age 74)
- 1513 "Mother was very matter-of-fact. Father was very emotional." (Man, age 74)
- 1514 "My father passed away when I was four years old. For that reason, my mother's financial situation was not very good." (Man, age 74)
- 1515 "My biological father was killed in an accident when I was just a year old." (Man, age 74)
- 1516 "To me, my parents were much too old. When I was 15, my father was over 60. Thus already an old man. For my parents, it was no bed of roses but work, physical labour. They lacked the time to show me a different side or to show me the way a bit when I was young. Everything turned out well for me and my family nonetheless." (Man, age 74)
- 1517 "I missed them. In Southern Europe at the time, you had to fend for yourself." (Woman, age 75)
- 1518 "It was very close and very good! Especially also their connection with their grandchildren, our children. Unfortunately, their last years were overshadowed by illness; during my mother's last year also by her dementia." (Woman, age 75)
- 1519 "My mother died when I was three years old. My father was away on business a lot. When he died, I was 20 years old. I grew up with my maternal grandmother together with my older sister." (Woman, age 75)
- 1520 "Before his death, my father lived for four years in a home for Alzheimer's patients. I couldn't really maintain a real relationship with him anymore. My mother lived contentedly in a nursing home during her last three years. We maintained warm close contact until the end." (Woman, age 75)
- 1521 "I have lived in Switzerland for 60 years and only had a few opportunities to see my parents!" (Woman, age 75)
- 1522 "During the last twelve months before my parents passed away, it was very difficult to support them. The reason being: I worked here in Switzerland and they still lived in Southern Europe." (Woman, age 75)
- 1523 "Financially we didn't have much, but I felt protected and loved." (Woman, age 75)
- 1524 "The relationship was good, but because of the distance (about 600 km) our contact was not too close." (Woman, age 75)

- 1525 “As a teenager, I lived in a boarding school in Switzerland – for this reason, I was only very rarely with my parents. In the meantime, both of them died shortly after one another.” (Man, age 75)
- 1526 “I had virtually no relationship with my father for the last twelve months of his life, given that he wasn’t really in his right mind anymore ...” (Man, age 75)
- 1527 “I had a very good relationship with my parents. Was always supported.” (Man, age 75)
- 1528 “My now-deceased siblings and I grew up in poor financial conditions. We nevertheless had a good childhood and teenage years since mother and father gave us everything they could under the given circumstances. Security and love were our wealth.” (Man, age 75)
- 1529 “I cherished my parents tremendously. They gave me great freedom. They were a model for me in every respect.” (Man, age 75)
- 1530 “As a timber and coal dealer (from an inheritance), my father had a physically demanding occupation; he would have preferred becoming something else. Our family had to make do with little, especially during and after the Second World War. We two boys – me in particular – helped our father with his work during our leisure time. First, wood and coal were delivered to customers on a table trolley pulled by two heavy draught horses. Later, my father bought (with a loan) the cheapest lorry he could get; we never had enough for a car. My parents were over 50 years old when they went on vacation for the first time. One week of hiking. But we lived simply but in contentment. Despite, or especially because of, their hard work, my parents lived to be almost 90 years old. My mother and father were always good to us children.” (Man, age 75)
- 1531 “Their parenting was authoritarian but loving.” (Man, age 75)
- 1532 “Unfortunately, my father died at a much too early age upon retirement. My mother spent her last three years in a nursing home.” (Man, age 75)
- 1533 “We had a good, open relationship.” (Man, age 75)
- 1534 “My father died of an accident when I was two years old.” (Man, age 75)
- 1535 “We had it good.” (Man, age 75)
- 1536 “Because of the family circumstances (divorce, remarriage), they were busy with their own problems, so I mostly had to find my own way.” (Man, age 75)

