

AVOIDING THE ICEBERGS: PREVENTING DISCONNECTION & "QUIET" ESTRANGEMENT IN UHNW FAMILIES

"Quiet" Estrangement: A Looming Iceberg

Disconnection between parents, children, and other relatives is a concerning trend in society with particular ramifications for UHNW families. A mix of factors—polarization in society, technological upheaval, shifting communication norms—are making it harder for families to stay close. **As conflicts go unaddressed, trust erodes, and cracks widen into fractures. This "quiet" estrangement has significant consequences for relationships, purpose, legacy, and wellbeing, as well as how the Great Wealth Transfer impacts future generations and society.** The good news? These patterns and relationships can be healed and changed. With intentional effort, families can strengthen bonds, repair trust, and build resilience.

Countering the Trend of Estrangement

In KORE's extended network, a common refrain we hear is that parents and their kids, no matter the age, are struggling to understand each other and connect. While many people perceive estrangement as extreme cases that involve courtrooms, emotional blow-ups, or years of not speaking, it can start much earlier in a family's life and be very subtle in its growth. Like icebergs that keep ~90% of their volume under the surface, this disconnection and emotional estrangement carry the potential to spark disaster but loom silently ahead. Many families - the ships in this analogy - are steaming headlong toward them, mistaking quiet and calm for strength. Lack of conflict does not equate readiness.

Well-structured experiences and communication is key to bringing family members together where seen and unseen fractures are developing. Having values-aligned, third-party support can be crucial for providing objective input and safe places to process, as perceptions of each individual can be quite different (and surprising) and make important conversations difficult. The same, well-intended words or actions that seem to solve a short-term problem for one can also sow seeds of future discord and relational distance. But, the opposite is true as well. **Proactively strengthening trust, values purpose, relationships, and communication today can prevent major disagreements, knock-down legal battles, communication breakdowns, divorce, and other circumstances** with huge potential financial ramifications for a family's business, philanthropy, or other projects. These intentional efforts can also fuel greater wellbeing for all involved.

Change Is Possible: The Human Factor

The process doesn't have to be as confounding or scary as it might sound. Most parents and kids want stronger relationships and connections with each other in some format, but are not sure how to build them. Or, they are discouraged because their initial attempts were rebuffed or misunderstood. There are research-backed experiences and tools that can help individuals and families navigate these challenges and flourish. Our nonprofit, KORE Venture, has been part of these positive shifts in family dynamics and individual flourishing. There's nothing like seeing the faces of parents or Rising Gens light up while talking about a family member or relationship that previously provoked fear or pain.

These types of changes in flourishing relationships and family communication often require individuals who are on the journey toward thriving personally. Thus, support for both individuals and the relational contexts are important. Small steps like completing an assessment tool can help families or individuals within them explore and identify areas for growth around communication, resilience, a sense of personal identity or purpose, and other key factors. Facilitated conversations, customizable sessions or workshops, and individual or group coaching are also often important for measurable change.

A Call to Action: The Cost of Ignoring Disconnection

Proactively addressing the rising tide of disconnection and "quiet" estrangement is crucial because of the huge relational and financial costs for wealth holders and families of abundance. Doing so also has positive spillover effects, boosting individual and family resilience that is crucial in a world changing faster than ever. At KORE Venture, we are finding ourselves increasingly feeling like the lookouts on the HMS Titanic, yelling out, "iceberg ahead!" as estrangement and disconnection is affecting almost every family in some way. But it's not too late to change course. The first step is awareness. There are details on how to access our free family resilience assessment measure below. Whether or not you choose to use our tools or partner with KORE, we hope you take this important trend into consideration as you build and refine your approach to generational legacy.

Curious how your family is doing on these key qualities like communication, flourishing, and resilience? [Email mmacdonald@koreventure.org](mailto:mmacdonald@koreventure.org) to access our introductory strengths assessment, or reach out to schedule a call.