

I guess it's natural for a person to share some of the same qualities as one or both of their parents. But I also think that part of the reason we are so alike is just that we became dependent on each other. I'm an only child, so my mom always had lots of time to spend with me.

Part 3

Do you enjoy spending time with relatives? Why or why not?

Yes, I love getting together for family functions because it's nice to catch up on each other's lives and see how people have changed.

What types of family traditions do you and your relatives have?

We used to have a lot more traditions when we were kids. For example, every New Year, we would have a big party at my grandfather's house, and all of the kids would collect a lot of money. We also used to have a big summer picnic for all of the birthdays that happened in the summer. I miss those traditions.

Do you think family members are more important than friends?

I think it depends on where you are at in life. At some points in my life, my mom has been the most important person, and at other times I have been closer to one of my friends.

Do you think that having a good relationship with relatives is important to most people?

I think that depends on the individual person. I know some people who are very close to their cousins or their siblings or their parents. I know other people who always fight with their relatives and don't like to spend time with them. Some of my friends see their grandparents or uncles and aunts often, and others don't. But even though people have different kinds of relationships with their relatives, I think everybody feels that it's important to know that you have a family who cares about you. You may spend a lot or a little time with your relatives, but it's important to know that they are there.

How do family members help each other?

Family members can help each other in many ways, both emotionally and materially. Older family members serve as role models for younger family members. Parents, older siblings, and family members can provide guidance and advice to their younger relatives. Family members provide each other with companionship. They can also help each other with material things, like lending money or offering a place to stay, or helping to find a job. Grandparents sometimes help take care of their grandchildren. There are a lot of different ways that family members help each other.

Do you agree or disagree: families are not as important as they used to be.

I disagree. I think families are more important now than ever. These days we have so many choices and so many decisions to make. We have to decide what to study and where. We might have to think about moving to another city or country to take a good job. These are hard decisions and if you don't have the support of your family, who will help you? We might make the decision to go to another country, for example, and that would be far away from the family, but still, it's important to know that your family cares about you and will help you.

How are families now different from families in the past?

Families don't always live close together now, and that makes a big difference. I think in the past, the members of an extended family were always around each other and they always helped each other with daily things. If someone didn't have enough money or a place to live or needed help with the children, there was always a relative who could help out. Now that people often go to other places to live, it's harder for family members to help each other because they are farther apart. They still care each other and provide support, but it has to be in a different way. For example, maybe they can give advice, but it's harder to help care for a sick relative. Also they spend less time together so they don't know each other as well.