- 1537 "I'm from the generation where parents didn't talk to their children very much. I'm happy to say that things have changed a lot, which is good for family balance." (Woman, age 76)
- 1538 "I had good parents." (Woman, age 76)
- 1539 "My mother died too early; I would have needed her very much." (Woman, age 76)
- 1540 "My father died when I was 16 years old. As I was unable to travel, it was impossible for me to see or visit my mother." (Woman, age 76)
- 1541 "My parents and I fled with two suitcases from the Russians in 1945 shortly before the end of the war. I had a poor childhood without love. Unfortunately ... I am glad to be able to be here in Switzerland." (Woman, age 76)
- 1542 "The relationship was always very good." (Man, age 76)
- 1543 "Since my father died when I was 16 years old, the relationship was typical of a father-son relationship during childhood and teenage years. He passed away quickly so that the situation never occurred that I could have/would have had to care for him. I accompanied my mother closely in old age, to the extent that the geographical situation allowed. My sister, who lived in the same neighbourhood as our mother, took over the task of looking after her on a daily basis. The last ten years, my mother lived in a nursing home." (Man, age 76)
- 1544 "The relationship with my parents was strong because I grew up on a small farm and was involved in the work early on." (Man, age 76)
- 1545 "They gave us a carefree, wonderful youth." (Man, age 76)
- 1546 "I respected my parents and obeyed them in the way that was generally customary at the time." (Man, age 76)
- 1547 "My mother was a doormat, and my father was a tyrant. They both had unrealistic expectations of me and my siblings. They did not agree with the wife I chose but compromised and took an interest in their grandchildren. I respected my mother but came to hate my father." (Man, age 76)
- 1548 "My mother broke off the relationship with me and my family for no apparent reason. She has never seen and wanted to see our second child. She fulfilled her obligation as a mother until I moved out. That was sufficient for her ... We had a good relationship with my father and his second wife. Because of the distance, we mostly saw each other only on vacations." (Man, age 76)
- 1549 "The circumstances were difficult after the war." (Man, age 76)



## Late seventies

- 1550 "It was nice with my parents, and I miss them both." (Woman, age 77)
- 1551 "My mother was very submissive towards my father and never questioned his decisions. My father was often away on business and, in his absence, my situation as the eldest of five children was not very enviable. My father was under guardianship for over a year before he died, living with one of my sisters, with whom I no longer had any relationship." (Woman, age 77)
- 1552 "Good." (Woman, age 77)
- 1553 "As their only child, I was almost too protected. For example, I wasn't allowed to join a club, for instance, a gymnastics club. To my father, my education was very important and therefore also my marks. Looking back, I am very grateful to my parents." (Woman, age 77)
- 1554 "My father expected a lot of me. Therefore, I had to help out in the store during secondary education. That is to say, from 4 p.m. onward I was doing tasks in the office and additionally serving customers in the store. On the other hand, my parents gave us an interest-free loan to buy our home. Father: 'I want you to finally be at home some place!' My mother was always there for me emotionally! She was also my role model in matters of language skills." (Woman, age 77)
- 1555 "My mother said that this man was my father and, according to the papers, he was. Later in his life, he said that he was not my father. I therefore do not know. I was not in touch with him between the age of five and briefly at about age 40. Only then did he tell me that he was not my father. The reason for his statement, according to my mother: He was in military service during the war and brought a venereal disease back with him. According to the doctor, he could no longer father children. Then he married a very Catholic woman, and, in my mother's mind, he had to tell her that I was not his daughter because he didn't want to tell it the way it really was. When he died, I tried to cut off some of his hair in the crematorium. But when I got there at 8:20 a.m. on Monday (it had been closed before then), he had just been cremated . . .!! Now I just have to live with this question." (Woman, age 77)
- 1556 "Very good relationship." (Man, age 77)
- 1557 "My father founded his own business and had a heart attack shortly afterward so that I had to quit my apprenticeship to help my father. He owned the business until he died; even though he could hardly work anymore, he always drew his salary. After his death, I took over father's

