



Hidden Voices: Family Estrangement in Adulthood

A summary of findings

804 people took part in an online survey about family estrangement. All participants had self-identified as being estranged from their whole family or key family member such as their mother, father, siblings or children.

How do people experience estrangement?

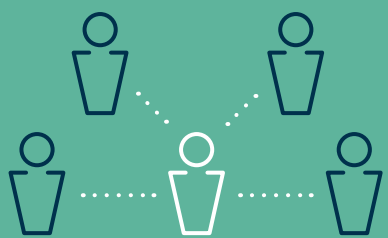
96%

of participants who were married, co-habiting or in a civil partnership had told their partner about their estrangement.



68%

felt that there was stigma



around the topic of estrangement and described feeling judged, feeling as if they were contradicting societal expectations and felt there was a general lack of understanding about estrangement.

Around 80%

felt there had been some positive outcomes of their experiences of estrangement, such as greater feelings of **freedom and independence.**

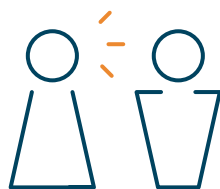


1 in 4

participants who had turned to their GP for support found them not at all helpful.



What do we know about family estrangement in adulthood?



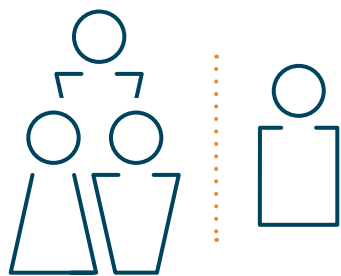
Common factors that contribute to relationship breakdown with parents, siblings and children include **emotional abuse, clashes of personality and values, and mismatched expectations** about family roles and relationships.

Those who wished their estranged relationships could be different wanted a relationship that was more positive, unconditionally loving, warm and emotionally close.



54%

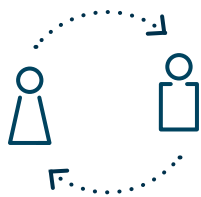
agreed with the statement 'estrangement or relationship breakdown is common in our family'.



Most who were estranged from a parent strongly agreed with the idea that they could never have a functional relationship again.



Family estrangements are not always stable and cycling in and out of estrangement is common, particularly for respondents who were estranged from their mothers.



90% found the Christmas period challenging.