

Felt Obligation Measure (FOM-parents)

Stein, C. H. (1992). Ties that bind: Three studies of obligation in adult relationships with family. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 9(4), 525-547.

When it comes to their parents, many adults tell us that they sometimes feel they ought to say or do certain things and not other things *because* they are dealing with their parents. Some people talk about it as a 'need' and say they need to talk to their parents regularly whether they have something new to say or not, because it is important to keep in touch. Other people talk about it like they 'should' keep in touch because they sometime feel badly if they don't.

Here is a list of things people sometimes tell us they 'need to' or 'should' say or do in their relationship with their parents. For each item, use the following scale to indicate how often you feel that you 'need to' or 'should say and do things in your relationship with parents.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
rarely not very occasionally somewhat very
 often often often

In your relationship with your *parents*, how often do you feel that you 'need to' or 'should':

1. Visit on holidays
2. Send cards for special occasions
3. Give them gifts for special occasions
4. Make them proud of you
5. Do what they suggest
6. Maintain regular contact
7. Talk about personal things
8. Do them favors
9. Keep peace in the family
10. Talk about your spouse
11. Not get more than you give
12. Tell them things they want to hear
13. Get the family together for special occasions
14. Return favors
15. Talk about other family members
16. Not give more than you get
17. Do things to please them
18. Talk about your children
19. Let them take care of you
20. Give them grandchildren
21. Talk about your problems
22. Not ask them for financial help
23. Tell them you love them
24. Take care of them in their old age

25. Be different to them
26. Not argue with them
27. Be your own person when you are together
28. Offer them your help and advice
29. Loan them things
30. Make them happy
31. Keep the giving and the receiving equal in the relationship
32. Talk about their problems
33. Borrow things from them
34. Make sure they see their grandchildren

*Relationship target words (in-laws, mother, father) were substituted for the word 'parents' in other versions of the measure.

Subscales

Contact and family ritual (items 1, 2, 3, 6, 13, 18, 20, 34)

Avoid conflict (items 4, 5, 9, 12, 15, 17, 32)

Assistance (items 8, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30)

Self-sufficient (items 11, 14, 16, 22, 25, 26, 27, 31)

Personal sharing (items 7, 10, 19, 21, 33)