- heavily indebted business. For many years, I and my spouse knew only work, nothing but work.” (Man, age 77)
- 1558 “My parents were great role models. Particularly with their love of God, which expressed itself in love of and devotion to especially weaker people, I had great examples, who left a lasting blessing in my life.” (Man, age 77)
- 1559 “Harmonious, not very emotional.” (Man, age 77)
- 1560 “The relationship with my parents was positive and normal. My parents were always my role models!” (Man, age 77)
- 1561 “My mother, physically and mentally healthy, was run into and killed at a pedestrian crossing – shortly after the hand signal was abolished. She said, ‘Now we don’t have to give hand signals anymore. Now drivers always have to stop.’ I made it clear to her that pedestrian crossings are not bridges and that pedestrians still have to be alert. Unfortunately, that was to no avail. It was a mistake to abolish the hand signal.” (Man, age 77)
- 1562 “Sometimes you wish for a different kind of relationship, maybe warmer and opener.” (Man, age 77)
- 1563 “The relationship with my parents was not always harmonious, but only my two older brothers were aware of that.” (Woman, age 78)
- 1564 “Was always very good.” (Woman, age 78)
- 1565 “I had exemplary parents. I grew up during a time when parents were still an authority, and I don’t regret that because it was good that way.” (Woman, age 78)
- 1566 “We always had a good and happy relationship.” (Woman, age 78)
- 1567 “I had wonderful parents who got along well for the most part. We lived in the countryside; I was allowed to have a lot of animals (provided that I took care of them myself!) and had a very beautiful childhood and youth!” (Woman, age 78)
- 1568 “My mother suffered from dementia and was in a nursing home during her last year. My father had strokes. During his last year, he was mobile, however, and my mother was able to care for him.” (Woman, age 78)
- 1569 “I was able to experience a happy youth with father and mother.” (Man, age 78)
- 1570 “My mother died at an early age of leukaemia, while I resided in a boarding house and therefore had little contact with my parents. My father died at very old age and in a demented state and in need of intensive care. For this reason, contact was no longer really possible emotionally.” (Man, age 78)

- 1571 “When I was about 20, I came to Switzerland for a planned year. Today I’m 78 years old and still live here. I always maintained a very good relationship with my parents, and during their last years when my parents lived in a nursing home, I was allowed (required) to make the monthly payments.” (Man, age 78)
- 1572 “Once I had completed school, my parents no longer took educational action. Their credo was, if it’s not enough yet, it’s never going to be sufficient!” (Man, age 78)
- 1573 “Always very good.” (Woman, age 79)
- 1574 “I hope that I have established such a good relationship with my own children as my parents did with me!” (Woman, age 79)
- 1575 “My parents needed me to continue their business, and I was raised accordingly. No brother. Hard school. ‘Girly stuff’ in a men’s industry. Father was rather jealous of me ...” (Woman, age 79)
- 1576 “Always a very good relationship.” (Man, age 79)
- 1577 “My parents were Swiss but originally from Italy. My grandfather had emigrated to Switzerland. They had a difficult life but made many sacrifices in order to give their children a better life. I am the youngest of three children, and unlike the others I managed to have a good career. As a result, I tried to help my parents out when they were old.” (Man, age 79)
- 1578 “The relationship with my parents was very good.” (Man, age 79)
- 1579 “All three siblings had a very good relationship with our parents. Our parents offered us a lot.” (Man, age 79)
- 1580 “Being a young widow and single parent, my mother was under considerable social pressure, which was a burden on her children as well.” (Man, age 79)

## 80 plus

- 1581 “My mother ended up living with me and our two children. She stopped talking. Had a stroke. My father used to work on building sites and liked a drink.” (Woman, age 80)
- 1582 “I had wonderful parents who always did their utmost to ensure their three children were happy. Thanks to them, I’ve learnt honesty and love for others and how to fight to succeed and make them proud of me. They’re always with me and I’ll always love them.” (Woman, age 80)

