

COMMUNICATION GAPS: 5 THINGS RISING GENS WISH THEY HEARD FROM THEIR PARENTS

Communication gaps between Rising Gens and their parents are one of the most common challenges that we at KORE Venture hear about. There is often a deep desire for stronger connection on both sides, but challenges in finding the language, opportunity, and approach that helps fuel meaningful conversations. Rising Gens often report feeling misunderstood or not listened to, and this can be aggravated by conflict. These gaps aren't limited to situations that are clearly fractured. In many relationships that are apparently or largely healthy, there is still often a desire for stronger affirmation or additional conversations. While at times disconnection happens through poorly-expressed words, it can be an absence of sharing or an avoidance of specific phrases that hinder relational strength. Drawing on input from KORE alumni we've pulled together five common things that Rising Gens wish they heard more from their parents. Each may be symptomatic of a burden that the young adult is carrying, whether that be fear of disapproval or loneliness or distrust. Taking time to explore the motivations underneath can be helpful for understanding a Rising Gen's world better.

1. "I'm proud of you."

Many parents think this, but surprisingly few verbally express it to their child. These words are so influential, especially if the Rising Gen has gone through a season of disruptive or rebellious behavior. Many who have a past they are ashamed of are keenly aware of their parent's displeasure and disappointment. They can carry weight around failures long after the parents have moved on. Some Rising Gens feel undeserving of or guilty for their privilege, which can increase a desire for affirmation.

2. "How do you think we could build a healthier family culture?"

Rising Gens are often very concerned about their family and are in tune with the health of the culture. Many believe that wealth can contribute to conflict and infighting. They're eager to have trusting relationships and unity, but they may not know how to initiate conversations around these topics or feel like they can do it alone. Being willing to listen to ideas, even if one disagrees with what is shared, demonstrates a parent's care and willingness and fuels stronger trust. This can fuel a healthier family culture and better communication.

3. "How can we better support you in thriving in life/your career/your growth?"

Rising Gens often feel a lot of pressure being a part of a family with significant resources, and it may not be coming explicitly from their parents. Whether internally or externally constructed, these expectations are strong forces in their lives. They influence, positively and negatively, how they make choices throughout life. Expressing support in their personal growth can help your Gen Z and Millennials grow in confidence and courage to pursue what brings them purpose.

4. "We're here for you. We get that being a part of a family wealth story is complex."

Growing up surrounded by resources many others don't have can create a sense of otherness and isolation. Many Rising Gens feel at least some shame around their wealth and internalize that being rich is bad, especially in today's cultural conversations. In the loneliness, they are isolated from trusted friends and a safe community. Our current cultural situation is only going to increase this reality, as technology and discord make relations more challenging. Very few Rising Gens have peer friends with similar backgrounds within whom they speak openly about lots of experiences. Thus, having expressed understanding and support from parents can mean a lot.

5. "What would you like to know about the family wealth/business/history/our story?"

Many Rising Gens know very little about their inheritance and / or wealth situation. Some families feel it keeps the kids humble or prevents entitlement. But it can send an often-unrecognized message that they are not trustworthy, intelligent, or important enough to know more. Rising Gens are eager to understand their family story so they can be responsible and prepared, and partner more effectively with their parents, as appropriate.

This is by no means an exhaustive list; there may be other gaps or areas of strength in communication in a given family. But it is illustrative of aspects of the internal world of Rising Gens. They are often navigating challenges their parents have not experienced and may not perceive. Most Rising Gens aspire to having a healthy, honest, and supportive culture in their families and more connection with their parents. They want to collaborate with their family members to create that space. The more each generation works towards understanding the other, the closer they will get to achieving it.

To learn more about how you can help encourage and build understanding with Rising Gens, or to join or customize a seminar or workshop around these topics for your community, reach out to us at mmacdonald@koreventure.org to set up a call.