- 1583 “To me, my parents were exemplary parents in every respect.” (Woman, age 80)
- 1584 “My father was abroad for job reasons and thus was seldom at home. That is why there was hardly ever any tension between him and me, for my mother – who also worked – had to take care of everything.” (Woman, age 80)
- 1585 “Father was a quiet macho type.” (Woman, age 80)
- 1586 “We were a normal family with clear rules. The relationship with my parents was, in line with the times, more distanced than today. After the war, our parents also had more worries ....” (Woman, age 80)
- 1587 “Economic facts were dominant.” (Woman, age 80)
- 1588 “My mother was mentally ill. I was able to establish a connection with her only once I was an adult. My father remarried and was extremely strict. Once they were old, I became the guardian for my mother, my father and my stepmother and visited them regularly and looked after them to the extent necessary. My Christian faith helped me to reconcile with all three of them.” (Woman, age 80)
- 1589 “I always had a very good relationship with my parents. I always loved and respected them. Unfortunately, I lost them quite early!” (Man, age 80)
- 1590 “It was a very good relationship with ups and downs, just the way it is actually supposed to be, marked by tolerance and mutual respect.” (Man, age 80)
- 1591 “After the end of the war, father never came home. He disappeared immediately. His marriage with my mother never was positive. He was an alcoholic and evil.” (Woman, age 81)
- 1592 “My mother passed away during my childhood. I had a poor relationship with my stepmother. The reason was that my mother was proud of her Huguenot ancestry; my stepmother was an ultra-Catholic. Wanted to have my wife deported by the police because she is German! I married, and the break with my parents was absolute. My parents never bothered with my children and have never seen them!” (Man, age 81)
- 1593 “Mutual live and let live. No warmth. I felt like the fifth wheel on the cart.” (Man, age 81)
- 1594 “My relationship with my parents was respectful but not very close.” (Man, age 81)
- 1595 “I emigrated from the Czech Republic to Switzerland in 1968. Thereafter, I was not allowed to return to the country and, for this reason, was not able to care for my mother before her death. My brother, who lived there, took care of her. I sent money instead.” (Woman, age 82)

- 1596 “My mother was very close to me and looked after my brother and me all the time, especially during the last war when my father was deported. I subsequently didn’t see my father from 1940 until 1945 when he returned from deportation (the only one of ten people in our immediate family). When he returned, his character had obviously changed. He wasn’t very demonstrative with us, his children, and was more demanding.” (Woman, age 82)
- 1597 “The relationship was generally very good. (Woman, age 82)
- 1598 “Since 1954, I did not live with my family anymore.” (Woman, age 82)
- 1599 “Very close, supportive relationship with my father during my childhood – until I married the ‘wrong’ man and left the Church. After that, he transferred his love to my daughters. A looser relationship with my caring mother, from whose modest education I distanced myself as an arrogant grammar school student. At 18, after returning from an exchange year abroad with a difficult host mother, I began to appreciate her warmth. Our relationship was friendly until her death, but I had never asked her for advice and she opposed my divorce vehemently. Both parents supported me a lot with childcare and created a paradise for my daughters. I am very grateful to them for an all-around happy childhood – the foundation of my good life.” (Woman, age 82)
- 1600 “Few memories. Failing memory ...” (Woman, age 82)
- 1601 “We were a solid middle-class family. I have the same education as my father.” (Man, age 82)
- 1602 “It was a ‘normal’ relationship. I hope that there will be many more of this kind.” (Man, age 82)
- 1603 “I lived abroad. My sister looked after our parents.” (Man, age 82)
- 1604 “Parents: careful, cautious, highly reserved, life marked by their status as stateless refugees (my mother lost her Swiss citizenship through marriage).” (Man, age 82)
- 1605 “I had a very good relationship with my parents. These days, I would have many questions for them that never came to my mind about 30 years ago. Now it’s too late!” (Woman, age 83)
- 1606 “I have been in Switzerland since the age of 19, thus far away and, at that time, without a mobile phone and so on, had little contact. I was there perhaps one to two times a year on vacations. For financial reasons in particular, it was not the time to visit home frequently. In addition, I had married and had a child whom I looked after alongside my part-time employment. My mother had been ill for a long time so that she couldn’t keep in touch, and my father worked all day, long

- hours. Now, many years later, I know that my father always wanted the best for us children, in his very strict way. I made peace with him after his death. In those days, the times were rougher. My father had spent many years in the military, away from his family. We experienced the war. Lost our house and so on.” (Woman, age 83)
- 1607 “A lot of respect and love.” (Woman, age 83)
- 1608 “Our relationship was respectful. We were simple people.” (Woman, age 83)
- 1609 “My father was an alcoholic.” (Man, age 83)
- 1610 “They did their best for me. It was a time of war!” (Man, age 83)
- 1611 “It was good.” (Man, age 83)
- 1612 “I didn’t have much of a relationship with my father; the relationship with my mother was lovely. Our mother stood by her husband wholeheartedly and loved him, although he was a difficult partner. He was socially well-liked but rather withdrawn at home. For example, he mostly ate alone. The older he grew, however, the more nervously tense he was. We children nevertheless turned out well in life overall. Our mother found great strength and stability in trust in Mary, mother of God. She would have certainly been a wonderful granny but unfortunately was not able to experience that anymore.” (Man, age 83)
- 1613 “My biological father passed away soon after I was born. A few years later, my biological mother remarried and I then came to have a stepfather, with whom and with my stepsiblings I got along very well.” (Man, age 83)
- 1614 “The times were different then. Children were not at the centre of attention as they are now. It was about ensuring family survival and not the pursuit of egoistic interests.” (Woman, age 84)
- 1615 “Although they were very different, my parents were role models, who provided guidance and support to my sister and me in our lives as women, wives and mothers. Thank you, Dad and Mum.” (Woman, age 84)
- 1616 “It was good.” (Man, age 84)
- 1617 “Relations with my mother were sporadic since she lived in Italy ...” (Man, age 84)
- 1618 “When I was born, my father was over 50 years old and my mother over 40 years old!!!” (Man, age 84)
- 1619 “They were really good parents, especially considering the difficult times back then.” (Woman, age 85)
- 1620 “I was four years old when my mother died.” (Woman, age 85)

- 1621 “My parents were fair and concerned about our large family (nine children). We siblings have a good bond and are very grateful.” (Woman, age 85)
- 1622 “We were a simple working-class family of the kind that existed in the 1930s/1940s/1950s.” (Woman, age 85)
- 1623 “My father was an alcoholic and used almost half of his wages for this purpose. Otherwise, he was the dearest person.” (Woman, age 85)
- 1624 “To sum up my relationship with my parents, I didn’t have any major problems. I trusted them, I knew I could count on them ... but there wasn’t much intimacy or gentleness.” (Woman, age 85)
- 1625 “A very close relationship with my parents! I remember when the war broke out in 1939. We visited a store and were on a wooden bridge with the flags of all Swiss municipalities. Suddenly, people started to run around frantically, and we heard about the general mobilization. We immediately went home again. My father and mother put on their Sunday clothes, and we went to the photographer together, who took a family picture before my father joined the military. When we got back home, he fetched his military apparel from the attic and bid us goodbye. At the door, he said to me, ‘Now you are the boss. Take good care of your mother!’ In 1941, I contracted polio, and my father stood there for a direct blood transfusion! After I returned from the children’s hospital, I remember that my father massaged me twice a day (for two years) so that I could walk normally again.” (Man, age 85)
- 1626 “My parents had a ‘traditional’ marriage at the time: My mother was ‘Minister of the Interior’, my father ‘Minister of Foreign Affairs’. We kids did not notice any quarrelling between them if there was any. On the basis of my father’s occupation, we were more lower middle class – financially we couldn’t do much. When I was about 25 years old, I was self-employed and no longer lived with my parents. We therefore were also not in close touch anymore. My parents were strict Catholics and raised us children accordingly. As I gradually abandoned these beliefs, and my father certainly also became more tolerant, there were no conflicts – we let each other live!!” (Man, age 85)
- 1627 “I barely knew my father (died of pneumonia). My mother also died way too early (cancer).” (Woman, age 86)
- 1628 “I have good memories of my parents and my family. We led a simple life, but a life full of love and mutual respect. My father worked as a seasonal worker. I remember the terrible pain when my mother died of a heart attack when she was still young. I was 15. I carried on living

- with my older sisters and my father until I got married ...” (Woman, age 86)
- 1629 “During the last year of her life, my mother was seriously ill with Alzheimer’s disease. Unfortunately, she did not recognise me anymore, and although I went to see her every day, our relationship was very superficial and sometimes difficult.” (Woman, age 86)
- 1630 “No problems.” (Man, age 86)
- 1631 “I loved my parents.” (Man, age 87)
- 1632 “My brother and I had loving parents who supported us.” (Woman, age 88)
- 1633 “My mother died when I was eleven years old. When my father died, I lived in the same household. We had a normal relationship and understood each other perfectly well; my relationship with his new wife was also good.” (Woman, age 88)
- 1634 “In the last twelve months leading up to his death, my father suffered from slight dementia, lived with us in the same household, but was cared for by his wife, my mother. In the last twelve months before her death, my mother suffered from severe dementia and no longer recognised us children. During her final years of life, she lived in a nursing home and, before that, in the same building with us but in her own household after the death of her husband, my biological father, while in the last years prior to moving to the nursing home, she ate lunch with us and was cared for by my wife to the extent necessary (first signs of dementia). Our living arrangement up until I got married was such that I lived with my parents, where I had to hand over my paycheck. Once I married, I moved away, and my parents moved with us. From this time on, my parents lived with us, where they helped us as long as their health allowed.” (Man, age 88)
- 1635 “In the last twelve months leading up to their death, both my father and my mother had dementia.” (Man, age 88)
- 1636 “I loved my parents. We were in touch sporadically and, toward the end of their lives, frequently.” (Man, age 88)
- 1637 “My parents were a simple working-class family and suffered considerably during the years of crises around 1930 and subsequently during the Second World War since my father was almost always on the frontline and, at the time, there was no real wage compensation. My mother managed to eke out a living for us kids with her work at home. When I was twelve years old, I worked for a farmer in the same village who had had an accident and continued working there until I was confirmed. I took care of the barn and the animals. With that money,



- I bought bread, flour, potatoes and so on from the farmer and brought it home to my mother. Since we were in a very poor financial situation, my father thought that I should later hire on to a factory to earn money. Fortunately, I was able to complete an apprenticeship without any money.” (Man, age 89)
- 1638 “As a country doctor, I was under a lot of stress, additionally an ill wife for a period of time.” (Man, age 89)
- 1639 “I always had a very good relationship with my mother. But she didn’t have a whole lot to say versus my father. Father was very religious, almost fundamentalist; but at his very old age, our opinions began to converge. But he remained very, very religious!” (Man, age 90)
- 1640 “My mum died a few months after my birth. After my father remarried, I was put in a boarding school. And then from the age of 15 or 16, I had to look after myself.” (Man, age 90)
- 1641 “Father had a deadly accident. At home, there were many of us children. Our mother ran the farm and didn’t have a lot of time for us. The older girls took care of the household and looked after the young children. A few years later, I came to have a stepfather, with whom I had a very poor relationship (alcoholism). When I was 21, I slapped him in the face.” (Woman, age 91)
- 1642 “My parents got along admirably well. I had fabulous parents. I was very close to my mother.” (Woman, age 93)
- 1643 “I had a wonderful upbringing. We weren’t rich, but my parents always had an open hand for people in need. I am therefore so grateful for all that they gave me. If all kids had such a home, there would certainly not be so many young ones who are so badly behaved and so on.” (Woman, age 96)
- 1644 “Just a normal relationship.” (Woman, age 96)

What do adults say about their parents? What emotions do daughters and sons have when it comes to their mothers and fathers? What stories do they tell? This book offers personal first-hand thoughts on family situations and histories. Daughters and sons express and explain their connections with their parents from early childhood across the whole life course. They talk about cohesion, ambivalence, conflict and distance. They report love and hate, eternal bonds and painful separations. The statements address both relationships with living parents and past ties to mothers and fathers who have passed away.

This is the fourth book of the SwissGen project, a representative survey of intergenerational relations in Switzerland. The analysis volumes offer key findings and examine central generational issues in depth ("Generationen zwischen Konflikt und Zusammenhalt" / "Generations between Conflict and Cohesion"). The data volume provides general information on the research project and basic quantitative results in form of summarised tables ("Relations with Parents: Questions and Results"). The book at hand is the qualitative complement to the analysis volumes. It offers over 1,500 statements of adults in their own words.

The study was conducted under the direction of Marc Szydlik at the Department of Sociology at the University of Zurich.

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